



Understanding perceived brand value and actual product quality as drivers of consumer motivation to purchase: A qualitative study of the luxury sparkling wine industry in South Africa



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Abstract

The primary objective of this study was to better understand perceived brand value and actual product quality as drivers of consumer motivation to purchase within South Africa's luxury sparkling wine industry. The study considered a consumer's exposure to South African and French sparkling wine brands to understand how quality is assessed and how perceptions are formed of sparkling wine as a product and as a brand.

From the literature, brand value and product quality were unpacked, and the uses and gratifications theory was applied to understand the need that a consumer seeks to satisfy when purchasing or consuming luxury sparkling wine. The study was conducted qualitatively, making use of semi-structured interviews and reflexive thematic analysis to collect and analyse the data. A sample of participants were identified as consumers of luxury sparkling wine, residing in Cape Town, South Africa and a total of 10 participants were interviewed.

Five major themes were identified in the findings, which indicated that, when purchasing luxury sparkling wine, various needs to be satisfied exist and these may conflict or co-exist. The sensory experiences and associations linked to sparkling wine consumption form part of a consumer's quality and brand value evaluations. The findings show that the environment in which a consumer purchases or chooses to associate with a sparkling wine brand may largely influence their brand choice and quality evaluation.

By understanding how a consumer forms associations towards sparkling wine consumption, the findings indicate how sparkling wine brands in South Africa can potentially enhance the perceived brand value of South African sparkling wine brands and the perception of the South African sparkling wine industry.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

1.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the research, with an introductory discussion of the concepts, theory and methodology to be studied and considered throughout. The chapter commences with a background to the study, providing an overview of the topics to be studied, specifically highlighting the potential for a consumer to use a selected sparkling wine brand to satisfy a specific need. The rationale for the research is discussed, indicating the need for the research by providing existing knowledge on the sparkling wine industry, branding, consumer decision making, and the influence of brand value and luxury brands. This is followed by a practical discussion of the research problem, aim and objectives.

The preliminary literature review indicates what is to be expected in Chapter 2, with an introduction to the seminal and contemporary literature used. The research methodology is discussed, an overview of the methodology to be employed is provided and the ethical considerations adhered to in the study are noted and discussed in detail in Chapter 3. The limitations of the research and contributions are considered and the chapter concludes with an overview of how the study's five chapters are structured, as well as the contents thereof.

1.2 Background to the study

The South African alcohol market amounted to R226 885 billion in 2021 (Statista, 2023a). The South African wine industry is an important part of South Africa's economy because, collectively, the industry contributed to 1.1% of the country's gross domestic profit (GDP) in 2019 and accounted for 1.6% of national employment (SAWIS, 2021a:45). An annual growth rate of 10.6% is projected between 2023 and 2027 for the South African sparkling wine industry, whereas the global luxury alcohol market is estimated to experience a compound annual growth rate of 8.43% between 2022 and 2027 (Mordor Intelligence, 2022; Statista, 2023b).

The growing South African alcohol market provides the foundation upon which South Africans consume alcohol of varying categories. Within these categories consumers fulfil their purchases for intrinsic or extrinsic reasons (Tybout & Calkins, 2019:133), motivated by various needs that are prompted by subjective underlying antecedents (Wiedmann,

Hennigs & Siebels, 2007:5, 6). Within the purchase process, various brands can be used to gratify consumer needs (Katz, Blumler & Gurevitch, 1973:514). However, the brand value attached to certain brands is magnified by consumers' motivation to purchase selected goods at higher pricing (Diaz-Soloaga, Carcelén-García & Diaz-Bustamante, 2023:91).

Qiu, Wang, Richard and Wang (2017:95) indicate that the country from which a brand originates influences the consumer's perception of the brand's quality. Within the wine industry specifically, it is often seen that the price of the product prevalently influences a consumer's purchase decision, despite the consumer's product knowledge (Robertson, Ferreira & Botha, 2018:170). Although consumers cannot distinguish between sparkling wines without being informed by product labelling, Champagne brands maintain a competitive advantage over other sparkling wine brands in certain markets due to the origin and luxury associations of the product (Charters, Velikova, Ritchie, Fountain, Thach, Dodd, Fish, Herbst & Terblanche, 2011:163). This phenomenon is identified in the South African marketplace – French Champagne and South African Méthode Cap Classique are produced according to the same method, yet are sold at extreme price differences (Café Caprice, 2022; Chidi & Mafata, 2018:74; Grand Pavilion, 2023; Siebert, 2018:53). This study aimed to understand whether consumers are informed of such, whether they seek this information, why they feel this way, and how their perceptions have been formed.

1.3 Rationale

The sparkling wine industry includes wine that has been fermented or directly injected with carbon dioxide to achieve certain levels of pressure (SAWIS, 2021b:3). Sparkling wine offerings in South Africa include Champagne, Méthode Cap Classique, Prosecco, and carbonated wine. Champagne is considered a luxury item and champagne brands preserve the associated brand value by employing brand strategies that support consumer demand for luxury (Holmqvist & Kowalkowski, 2023:260; Riley, Singh & Blankson, 2016:481). A brand encompasses the tangible product to be sold, as well as the intangible associations and benefits associated with the product (Murphy 1992:1). However, branding has become more than a means to distinguish one product from another. A consumer's cumulative tangible and intangible brand experiences have the ability to influence purchase decision making (Murphy, 1992:1–2). This influence is highlighted as products with virtually indistinguishable utility are sold at extreme pricing differences – the only difference highlighted as the respective brand (Murphy, 1992:1).

Consumers are provided with a multitude of product offerings when making purchase decisions regarding which sparkling wine to purchase (Robertson *et al.*, 2018:160). Consumers who evaluate product quality based on product attributes may be provided with insufficient or ambiguous information (Bayraktar, Uslay & Ndubisi, 2015:349). As a result, this consumer segment does not scrutinise a product for its objective industry standard of quality, but makes use of existing knowledge and prior experiences to form evaluations (Bayraktar *et al.*, 2015:349). When consumers evaluate products of similar attributes on the basis of quality, consumers prefer products with higher prices (Audrin, Brosch, Chanal & Sander, 2017:2). Product attributes are used to evaluate product quality, but the variety of brands on offer, similarity between brands, consumer knowledge and social value attached to a potential purchase increases the complexity and pressure of the decision (Robertson *et al.*, 2018:160–161).

Consensus between consumer value and brand value is imperative for luxury brands, as luxury brand strategy is founded upon the notion that the luxury product is superior, therefore justifying its high price (Choo, Moon, Kim & Yoon, 2012:82). When brand value serves as a means to differentiate brands, as well as improve an organisation's financial performance, organisations may benefit from brand value as consumers have an enhanced perception of the brand's products and respective features. This enhances consumer loyalty, sensitivity to price increases and the effectiveness of marketing campaigns (Melović, Vukčević & Dabić, 2021:99; Niculescu, Dumitriu, Purdescu & Popescu, 2019:173).

Luxury brands follow brand strategies that correspond with luxury brand principles rather than traditional marketing strategies (Kapferer & Bastien, 2009:476–477; Kowalczyk & Mitchell, 2021:439–440). The market success of leading brands inspires follower brands to offer products of similar characteristics and utility (Murphy, 1992:2). However, follower brands have less chances of success in the market when competing with leading brands, unless offering substantial advantages to the consumer, such as price (Murphy, 1992:2). While some South African sparkling wine brands imitate an identical production process to luxury French Champagne brands, the South African products are sold at a noticeably cheaper price than French products. The reduction in price is not a reflection of luxury pricing and associated demand (Chidi & Mafata, 2018:74; Leibenstein, 1950:189; Veblen, 1912:70).

1.4 Problem statement

A problem statement addresses and indicates the need for the research project (Cooper & Schindler, 2014:509). It is a clear and succinct declaration of what the research aims to achieve and determines subsequent planning (Pandey & Pandey, 2015:26). Sekaran and Bougie (2016:39) add that a problem statement is to be viewed from an academic perspective, and is to be explicit, particular and focused. It includes the research objectives and research questions (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:39) and encompasses a discussion of the problem. It provides background as to what the problem is and why it is considered a problem, along with relevant details and prior efforts to confront it (Hofstee, 2006:85).

The problem identified for this study is that the relationship between perceived brand value and actual product quality as drivers of consumer motivation to purchase is misunderstood in the South African sparkling wine industry. Therefore South African sparkling wine brands may be purchased less frequently than international brands, which lessens the potential sales revenue of South African sparkling wine brands.

1.5 Research aim

The research aim of this study is to better understand perceived brand value and actual product quality as drivers of consumer motivation to purchase within the South African luxury sparkling wine market.

1.5.1 Research objectives

1. To identify attributes that enhance or reduce a product's perceived level of quality within the sparkling wine industry.
2. To determine consumer perception towards available sparkling wine brands in South Africa.
3. To determine how consumer perception towards available sparkling wine brands in South Africa was formed.
4. To determine how perceived brand value contributes to consumer decision making when purchasing sparkling wine.
5. To determine the need that a consumer aims to satisfy by purchasing a selected brand of sparkling wine.

1.6 Preliminary literature review

1.6.1 Understanding product quality

A quality product recognises and satisfies the needs of the consumer (Ishak, Ginting, Suwandira & Malik, 2020:1). Quality measures are incorporated into product design to increase the likelihood that the product understands the consumer's needs, with an increased likelihood that a consumer will purchase the product. Quality is therefore argued as a source of competitive advantage (Ishak *et al.*, 2020:1–2, 8). Consumers make use of intrinsic and extrinsic prompts when evaluating product quality (Audrin *et al.*, 2017:2). Intrinsic prompts relate to elements essential to the product itself and contribute to the existence of the product, whereas extrinsic prompts are additional elements conveying information about the product. Intrinsic prompts include the materials used to manufacture a product and the product attributes that contribute to the quality thereof (Audrin, *et al.*, 2017:2). Extrinsic cues relate to product attributes that, when altered, do not alter the fundamental existence of the product, such as brand, price, country of origin and place of purchase (Veale & Quester, 2008:195). The following section will examine how the needs of the consumer and consumer evaluation occur. The layers that a product is composed of will be examined to further serve as a framework upon which the levels of importance can be attributed to the relevance of purchase motivation.

Kotler and Keller (2012:326) explain that a product can be examined and understood as consisting of five layers. Each layer adds increased value. Foundationally, a product offers consumers the core benefit. The basic product that the consumer is purchasing represents the second layer and comprises the addition of attributes to form a product. The third layer indicates the expected product – attributes or characteristics that will be provided over and above the basic product. The augmented product follows for some products and provides a layer for marketing initiatives to position their brands and compete for market share by exceeding customer expectations. Ultimately, the potential product entails future adaptations and changes to the product in an attempt to further satisfy customer needs and enhance product offerings (Kotler & Keller, 2012:326).

The different layers of product quality, as stated by Agyekum, Haifeng and Agyeiwaa (2015:26), indicates that a quality product is to deliver on the fundamental problem it exists to solve and it offers an understanding of consumer expectations. Consumers perceive quality products to be of the correct size, colour and weight, and may be considered superior to competing brands' products. Foundational quality may be

extended with additional features offered as tangible or intangible aspects, such as product enhancements or after-sales service guarantees (Agyekum *et al.*, 2015: 26–27).

1.6.2 Perception and consumer perception towards a brand

Perception is considered as an individual's primary source to acquire information regarding the world around them (Maund, 2014:2). To better understand how a consumer's perception of a brand may be formed, the following section examines how perception is formed, followed by an introduction to brand contact points. Brand contact points are introduced as a link between the sensory aspects that a consumer has been exposed to and their subsequent perception of a brand which drives their decision to purchase.

1.6.2.1 Shaping consumer perception

According to Qiong (2017:18), an individual makes use of their senses to acknowledge and categorise stimuli, allowing for subsequent evaluations and meaning. By using sight, hearing, smell, touch and taste, an individual is able to interpret stimuli in a subjective and specific way (McDonald, 2012:6). The perceptual process comprises three stages as an individual selects, organises and interprets stimuli (Qiong, 2017:18). The selection stage commences the perceptual process as an individual attempts to create meaning from the stimuli that they are exposed to. However, to avoid information overload when exposed to numerous stimuli at a time, an individual selects certain stimuli to process, thereby disregarding the existence of other stimuli (Qiong, 2017:18, 19).

Within the second step of the perceptual process, an individual organises the selected stimuli to create meaningful patterns and associations. The final stage occurs as an individual interprets the organised patterns to create meaning. When interpreting the stimuli, an individual's perception is influenced by numerous variables, such as the individual's intentions, background, values, knowledge and experiences. This is, therefore, a subjective process (Qiong, 2017:19).

1.6.2.2 Brand contact points

Brand contact points refer to perceptual experiences of the brand by a consumer through various channels. The experiences may exist prior to a consumer purchasing a brand, during the purchase or their use of the product, as well as after the purchase and use

experience (Yang & Chen, 2018:403). Brand contact points are important as each experience may leave a positive or negative impression on a consumer, irrespective of the brand's intended communication relating to the specific contact point (Chard, MacLean & Faught: 2013:199). Brand contact points are to be considered alongside the sensory process of perception, as these convey valuable information about the brand via the senses. This serves as a means for consumers to attach value or meaning to a brand (Firat, Yilmaz & Smilkova, 2019:221).

1.6.3 Brand value

Brand value is understood in practice as a consumer's preference for and consumption of their brand of choice (Winzar, Baumann & Chu, 2018:640, 641). It is seen as a three-levelled concept, and is introduced by the financial gain an organisation derives as a result of the brand, consumer's inconsequence of a brand in relation to its price and direct competing brands, and the price premium that consumers are prepared to pay for a brand (Winzar *et al.*, 2018:640). The subsequent sections explain brand equity as a driver of brand value, and is supported by understanding the meaning of brand value to the consumer specifically.

1.6.3.1 Brand equity's role in creating brand value

Brand equity is understood as the associations, assets and values held in the perceptions of consumers and related brand stakeholders towards the specific brand name that are subsequently responsible for the brand's margins and sales volumes (Shariq, 2018:317). However, brand value is comprised of the brand's associations and behavioural responses to the brand's actions, consequently understood as the brand's ability to harness associations to enhance the financial position of the brand (Gajanova, Nadanyiova, Majerova & Aljarah, 2021:153). When the benefits of brand equity are identified, this allows for an increase in pricing but a loss of brand equity may result in consumers switching to other brands (Goldfarb, Lu & Moorthy, 2009:70). The consumer can also switch to other product categories entirely (Goldfarb *et al.*, 2009:70).

1.6.3.2 Current brand value: The meaning of brand value to consumers

According to the works of Shen, Chen and Luo (2019:2976), consumers have become co-creators of brand value. Brand value can be understood within three themes: consumers, the market and finance. From a consumer perspective, brand value is

concerned with the consumer's purchasing behaviour as a result of subjective perceptions and associations towards the brand. The market theme includes the brand's performance in the markets in which its products belong. The financial theme encompasses the brand's financial performance and value, as indicated by the organisation's balance sheet and the quantifiable cost of buying or selling the brand (Shen *et al.*, 2019:2981).

1.6.4 Purchase motivation

Consumer purchase motivation serves as the reasoning behind consumer decision making when selecting products to purchase (Herawati & Prajanti, 2019:2). The following section explores purchase motivation within the luxury goods industry, alongside the Uses and gratifications theory. It is supplemented by the introduction of The Motive Matrix to categorise purchase motivation.

1.6.4.1 Purchase motivation for luxury goods

Veblen's (1912:70) foundational work, *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, explains that luxuries are reserved specifically for the leisure class. Making specific reference to luxury alcohol, Veblen posits that the ability to afford such goods, as well as the consumption overindulgence of such, serves as an indicator of nobility, wealth and status. Excessive consumption of luxury alcohol is similarly excused, and the consumption thereof signifies quality and quantity, as the individual is deemed superior, since they are associated with the reputability and expense of the item (Veblen, 1912:70–71).

Leibenstein (1950:188) indicates that motivation to purchase can be attributed to the product's functional or non-functional demand. Functional demand encompasses purchases as a result of a product's innate features, whereas non-functional demand highlights the purchase of qualities that surpass a product's inherent features. Within the context of luxury alcohol, functional demand is attributable to the consumable liquid under which the beverage is categorised. Non-functional demand refers to brand-specific attributes, such as packaging and perceived associations of the brand. Leibenstein (1950:189) categorises such external utility demand as the bandwagon, the snob, and the Veblen effects. The bandwagon effect sees an increased demand for a product, as consumers aim to associate themselves with those currently using the product and to be perceived as fashionable. In contrast, the snob effect denotes a decrease in demand for a product, as consumers wish to disassociate themselves from others' consumption

thereof, spotlighting their distinctiveness. The Veblen effect encompasses conspicuous consumption: as demand for a product increases because of an increased selling price, the actual retail price of the purchase is to be considered alongside the perceived conspicuous price (Leibenstein, 1950:189). Bagwell and Bernheim (1996:349) described the Veblen Effect as a purchase of equivalent functionality and higher price motivated by the desire to communicate wealth through such purchases.

Verdugo and Ponce (2020:3) argue that the purchase of luxury goods is primarily attributable to conspicuous motivation, which encompasses the consumer's search for social status. Conspicuous motivation recognises the bandwagon effect, as consumers use their purchases to belong and prove their membership to a high-end caste. Similarly, the snob effect explains how consumers reject certain brands in an attempt to distance themselves from those of lower social standing. While studies confirm consumers' extrinsic needs for luxury purchases, a research gap exists within specific product categories to confirm the transferability of the findings (Verdugo & Ponce, 2020:11). Specifically, studies have not yet explored the South African luxury alcohol market. Similarly, the works of Halwani (2019:16) recognise the exclusive, discerning nature of luxury, where the author challenges the need for research to recognise consumer perceptions of distinctive luxury brands alongside the age of the consumer and what the brand makes the consumer feel.

1.6.4.2 Uses and gratification theory applied to luxury alcohol consumers

Uses and gratification research recognises that the origins of consumer needs be understood, and should not be overlooked by the importance of studying the effects of persuasive communications. The authors explain that consumer needs are to be studied as intervening variables, uncovering the quantity and mechanics of how selected media contributes to selected need creation. In doing so, the theory aims to avoid generalising consumer media usage. This attributes content usage to occasion and understands the personal and societal circumstances that inspire needs and use primarily aimed at altering existing conditions and expanding cultural viewpoints (Katz *et al.*, 1973:521).

Contemporary authors confirm that uses and gratifications theory encompasses consumer motives to make use of a specific media, as well as the gratifications coupled with said usage (Tanta, Mihovilović & Sablić, 2014:86). The theory suggests five basic assumptions: the audience consciously seeks media with purpose; the choice of medium is a reflection of the individual audience member; competition exists to satisfy the needs

of the audience member; member involvement equates to informed responses to their usage motivations and interests; and audience members are to exclusively critique their media content. Uses and gratification can be understood alongside the five themes of human needs: cognitive, emotional, individuality, community and escapism (Tanta *et al.*, 2014:87).

1.6.4.3 The Motive Matrix

The Motive Matrix is used to understand what drives consumers to connect with brands and what motivates their purchases. The Motive Matrix can be used as a tool to indicate what it is about the brand that resonates with the consumer. It recognises the consumer's fundamental need for self-fulfilment as achieved through purchase decisions (Tybout & Calkins, 2019:131, 133).

Tybout and Calkins (2019:133) categorise self-fulfilment to be achieved with an internal or external purpose. Internally, the consumer's purchase decisions indicate an important aspect of the consumer's sense of self, whereas externally, purchases are concerned with how the individual is perceived by others. While the consumer's purchase signalling can be inward or outward, the motives of such are categorised within the concepts of "coherence", "agency", and "communion" (Tybout & Calkins, 2019:134).

1.6.5 Luxury alcohol brands: An overview

A standardised definition of luxury does not exist, but the concept of luxury has been studied and major themes of "Quality", "Status", "Price" and "Exclusivity" recur within the analysis of luxury (Wirtz, Homqvist & Fritze, 2020:667). The following sections apply the concept of luxury to the South African alcohol market to determine when alcohol can be categorised as a luxury item, and to indicate the availability of such within the South African market.

1.6.5.1 Establishing a benchmark: When is alcohol considered a luxury brand?

Verdugo and Ponce (2020:2) state that luxury items have enhanced qualities in relation to other items in the same product category. Enhanced qualities include exclusivity, quality, aesthetics, remarkability and suggestive meaning (Verdugo & Ponce, 2020:2). Williams (2017:17) explains that spirit alcohol is categorised as "Value, Premium, High

End Premium and Super Premium”. However, categorising a specific product is subjective, as is the definition of luxury and what it means to an individual. Similarly, within the alcohol industry, premium alcohol is understood as the alcoholic products that have an increased perceived value as a result of the respective ingredients and packaging (Mordor Intelligence, 2022).

1.6.5.2 The availability of luxury alcohol brands in South Africa

Globally, the market leaders in luxury alcohol are, in order of appearance, Pernod Ricard SA, Diageo plc, Bacardi Limited, The Brown-Forman Corporation and Gruppo Campari (Mordor Intelligence, 2022). While not a member of the top five leading brand houses, the Really Great Brand Company offers South African consumers three of five of the United States of America's top selling champagnes: Veuve Clicquot, Moët & Chandon, and Dom Pérignon (Smith, 2022).

Table 1.1: An overview of international luxury alcohol brand houses and brands in South Africa

Luxury Alcohol Leaders	Pernod Ricard SA	Diageo South Africa	Bacardi Limited	The Really Great Brand Company (RGBC)
South African Market Offerings	• G.H.Mumm Champagne • Perrier-Jouët Champagne • Jameson Irish Whiskey • The Glenlivet Scotch Whisky • Absolut Elyx Vodka • Avión Tequila	• Johnnie Walker Scotch Whisky • CîROC Premium Vodka • Tanqueray London Dry Gin • Don Julio Tequila	• Grey Goose Vodka • Patrón Tequila • Bombay Sapphire Gin • Bacardí Rum	• Veuve Clicquot • Moët & Chandon • Dom Pérignon • Belvedere Vodka • Hendrick's Gin

(Adapted from: Bacardi Limited, ([n.d.]); Diageo, 2021; Pernod Ricard, 2021; RGBC, 2022)

1.6.5.3 Sparkling wine classification according to region and processes

Sparkling wine refers to carbonated wine that has been fermented or injected with carbon dioxide to achieve the desired level of pressure (SAWIS, 2021b:3). Sparkling wine is labelled according to the process followed to manufacture the wine, as well as the wine's origin (Siebert, 2018:53).

Champagne is produced in the Champagne region of France and follows the Méthode

Champenoise method (Siebert, 2018:53). France offers numerous sparkling wines that follow the same production method but are labelled relative to their region, including Crémant de Bordeaux and Crémant de Loire (Haskell's, [n.d.]:14). Numerous countries make use of Méthode Champenoise to produce sparkling wine with each named and identified respectively (Siebert, 2018:53). Méthode Cap Classique (MCC) refers to the sparkling wine produced in South Africa according to Méthode Champenoise (Chidi & Mafata, 2018:74).

Méthode Champenoise, also known as the traditional method, is characterised by its two-step fermentation process (Alexandre & Guilloux-Benatier, 2006:119). The production commences with the first fermentation of turning grape must into base wines (Alexandre & Guilloux-Benatier, 2006:119). The must refers to the yield obtained from pressing grape berries, including grape juice, seeds and pulp (SAWIS, [n.d.]). The characteristic second fermentation occurs inside the wine bottle and, after the fermentation is complete, the wine is further aged on dead yeast cells, after which the dead yeast cells are disgorged from the bottle (Alexandre & Guilloux-Benatier, 2006:119; Cisilotto, Scariot, Schwarz, Rocha, Delamare & Echeverrigaray, 2023:322).

Prosecco is the term for sparkling wine originating from selected regions in Italy (Ingrassia, Altamore, Bacarella, Bellia, Columba & Chironi, 2022:145). Prosecco is produced according to the Martinotti-Charvat method, where the secondary fermentation of the wine occurs in large, closed containers, as opposed to the wine bottles used in Méthode Champenoise (Ingrassia *et al.*, 2022:145). Martinotti-Charvat, also known as Charvat or the Italian method, is primarily used due to a shorter fermentation time than the traditional method (Cisilotto *et al.*, 2023:322; Ingrassia *et al.*, 2022:145).

The most basic sparkling wine production method is carbonated sparkling wine – when carbon dioxide is directly introduced into the wines (Culbert, Cozzolino, Ristic & Wilkinson, 2015:8342). Culbert *et al.*, (2015:8347) explain that the method of production directly influences the style and sensorial attributes of the sparkling wine. Méthode Champenoise is typically described as more complex, whereas Martinotti-Charvat and carbonated wines are typically characterised by fruity tones.

1.6.6 The South African alcohol market

1.6.6.1 The value of the South African alcohol market

The sale of liquor is mandated by regulatory bodies to control alcohol sales. An institution is to apply for and obtain a liquor licence to legally sell alcohol (Western Cape Liquor Authority, 2021). On-consumption licences refer to vendors selling alcohol to be consumed on the vendor's premises, such as restaurants, clubs, hotels, bars and pubs (Institute of Alcohol Studies, 2020: 5; Western Cape Liquor Authority, 2021). Conversely, off-consumption licences refer to the entities selling alcohol to be consumed away from their premises, such as liquor stores and supermarkets (Institute of Alcohol Studies, 2020:4; Western Cape Liquor Authority, 2021).

In 2021, revenue in the South African alcohol market amounted to R222 145 billion*¹ (US\$12.0550m) (Statista, 2023a). In the South African wine industry specifically, revenue in 2019 amounted to R14 608 billion, of which R5 476 million was attributed to wine producers' income (SAWIS, 2021a:45; SAWIS, 2021b:4).

In the year 2019, the South African wine industry directly accounted for 0.3% of South Africa's GDP and created direct employment for 80 173 individuals. When considering the total economic-wide impact of the South African wine industry, the industry contributed to 1.1% of South Africa's GDP (R55 billion) and impacted 1.6% of the country's employment (269 096 individual jobs). The total economic impact considers the numerous stakeholders, industries and activities related to production, packaging, warehousing and other businesses that benefit from the wine industry through direct, indirect and induced impacts (SAWIS, 2021a:45).

The wine industry consists of sparkling wine, still wine and fortified wine (SAWIS, 2021b:3). The sparkling wine industry in South Africa includes all alcoholic wines with the addition of carbon dioxide, including imported sparkling wines, such as Champagne and Prosecco (Statista, 2023b). In 2019, 11.4 million litres of sparkling wine were sold in South Africa, whereas 2.3 million litres of sparkling wine were exported, and 1.5 million litres of sparkling wine were imported (SAWIS, 2021b:4, 45). Revenue in 2023 for the South African sparkling wine market is projected at R644 969 150*² (US\$35m). Annual

¹ *US\$ to ZAR conversion calculated on 2 November 2023; US\$1: 18.43 ZAR

² *US\$ to ZAR conversion calculated on 2 November 2023; US\$1: 18.43 ZAR

growth of 10.6% is projected between 2023 and 2027 (Statista, 2023b).

Notably, the global luxury alcohol market is estimated to experience a compound annual growth rate of 8.43% between 2022 and 2027 (Mordor Intelligence, 2022).

1.7 Research methodology

1.7.1 Research philosophy

According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2016:124), research philosophy refers to the researcher's beliefs and assumptions regarding the way in which knowledge is developed. While the researcher may be aware or unaware of their assumptions, these assumptions influence the way in which the researcher interprets the research question, methodology, research strategy, chosen data collection and analysis methods (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:124–125). The researcher's assumptions include their epistemological, ontological and axiological assumptions (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:124).

According to Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis and Bezuidenhout (2021:23), a research paradigm is a set of beliefs that guides a researcher towards a topic of study, how the topic should be studied, and how the data should be interpreted. The paradigm that a researcher follows indicates the questions to be asked as well as the associated processes to follow to obtain the answers to these questions (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:23). A selected paradigm indicates assumptions relating to the way in which reality and knowledge is perceived, and determines the research approach, methodology and method to be used (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020:40). This study is positioned within the interpretive paradigm, as its primary focus is to understand how individuals understand and simplify the world around them. The paradigm is concerned with the meanings that individuals attach to concepts to better understand possible irrationalities rather than to affect change (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:134).

Epistemology relates to the means in which reality is known by scientists and the way in which researchers approach the world around them, distinguishing between right and wrong within research-related concerns (Junjie & Yingxin, 2022:11). Epistemology indicates how the researcher approaches the gathering of knowledge to reach reality (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020:40). This research was conducted within the epistemological approach of interpretivism. Interpretivism is best suited to the research as it recognises that reality is subjective, as is the individual nature of human respondents (Alharahsheh

& Pius, 2020:41). Due to human competence, interpretivism emphasises that humans are different from natural phenomena and need to be understood by considering in-depth variables that contribute to their development of perceptions (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020:41; Junjie & Yingxin, 2022:11). Variables to be considered include culture, behaviour based on previous experiences and the environments in which humans develop their realities (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020:41). Interpretivism focuses on these individual variables to form a connection between the research and research subject. Specifically, by following the interpretivist approach, the study explored how and why individual perceptions are constructed and how these perceptions materialise in individual or group behaviour (Junjie & Yingxin, 2022:11).

According to Junjie and Yingxin (2022:11), ontology is understood as the essence of reality. Ontology is considered to be a belief about the world around us and is the philosophical study of the nature of existence (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:28). The research was positioned alongside the ontological beliefs of constructionism. Constructionism focuses on human interpretations of subjects and themes, as well as how these interpretations were formed, the human exchanges contributing to these perceptions and the environments in which the process occurs (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:29). Constructionism allows for the gathering of rich qualitative data focused on the relative phenomena of what is being studied, with the aim of understanding how humans make sense of the world as a result of their perceptions (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:29).

Axiology refers to the degree of influence that the researcher's own values will have on the undertaken research (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:124). Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.* (2021:10) explain that, from an axiological view, the researcher considers whether research is objective, understood as "value-free", or subjective, understood as "value-bound". The interpretivist approach to axiology seeks to conduct value-bound research and experiences reality to be unique and complex. The researcher acknowledges both their own values and research interpretations alongside those of participants when conducting value-bound research (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:38).

1.7.2 Research approach and purpose

The research was approached inductively, as the researcher worked from specific to general by observing certain phenomena to draw general conclusions (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:26). Concurrent with the interpretivist position of the researcher, an inductive approach to research is often used by interpretivists as information is collected

and analysed, and a theory is deduced (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:37). Saunders *et al.* (2016:64) highlight that, within inductive approaches to research, the research still possesses a research question and objectives that it seeks to answer. The literature review serves as an indication of the researcher's knowledge in the specific area of interest and is used when developing subsequent theories (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:74).

Inductive reasoning is often made use of in exploratory and qualitative research (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:26). The purpose of this study was to conduct exploratory research, as the study sought to improve the current understanding of the observed phenomena of consumers purchasing luxury sparkling wine brands in South Africa, when considering perceived brand value and product quality. Exploratory studies are considered valuable to a researcher who aims to understand how a phenomenon occurs. Exploratory research questions ask open questions commencing with "How" and "What" to explore the phenomenon and gain relevant insights into its nature (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:164, 165).

1.7.3 Research strategy

Uses and gratifications theory is suited to the study as its practical design facilitates an understanding of how consumers seek to fulfil their needs through purchase decisions of luxury alcohol brands (Ferris, Hollenbaugh & Sommer, 2021:2). The theory recognises the psychological aspect of individual consumer traits and the influence that this has on a consumer's conscious decision making (Ferris *et al.*, 2021:2). Uses and gratifications theory was applied alongside Tybout and Calkins' (2019:134) depiction of The Motive Matrix, thereby integrating the needs recognised in the uses and gratifications theory with the inward and outward coherence, agency and communion motivations of The Motive Matrix.

1.7.4 Methodological choice, data collection and data analysis

The study commenced with qualitative research. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews. Qualitative research refers to research that is conducted from words and images, instead of numbers (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:568). Qualitative research was selected for this study as it seeks to provide the researcher with an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon. By making use of qualitative techniques to describe and explain, the researcher may better understand how and why phenomena occur in the social world (Cooper & Schindler, 2014:144). As the words and images associated with qualitative data may have various meanings, these meanings are to be understood

and defined with attentiveness to enhance the quality of the research (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:568).

Sekaran & Bougie (2016:113) define an interview as a data collection method consisting of a goal-oriented and focused discussion between two or more individuals. The aim of the discussion is to obtain relevant information from recipients (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:113). Semi-structured interviews were used, conducted on a one-on-one basis between each respondent and the researcher, alongside a list of themes and potential questions to be asked (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:391).

Interviews took place over Zoom, and the content was transcribed and inputted into MAXQDA to identify patterns according to specified, predetermined codes. Considering the current literature on the extrinsic value of luxury goods' purchase motivation, the interviews took place one-on-one to encourage honest responses, which respondents may have otherwise been reluctant to share in a group setting.

The qualitative data was analysed according to Braun and Clarke's (2021) six phases of reflexive thematic analysis. Reflexive thematic analysis is not exclusive to specific research design or epistemology and the flexibility of the approach allows for broad application of various theories and epistemologies in qualitative research (Campbell, Orr, Durepos, Nguyen, Li, Whitmore, Gehrke, Graham & Jack, 2021:2013). To conclude the data collection and analysis phase, conclusions were drawn to determine the meaning of the identified themes, identify contradictions and make comparisons, and seek explanations for identified patterns, with the aim of answering the research question.

1.7.5 Time horizons

When considering the associated time horizon of a study, the question arises whether the research is to reflect the chosen phenomena at a specific time or over a longer period of time (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:200). This research was carried out as a cross-sectional study, studying the identified phenomenon at a specific point in time (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:200). A cross-sectional study is an appropriate selection for this research as the research was only carried out once and does not possess the necessary time or budget to be implemented longitudinally (over an extended period) (Cooper & Schindler, 2014:128).

1.7.6 Population and sampling

The population refers to the complete group of people or phenomena that the researcher would like to study (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:236). The target population is defined according to geographic location, time and elements (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:240). The target population for this study included individuals that purchase or consume or purchase and consume sparkling wine brands in South Africa, within either or both on-consumption premises or off-consumption premises.

A sample refers to a portion of the population that will be studied within a research, with the aim of drawing conclusions that are generalisable to the greater population to which the sample belongs (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:237). The sample for this study consisted of South African consumers of luxury sparkling wine brands. The research was conducted in the Western Cape, specifically in the cosmopolitan area of Cape Town's central business district (CBD) – an urban location characterised by LSM 8–10 members (Schwabe, 2021). A sample of 10 individual respondents was selected for the study.

Nonprobability is best suited to the study to address the research objectives and answer the research question, as the technique allows for a practical, realistic approach to selecting a sample (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2007:226). The techniques are useful for qualitative data collection, and consider the availability of resources, research objectives and question, and the ambiguity of the population size (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:226, 227).

A combination of purposive and snowball sampling was used. Purposive sampling initiated the sampling process to ensure that respondents were familiar with the variable to be studied, that is, luxury alcohol brands, that they had consumed such previously, or aspired to consume such in future. The use of purposive sampling enables the matching and homogeneity of sample groups, as well as the control of the brand variable to be studied (Pandey & Pandey, 2015:54). Purposive sampling enabled the researcher to discern which respondents were best suited to the study, as the premise for this technique is determined alongside the requirement of information-rich data collection to address the research objectives and question (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:230, 231). Purposive sampling is useful in research that uses small samples (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:228). Considering the social nature of alcohol consumption, snowball sampling was used to increase the availability of respondents, who were then selected at random to participate in the study. Snowball sampling converts the sampling technique to

probabilistic in an attempt to increase the generalisability of the findings (Pandey & Pandey, 2015:56).

Snowball sampling is often used when it is challenging to identify participants within the desired population (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:232). To accommodate a potential lack of participants, snowball sampling was considered to mitigate potential sampling constraints. Snowball sampling occurs when one or two respondents within the population are contacted, following which these respondents identify additional respondents. The process ensues until the sample is a desired size or until there are no additional respondents available (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:232).

The limitations of nonprobability sampling were identified, as the techniques are focused on generalising theory instead of a population. The limitations of purposive sampling indicate that the total population cannot be represented statistically (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:230). Within purposive sampling, it is imperative that the researcher has knowledge of the population. The subjective selection of respondents may indicate erroneous classifications (Pandey & Pandey, 2015:54). Snowball sampling's limitations indicate that a respondent's selection of another respondent may be biased, as initial respondents may select those who are comparable to themselves, bringing about a homogenous sample (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:233).

1.7.7 Trustworthiness

To support the accuracy and quality of this study, the researcher implemented the following measures relating to credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. To enhance the study's credibility, the researcher used prolonged engagement, thereby ensuring the researcher possessed a deep understanding of the environments in which purchasing and consumption of sparkling wine occurs, supported by relevant theories related to the research aim, such as brand value, perceived quality, and luxury. To support the transferability of the study, the researcher has provided in-depth explanations of respondent behaviour, opinions and experiences (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:295–296).

The dependability of this study was considered by providing cohesion between the qualitative data collection and analysis methods, as well as detailed explanations of the concepts and their relevance to the study. Furthermore, to enhance the confirmability of the study, the researcher presented and has continued to present meticulous details

relating to the data collection to enable others to replicate the study. The researcher kept a reflexive journal throughout the data collection and analysis phases to limit potential bias and preconceptions (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:296).

1.8 Ethical considerations

Research ethics is concerned with research design to ensure that its methodology is accurate and morally justifiable to all included in the research (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:181). Ethical behaviour is necessary throughout the research process, including data collection, analysis, reporting and publishing of results (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:13). The study adhered to all guidelines and requirements as set out by The Independent Institute of Education (The IIE, 2021), ensuring that participants' interests and well-being were taken into consideration. The research did not commence before obtaining ethical clearance from The IIE. Similarly, respondents voluntarily engaged with the research, providing their written and signed consent (the consent form provided explicit and complete details of the study, highlighting the respondent's autonomy within the study) and assured anonymity (The IIE, 2021). Each respondent was furnished with a consent form, confirming how the respondent's details and responses would be stored, and what the study aimed to achieve. The respondent was required to sign and approve the consent form in order to participate in the study. All respondent forms have been filed for future reference, should the need arise.

To ensure this research adheres to an appropriate code of conduct within expected societal norms, the following steps were instituted by the researcher:

- Participants were included in the study if principles of informed consent were adhered to. Participants were provided with complete information relating to their participation rights and usage of the collected data, and participants freely consented to participation (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:184).
- Participants were allowed to withdraw from the study at any time throughout the process, whether partly or entirely (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:181).
- Both potential and actual participants' privacy was respected, as participant responses remained confidential and anonymous (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:181; Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:159).
- Participants' self-respect and self-esteem were honoured and personal, invasive information was not sought from them (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:159).
- The data was collected and used in a manner that did not bring harm, pain,

discomfort, embarrassment or stress to participants (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:181).

- The collected data was not manipulated or misrepresented when reporting on the findings (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:160).
- The researcher strove to maintain these ideals, as well as an objective viewpoint that was not driven by the researcher's ego or self-interest but by honesty and attentiveness (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:181; Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:13).

The study's ethical considerations are further discussed in detail in Chapter 3, Section 3.10.

1.9 Limitations and anticipated contributions of the research

By considering the research design and methodology of this study, the research recognises various limitations. As a result of the chosen sampling method, the results obtained from this study cannot be generalised or statistically represent the entire population (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:227, 230). Further limitations exist as the research is limited to a cross-sectional study, within a particular time period due to time and budgetary constraints. This study does not recognise the relationship among consumption frequency, respondent income or geographic location variables to provide deeper insight into consumer decision making. The results obtained from this study are limited to the South African luxury sparkling wine industry and are not a representation of the entire South African alcohol or luxury alcohol industry. Additional limitations associated with the research design and methodology are discussed in Chapter 5.

It is expected that the results obtained from this study will provide a better understanding about what motivates consumer purchase decisions when considering luxury sparkling wine brands in South Africa. It is expected that the obtained results will provide a better understanding of the antecedents that drive these purchases, specifically considering the impact of product quality and perceived brand value. By considering these factors, the study aims to highlight the objective, comparable attributes of sparkling wine with a consumer's subjective perception of brand value.

It is anticipated that the findings may benefit South African sparkling wine brands and South African sparkling wine brand owners specifically. The results may indicate to South African sparkling wine brands why a consumer may prefer imported sparkling wine of similar quality over that of locally produced sparkling wine. The contributions of this study may assist South African sparkling wine brands to better understand perceived brand

value and actual product quality as drivers of a consumer's motivation to purchase sparkling wine. By better understanding these drivers of a consumer's motivation to purchase, South African sparkling wine brands may design brand strategies that align with the needs of sparkling wine consumers by understanding consumer needs, perceptions and gratifications sought from purchases. This has the potential of increasing the possibility that a consumer may be motivated to purchase a South African sparkling wine. The findings may be used to support future campaign themes to specifically appeal to a target audience by using marketing assets, such as copywriting, imagery, call to actions, and personas or celebrity endorsements.

It is further anticipated that the results obtained from this study will provide a better understanding of which brand contact points predominantly influence a consumer's motivation to purchase sparkling wine in South Africa. The results may be used by South African sparkling wine brands to ensure consistency of their brand message across owned and public brand contact points to better manage perceived brand value and influence a consumer's motivation to purchase. The findings from the study may contribute to the luxury sparkling wine industry in South Africa, as the findings reveal what a consumer may consider to be a luxury sparkling wine and why within the context of South African MCC and French Champagne. The findings may further be used to assess whether an MCC brand's current brand strategy aligns with the needs and gratifications sought by its intended target audience, and how points of parity and points of differentiation can be used to the advantage of local MCC brands when considering Champagne brands.

The research recognises the existing theory pertaining to consumer motivation to purchase luxury brands alongside previous studies that have focused on consumer perception of luxury wine. This study, however, may be the first of its kind to research the South African sparkling wine industry, and apply The Motive Matrix to consumers of sparkling wine in South Africa. It is therefore anticipated that the study may enhance the existing knowledge surrounding brand value and product quality as drivers of purchase motivation in the sparkling wine industry in South Africa. The study may further contribute to the existing knowledge of brand contact points that shape these decisions. The research may be used alongside future studies aimed at better understanding consumer purchase motivation of luxury alcohol brands as a category. The study may similarly be used for further explorations of the impact of the South African wine industry on the South African wine tourism industry, highlighting the economic impact associated with job creation and GDP.

1.10 Chapter outline

A brief outline of each chapter is provided in Table 1.2.

Table 1.2: Chapter outline

Chapter	Outline
Chapter 1: Introduction	The introduction chapter provides the reader with an overview of the study, introducing the topic and the research objectives, and indicating the layout of subsequent chapters. The chapter introduces the ethical considerations that the study adheres to, as well as the limitations and possible contributions.
Chapter 2: Literature review	The literature review chapter focuses on identifying key terms and concepts related to the study. The chapter presents applicable models, theories and journals, as well as the relationships between these concepts and the research gaps to be fulfilled. The chapter provides the foundational premise of the research design and research method of data collection.
Chapter 3: Research methodology	The research methodology chapter encompasses the research design, indicating to the reader the chosen conceptual approach, the research design and research paradigm, explaining and justifying the selection of each component. The chapter further indicates how the data was analysed, the sample from which the data was obtained and the ethical considerations to be adhered to.
Chapter 4: Discussion of results	The chapter briefly reiterates the aim of the research, presents the analysed data, interprets the findings and associates the findings with existing literature.
Chapter 5: Discussions, limitations and conclusions	This chapter discusses the implications and interpretations of the research results, presents and collates pertinent themes of the analysis into concluding findings. Recommendations for the application of the research are provided, as well as possibilities for future research.

1.11 Conclusion

The research offers an improved understanding of the reasons consumers of luxury alcohol brands in South Africa are motivated by perceived brand value rather than product quality when making purchase decisions. To understand the existing literature surrounding the research problem, the proposal made use of a combination of seminal authors and contemporary models, creating adapted models used alongside the fundamentals of uses and gratifications theory. The research follows a mono-method approach, consisting of qualitative data collection using semi-structured interviews and reflective thematic analysis. As the research focuses on the sparkling wine industry in South Africa, it is not without limitations, and further research gaps exist to generalise the study across industries, consumer goods and geographic location. The following chapter considers the applicable literature of seminal and contemporary authors appropriate to the aim and objectives of this study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The literature review serves as a collection of academic works related to the topic of study and research aim and objectives. The chapter is structured by presenting the literature from a broad to narrow approach, which collectively serves as the foundation of the subsequent chapter. The chapter commences with a foundational understanding of product quality, indicating the product layers and cues that a consumer may use upon quality evaluation. As a central concept of this study, brand value and its associated concepts of branding are explained and supplemented with a framework to better understand what brand value means to consumers. Consumer perception is considered, along with a consumer's potential exposure to a brand that may influence the shaping of their perception.

The chapter commences by integrating both seminal and contemporary authors, specifically considering purchase motivation for luxury goods and the gratifications sought from such purchases. The value attained from these purchases is considered by reflecting on how a consumer may use a brand to communicate a message of their choosing. The chapter concludes with a comparative analysis of sparkling wine manufacturing and associated pricing.

2.2 Understanding product quality

Product quality refers to the extent to which a product is able to fulfil its intended functions. When evaluating product quality, consumers consider aspects that may include the product's features, aesthetics, comparability of product specifications and the consistency at which the product is offered (Mahaputra & Saputra, 2021:1100). The following section considers product quality by examining the attributes that a consumer may use to form their evaluations. It follows with an analysis of a product's different layers to understand the functions a product may serve and the benefits it may provide to a consumer.

2.2.1 What is understood by quality product?

Agyekum *et al.* (2015:26) indicate that a quality product delivers on the fundamental problem it exists to solve and it understands consumer expectations. Consumers

perceive quality products to be of the correct size, colour and weight, and they may be considered superior to competing brands' products. Foundational quality may be extended with additional features, offered as tangible or intangible aspects, such as product enhancements or after-sales service guarantees (Agyekum *et al.*, 2015:26–27). The importance of understanding product quality is highlighted by Zirena-Bejarano, Zirena and De La Gala-Velásquez (2022:137) who note that a consumer's perception of product quality may influence their decision to purchase a brand over a competitor's products.

Quality is regarded as a multidimensional construct that influences consumer need satisfaction and purchasing decisions (Malekpour, Yazdani & Rezvani, 2022:578). Solin and Curry (2022:779) explain that, in theory, objective quality can be gauged and demonstrated according to predetermined standards. However, quality measures remain subjective, as the outcome of the evaluation is attributed to an individual's perspective and perception (Solin & Curry, 2022:779).

A consumer evaluates their satisfaction with a product by comparing their performance expectations of the product to the product's actual performance. When a consumer is satisfied with the quality of a product, consumer loyalty increases as the consumer is more likely to repurchase the same product when the need for the product presents itself and is less likely to purchase a competing product of similar characteristics (Syafarudin, 2021:72, 74).

2.2.2 Examining product quality

A product consists of five layers, with each layer adding additional value to the consumer. The first product layer, the core benefit, provides the foundation for subsequent layers. This layer provides the fundamental benefit that the consumer is seeking to purchase. The basic product refers to the second layer and entails additions that transform the core benefit into a sellable product. The third layer, the expected product, denotes features and conditions that are associated with purchasing the type of product (Kotler & Keller, 2012:326).

The augmented product, the fourth layer, refers to the product's attributes that surpass consumer expectations. These attributes are primarily associated with the uniqueness that a brand can offer its consumers, which leads to competitive advantage. The fifth product layer, the potential product, refers to the transformations and adaptations that a

product may undergo to add additional product value, increase the distinguishability of the product and satisfy consumer needs and wants (Kotler & Keller, 2012:326).

Product attributes are incorporated into a product's design to ensure that the attribute's associated benefit is given to the consumer (Gwin & Gwin, 2003:31). Consumers consider product attributes when making purchase decisions as these attributes convey product information, such as product type, functionality and usability, and provide consumers with aesthetic and symbolic meaning (Akpoyomare, Adeosun & Ganiyu, 2012:197).

Consumers consider product attributes subjectively. Their consideration is dependent on factors such as their involvement in the purchase, the environment in which the consideration occurs, the consumer's knowledge related to the purchase and the consumer's motivation to purchase the product (Akpoyomare *et al.*, 2012:197). Attributes that influence a consumer's decision making may be tangible or intangible, such as size or brand associations (Zia, 2017:45). Although relevant to the subjectivity of an individual consumer, attributes for consideration in the food industry specifically may include price, packaging, manufacturing and expiry dates, nutritional value, country of origin, taste, the presence of animal by-products, processing, and brand related aspects, such as advertising and promotional incentives (Zia, 2017:45).

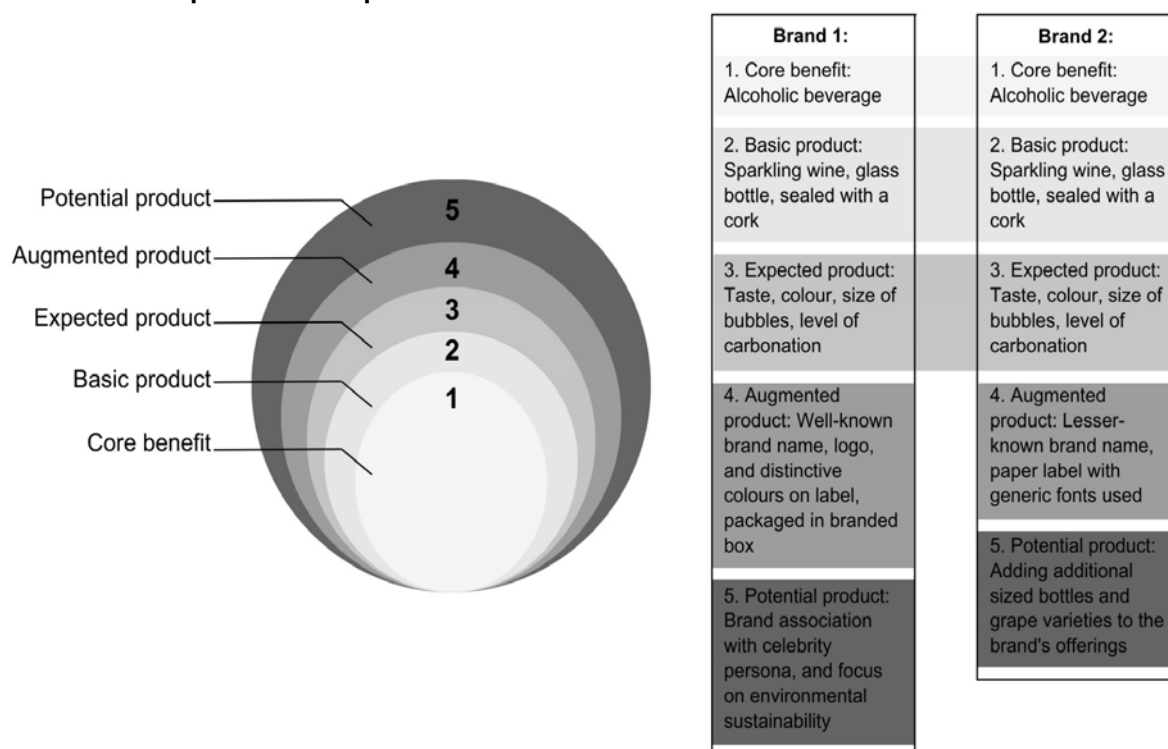
Fandos and Flavián (2006:648) add that consumers evaluate product quality based on three categories of attributes. The search quality refers to the product's intrinsic and extrinsic attributes, as experienced by and influencing a consumer's purchase choice within the moment of purchasing, such as in a retail outlet. Experience quality encompasses a consumer's exposure to the product's intrinsic attributes, as these attributes can only be experienced upon product use or consumption. A consumer's senses are used to evaluate and are influenced by the product within the experience quality category. The credence quality category entails intrinsic and extrinsic attributes that the consumer deems to be of value but are not experienced when a consumer purchases or consumes the product. This is prompted by external parties, such as word-of-mouth or media communications (Fandos & Flavián, 2006:648).

Consumers make use of a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic attributes to evaluate product quality and, yet, the combination of such may increase the complexity of the product. Consumers use previous experiences and knowledge to support their analysis (Robertson *et al.*, 2018:160–161). Veale and Quester (2009:195) explain that although

extrinsic prompts have minimal influence on product quality, consumer perception of product quality is influenced by extrinsic prompts of brand, price, country of origin and the selected distribution channel. Consequently, extrinsic prompts influence a consumer's overall perception of a product's respective brand value (Bayraktar *et al.*, 2015:348).

A better analysis of a product can be obtained by isolating product attributes. This enables an understanding of the reason a consumer prefers a certain product over another, and certain brands over others (Gwin & Gwin, 2003:32). Figure 2.1 presents a comparative model which integrates the five product layers (Kotler & Keller, 2012:326) and identifies potential attributes within each layer that may relate to consumer decision making when applied to sparkling wine brands. The figure highlights the distinctive nature of the augmented product layer and the brand attributes that exist within this layer. Although the augmentation layer allows brands to differentiate themselves in the marketplace based on the additional attributes, these attributes may become synonymous with the category in which the product competes, transforming from points of differentiation to points of parity (Kotler & Keller, 2012: 326). As indicated in the figure, Brand 2 may implement branded boxes similar to Brand 1, which renders Brand 1's packaging a point of parity within the sparkling wine category.

Figure 2.1: The five product layers of sparkling wine: An integrated model applying potential comparative attributes of brands



(Adapted from: Akpoyomare *et al.*, 2012:197; Kotler & Keller, 2012:326; Zia, 2017:45)

2.3 Introducing brands and how brands add value to consumers

According to Keller (2003:7), a brand refers to various assets that have been created for association with a specific product or organisation in the marketplace. A brand further consists of aspects related to these assets, such as the awareness and associations related to them, while fulfilling numerous roles to both the consumer and organisation (Keller, 2003:7–8). The following section examines what a brand is, along with various concepts related to the consumer associations and awareness relative to a brand. The section introduces aspects of brand identity, brand image, brand equity and brand value. The structure is presented to better understand of how these concepts are formed, and how they influence and exist with each other. This highlights the value that a brand can add to a consumer.

2.3.1 Introducing the concept of a brand and relevant brand concepts

The American Marketing Association ([*n.d.*]) defines a brand as “a name, term, design, symbol or any other feature that identifies one seller’s goods or service as distinct from those of other sellers”. Brands can be used to distinguish a certain organisation’s products within the marketplace so that consumers are able to identify, repurchase or recommend a certain product (Murphy, 1992:1).

Maurya and Mishra (2012:122) state that a brand is a direct manifestation of an organisation’s product differentiation and target market segmentation strategy. Supplementary to the American Marketing Association’s definition of a brand, a brand is described as a set of identity associations within the consumer’s mind, representing symbols, attributes, personality and values ([*n.d.*]). Liyanage (2016:315–316) explains that a brand is a mental construct resulting from the consumer’s exposure to a brand and the perceptions formed that contribute to differentiating the brand and simplifying consumer decision making. A brand is considered a promise to the consumer made by the manufacturer of the product, which reduces the costs associated with decision making and potential purchase risks (Keller, 2003:8).

From an organisation’s perspective, a brand enables an organisation to add distinctive attributes to its products to communicate unique associations to consumers, which indicate a level of product quality. These attributes can be legally protected, and serve as a means of competitive advantage and financial return for the organisation (Keller, 2003:8).

Brand identity is created by the brand and is communicated to consumers to develop relationships with them, position the brand in the marketplace and curate a distinctive personality for the brand (Hill, Hallmann & Sotiriadou, 2020:433; Lobpries, Bennett & Brison, 2016:348). Brand identity components are implemented with a long-term view and consist of the brand's core values, attributes, associations and symbolisms (Lobpries *et al.*, 2016:348). Brand image refers to consumers' reactions to the communicated brand identity. Brand image manifests as consumers' perception of the brand (Hill *et al.*, 2020:433) and is created as a result of consumers' cumulative associations and evaluations of a brand. Brand image can, therefore, influence the purchase and consumption of a brand (Fan, 2019:38).

Brand equity refers to the relationship between a brand and its consumers. It refers to the consumer's beliefs and associations held towards the brand (Wood, 2000:662). A relationship characterised by high brand equity increases a brand's competitive advantage as consumers are increasingly receptive to a brand's products yet resistant to competing brand's messages which creates increased barriers of entry (Wood, 2000:664). Aaker (1991:27) confirms that the associations linked to a brand are to be viewed as assets or liabilities, consequently adding or subtracting from a brand's value. Aaker (1991:27) identifies brand loyalty, brand awareness, perceived quality, brand associations and proprietary brand assets (such as trademarks and strategic relationships) as the components that underlie brand equity.

Brand value is a consumer-centric concept that encompasses an organisation's commitment to providing products or services that are of distinction, relevance and value to consumers (Harjoto & Salas, 2017:547). Brand value can be understood from a consumer and an organisational perspective (Zhang & He, 2013:45). From a consumer perspective, brand value is concerned with a consumer's perception of the emotional and functional value the brand can provide to them (Zhang & He, 2013:45–46). The brand value may influence consumers' perception of a brand's product as having enhanced features and performance (Niculescu *et al.*, 2019:173).

From an organisational perspective, brand value describes the organisation's premium sales revenue that is attributed to the brand (Zhang & He, 2013:46). Organisations may benefit from brand value, as brand value is associated with consumers who are loyal to the brand, less sensitive to price increases and less susceptible to competitor marketing efforts (Niculescu *et al.*, 2019:173). The outcomes of brand value are further identified as brand marketing efforts become more effective and the brand has increased opportunity

in the marketplace, such as offering brand extensions (Niculescu *et al.*, 2019:173).

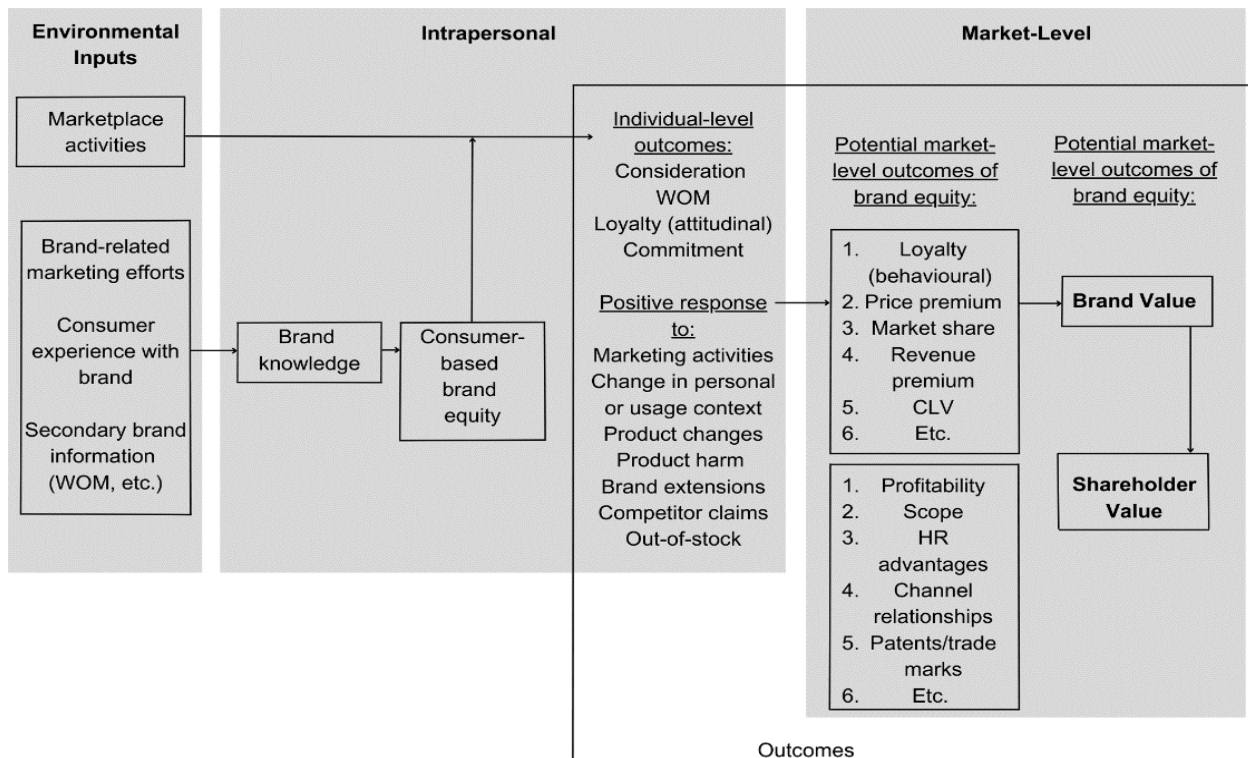
2.3.2 Brand equity's role in creating brand value

Raggio and Leone (2006:387) separate the concepts of brand equity and brand value, illustrating that brand equity is to be leveraged to increase brand value. They propose a model (Figure 2.2) that highlights the sources of brand equity, indicating how brand equity is the precursor to brand value. Specifically, the context in which the consumer marketplace exists is to be understood taking into account the brand's controlled and uncontrolled brand contact points with the consumer. Consequently, the cumulative brand knowledge enables brand equity. The outcome of brand knowledge-based brand equity is identified as the commitment and loyalty to the brand, the increase in brand usage, positive word-of-mouth and favourable responses to brand extensions and increased competition. These outcomes are to be leveraged to create brand equity in quantifiable forms of customer lifetime value, market share, the ability to charge premium prices, revenue and loyalty, either individually or collectively contributing to brand value (Raggio & Leone, 2006:390).

Brand equity can be used as a measure of brand value, and that brand value can be generated by enhancing antecedents of brand equity. When measuring brand equity, a consumer's attitude or preference towards a brand when making purchase decisions is to be examined. Supplementary to this measurement, brand equity consideration evaluates the brand's financial investment in marketing, advertising and promotional activities that contribute to a consumer's brand knowledge (Davicik, 2013:1346).

Consumer-based brand equity (CBBE) is regarded as a multidimensional construct as it encompasses a consumer's awareness and associations related to a brand, a brand's perceived quality, a consumer's loyalty towards the brand and, ultimately, a consumer's preference for a brand when presented with alternative brands (Sankaran & Chakraborty, 2022:131).

Figure 2.2: The brand equity/brand value conceptual framework



(Source: Raggio & Leone, 2006:390)

2.3.3 Current brand value: The meaning of brand value to consumers

Shen *et al.* (2019:2990) indicate that consumers draw conclusions from their consumption experiences, specifically understood as their experiences of and relationship to the brand, alongside their knowledge of and behaviour towards it. Liu, Schoefer, Fastoso and Tzemou (2020:1) posit that within the context of brand value, consumer perception of brand globalness may increase the consumer's perception of the quality of the brand because it is assumed that the global consumption and availability of the brand is indicative of its likeability and potential scarcity.

Brand value provides consumers with emotional and operational value (Gupta, Gallear, Rudd & Foroudi, 2020:212). The emotional brand value occurs when a brand consistently satisfies the emotional needs of a consumer, consequently allowing a consumer to emotionally associate with a brand. Resulting from a consumer's association with a brand, operational value increases a consumer's engagement with a brand and its related activities. A consumer considers their engagements with a brand, evaluates the efficiency at which the brand is experienced, the value offered by the brand, and how the brand is perceived in relation to competing brands (Gupta *et al.*, 2020:212). Wang and Tzeng (2019:5602) explain that a brand can be used as a means to provide additional value to a consumer. The brand value provided to a consumer materialises as the benefits

associated with the brand and can be tangible or intangible, logical or emotive (Wang & Tzeng, 2019:5602).

Brand value emanates from a consumer's interactions with, impressions of and feelings that form associations with the brand. Perceived brand value manifests as the price premium that a consumer is prepared to pay for a brand – the consumer perceives the brand to be superior to competing brands based on selected associations. Perceived brand value is regarded as a subjective assessment. Even though consumers are exposed to brand messaging to understand brand image and personality, evaluations of the brand will differ across individuals (Diaz-Soloaga *et al.*, 2023:91).

Due to a consumer's involvement in evaluating brand value, consumers are regarded as co-creators of brand value (Mingione & Leoni, 2020:74). The co-creation process enables a consumer to emotionally connect with the brand; a consumer may feel engaged with and empowered by the brand (Mingione & Leoni, 2020:75). In summary, the brand value co-creation process indicates that brand value is not only created by the production and consumption of a product, but by a consumer's interactions with the product (Wang, Tajvidi, Lin & Hajli, 2020:139). In practice, the interactions and co-creation occur where the brand exists. Therefore, co-creation is not limited to the physical use of a brand's product, but can be realised across various brand interactions that a consumer is exposed to, such as engaging with an online community interested in the brand or exposure to the brand's marketing communications (Wang *et al.*, 2020:139).

2.4 Consumer perception and decision making

A consumer's perception of a brand is understood as the consumer's knowledge of the brand which is shaped by brand awareness and brand image (Low & Lamb, 2000:350). The following section examines how consumer perception is formed by considering the factors that influence consumer perception alongside specific contextual cues. To better understand the factors that shape consumer perception, a consumer's potential exposure and interaction with a brand is examined, introducing brand contact points and their possible influence. The customer journey is presented as a framework to compartmentalise potential brand contact points and how brand contact points influence consumer decision making and drive brand equity is examined.

2.4.1 Shaping consumer perception

Perception is defined as the viewpoint or impression of an individual based on how the individual views or comprehends things. Perception is the way in which an individual observes by primarily using their senses (Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, [n.d.]). Perception encompasses a degree of both integration and interpretation of various received senses. Perception is not a mere unchanging product of observation; it is the outcome of physical and mental activity comprising both bottom-up processes and top-down processes (Galatti, 2014:63).

Bottom-up processing details the perception process that occurs when an individual makes use of and combines various smaller environmental cues and information to form perception. It is driven by information, as the individual pieces information together to form a conclusion. The approach occurs passively and the outcome is not heavily dictated by the individual's assumptions or prior learnings (Galatti, 2014:45).

Top-down processing denotes the perception process that occurs when an individual is guided by their own theories, assumptions and beliefs to make sense of an occurrence. This approach can be informed by the individual's previous experiences, contextual assumptions or both previous experiences and contextual assumptions. When an individual is confronted with an overwhelming number of stimuli, top-down processing aids the individual in prioritising and selecting stimuli to focus on. Bottom-up and top-down processing are interconnected and do not exist in isolation. They are highlighted by an individual's ability to perceive the unexpected (Galatti, 2014:52).

Although individuals can be exposed to the same stimulus, each individual will form their own perceptions due to perceptual processes including selective attention, selective distortion and selective retention (Kotler & Armstrong, 2012:148). Selective attention refers to the process in which an individual prioritises the processing of selected stimuli above other available sensory inputs (Ligeza, Vens, Bluemer & Junghofer, 2023:1). It is understood as a fundamental and automatic cognitive process in which an individual filters out irrelevant information to focus on selected stimuli. This process may prompt the course of subsequent cognitive processes (Ligeza *et al.*, 2023:2).

Selective distortion refers to an individual's inclination to interpret stimuli according to a means that suits the individual's preconceived ideas (Akhtar, 2019:56). In doing such, an individual alters the stimulus input in a way that has importance to them, potentially

ignoring less pleasing stimulus aspects and connecting the stimulus to personal needs and assumptions (Dang, 2021:254, 262). Selective retention describes an individual's propensity to only recall the stimulus information that the individual wants to, foregoing the ability to retrieve outstanding facts or events (Collins Dictionary, [n.d.]; Merriam-Webster, [n.d.]).

Selective attention translates into increased effort by brands to harness consumer attention. Selective distortion may misconstrue intended messages within brand stimuli, converting intended information into notions that instead mirror the consumer's mindset. Similarly, selective retention may cause a consumer to recall positive information about their favoured brands, while forgetting positive information about competing brands which they do not favour (Kotler & Armstrong, 2012:149).

Boshoff (2014:83) establishes perception and related stimulus inputs as a factor inherent to an individual consumer that influences the consumer's buying decision process. Sensory-related contextual cues may influence consumers who purchase food or beverage items in the following manner:

- *Visual cues:* Visual cues are used to influence consumer perception and behaviour, and include contextual aspects such as display patterns, colour use, dimensions and proportions. Specifically, visual cues relate to packaging design and detail, perceived product size, product visibility and availability at point-of-sale environments, and the number of competing products offered to the consumer at a given point (Seo, 2020:3). Favier, Celhay and Pantin-Sohier (2019:12) confirm that packaging design is a means to communicate brand identity, and that the intricacy of the design influences consumer perception of brand image. The design of Champagne packaging specifically contributes to consumer experience and satisfaction; the visual aspect of the product is the main element indicating the brand's image.

Spence (2020:4) conducted a study in which participants blind tested a series of different sparkling wines and the visual cues of the sparkling wine samples were removed. Participants were given their samples in opaque black tasting glasses and were tasked with identifying the proportion of a certain white grape within each sparkling wine. The results indicated that no one within the study was able to correctly attribute such. Similarly, the pleasure obtained from each sample was not consistent with its price. A significantly higher priced sparkling wine did

not equate to higher pleasure (Spence, 2020:4).

- *Auditory cues:* Seo (2020:4) suggests that background sounds serve as auditory cues that may influence consumer perception, preference for and behaviour towards a food or beverage item. These background sounds manifest as music, conversation, noise or silence and occur within the consumption environment. The sounds made by the individual when consuming food and beverages, or the sounds made by the respective item's packaging, may influence the consumer's perception of the product. Specifically, the authors make mention of the "popping" sound made by carbonated beverages (Zampini & Spence, 2010:64).
- *Olfactory cues:* Timmins, Kroukamp, Paulsen and Pretorius (2020:1) confirm that a consumer's sense of smell has a significant influence over their multisensory perception of taste and subsequent enjoyment of their food and beverages. Within the wine industry, olfactory cues are identified as "smell", "aroma", "fragrance", "odour", "scent" and "bouquet", and are used to indicate the origin of the wine. Although a consumer's sense of flavour consists of both olfactory and gustatory cues, the overall consumer experience of the wine is a culmination of the consumer's visual cues (such as colour, shade and aesthetic), touch cues (mouthfeel and texture) and auditory and emotional cues (atmosphere, mood and companionship) (Timmins *et al.*, 2020:2).
- *Gustatory cues:* Gustation refers to the process of perceiving taste. The gustatory system identifies nuances of flavour, such as sweet, bitter, salty, sour and umami (Obiefuna & Donohoe, 2023:2). Charters and Pettigrew (2007:1002–1003) present a range of gustatory dimensions which wine consumers are exposed to and use to assess wine quality. Taste is regarded as the prevalent quality dimension and is a direct assessment of a product's specific flavour. Experienced and inexperienced wine consumers have shown different levels of gustatory and olfactory sensitivity, therefore influencing an individual's perceived flavour (Sáenz-Navajas, Avizcuri, Echávarri, Ferreira, Fernández-Zurbano & Valentin, 2016:217).

Structural balance is regarded as the second most prominent gustatory cue when assessing wine quality, and encompasses the overall flavour, mouthfeel, intensity and alcohol percentage of the wine. It is regarded as the relationship among key components within the wine. Additional gustatory cues within the

wine category specifically denote the mouthfeel, body and smoothness of the product when in the mouth of the consumer, addressing aspects of product heaviness and occupancy. Concentration refers to the intensity and length of the wine's flavours in the mouth, whereas drinkability is the subjective measure of the quantity and speed at which a wine is consumed and the individual's preference for continuing to consume such (Charters & Pettigrew, 2007:1002, 1003).

- *Touch cues:* Touch cues occur between products and consumers when the consumer is purchasing, using and consuming the product (Seo, 2020:5). When analysing food items "hand-feel touch perception" is influenced and understood in terms of three categories (Pramudya & Seo, 2019:5). The first category relates to the perceived stimuli of the actual product's intrinsic qualities and can be prompted by cues such as physical format, textures and ingredients. The second category is concerned with the consumer and addresses the individual's physical sensitivity to touch and pressure, and the individual's psychological inclination that feels the need to touch products. The third category encompasses external cues that are connected to the internal product and are concerned with the containers and crockery associated with the consumption of the product, as well as the packaging thereof. As a component of branding, packaging is identified as key to affecting consumer perception by signalling cues of product weight, composition and materials used, as well as being a vehicle for visual design elements that shape consumer perceptions about the product (Pramudya & Seo, 2019:9).

2.4.2 Linking consumer perception with brand contact points

Kotler and Keller (2012:251) introduce brand contact points as any experience between a brand and its stakeholders that communicates information regarding the brand, its offerings or market. These exchanges can be positive or negative and can enforce or detract from the stakeholders' perception of the brand. Brand contact points culminate in a consumer's experience of a brand and form the core of the relationship between the brand and the consumer (Sharma & Sahni, 2017:22).

A series of brand contact points that culminate in the typical consumer journey are understood as brand contact patterns. Brand contact patterns exist among the brand and its stakeholders, and the subsequent relationship among the parties is a critical driver of

the brand's equity. Depending on the nature and context thereof, brand contact patterns and brand contact points within the patterns are not of equal influence (Klopper & North, 2011:168).

To determine the influence of a brand contact point, five variables are to be considered. The first brand contact point may be of significant influence within the brand contact pattern, as this exposure establishes and influences consumer expectations of further brand contact points. This sets the tone of what is to follow and may indicate what the brand's promise is and whether it can live up to this promise. The last contact point directly indicates to the consumer whether the brand lived up to its promise. The consumer may be influenced to re-engage with the brand in future which could materialise as repeat purchases or word-of-mouth brand recommendation – both materialisations prompt new brand contact patterns (Klopper & North, 2011:168).

Points of frequency impose an influential role on shaping the brand's identity in the mind of the consumer, as these brand points encompass what the average consumer is exposed to most within a given period of time. Points of frequency may communicate and reinforce different layers of brand information, and are often identified alongside a product or service's core usage and consumption process. Points of impact refer to brand contact points that stand out to a consumer more than other contact points within a specific brand's contact patterns. Points of impact may be ongoing, such as attributes of a brand's product or service offerings, or intermittent, such as attributes of a brand campaign (Klopper & North, 2011:169–170).

Points of resonance are brand contact points that offer a vivid connection between the brand and the consumer. These contact points inherently represent the brand's purpose within their function in the contact pattern. Points of resonance may enforce a brand's credibility and cohere with the different contact points to align to a single brand message (Klopper & North, 2011:170).

2.4.3 Brand contact points within the customer journey

Stein and Ramaseshan (2019:53) introduce six categories of brand contact points that a consumer may be exposed to. These are “brand advertising, retailer advertising, in-store communications, word-of-mouth, peer observation – seeing other customers, and traditional earned media such as editorial”. Brand contact points are further analysed by examining the ownership of the contact point. Ownership exists within the brand and

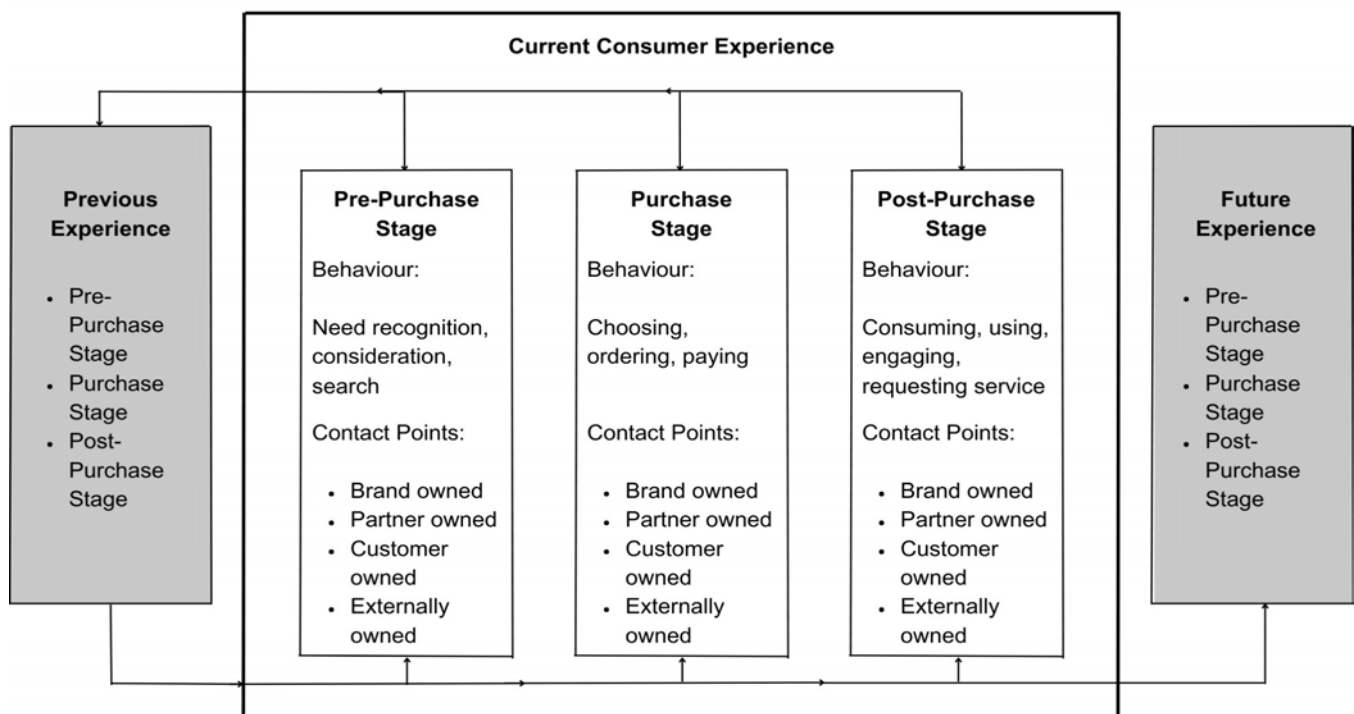
among partners, consumers and external independent social organisations within the customer journey (Stein & Ramaseshan, 2019:53).

The customer journey is understood as a brand's map of brand contact points that the average customer may be exposed to along pre-purchase, purchase and post-purchase stages. The customer journey is not a mere representation of the purchase process, but an intricate consideration that includes all interactions with a brand, including those of retail outlets and competing brands (Towers & Towers, 2021:321).

As indicated in Figure 2.3, Lemon and Verhoef (2016:76) explain that the customer journey commences with the pre-purchase stage, followed by the purchase stage and the post-purchase stage. When considering a consumer's current brand experience, all three stages of the customer journey are informed by the culmination of previous experiences in each respective stage. The pre-purchase stage occurs when a consumer recognises that a need exists that is to be satisfied. This stage represents the actions that occur prior to a purchase transaction taking place between a brand and a consumer. The stage materialises as a consumer searches for solutions, in the form of products or brands, to fulfil the need, along with the necessary consideration of the brands and products. The purchase stage refers to the purchase event between a consumer and a brand, when a consumer selects, orders and pays for their chosen product. This stage considers the environment in which the transaction occurs, as the purchase environment may influence a consumer's decision making. The purchase stage exposes a consumer to a multitude of brand contact points, thus increasing the amount of contact points the brand is to be judged on. However, a consumer may become overwhelmed with the number of choices on offer or may lack the confidence to purchase an item and withdraw from the purchase process (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016:76).

The post-purchase stage examines the exchanges that occur between a consumer and a brand after the purchase transaction transpires. This stage considers the environment in which the exchanges occur and encompasses a consumer's use or consumption of their purchase, after-sales service and non-transactional activities, such as endorsement or disassociation of the purchase within their networks. The actual product purchased is a vital brand contact point within this stage, as the consumer experience within this stage may prompt the consumer to re-enter the customer journey, consider repurchasing the brand and instil consumer loyalty towards the brand (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016:76).

Figure 2.3: The customer journey indicating consumer experience, brand contact points and behaviours



(Source: Lemon & Verhoef, 2016:77)

2.4.4 Brand contact points and consumer decision making driving brand equity

A consumer may experience a brand during personal perceptions and prior to fostering purchase motivation for a brand or related product (Chen, Chen & Ma, 2016:25). Yang and Chen (2018:403) explain that brand contact points indicate the brand's value in the form of attributes, advantages, distinctiveness and culture to consumers, allowing consumers to identify and associate these aspects with the brand pre-purchase, post-purchase and during consumption.

Brand contact points contain sensory elements, enabling brands to communicate brand value and information to consumers. By means of sensory processing, consumers attach meaning to brand contact points, and brand contact points are transferred into points of brand communication (Firat *et al.*, 2019:221).

Brand communication is interpreted subjectively by each individual consumer, and the various brand contact points culminate in the mind of the consumer to form brand perception. Brand perception relates to how a consumer defines a brand and influences

both consumer decision making within the purchase process and subsequent brand success (Firat *et al.*, 2019:221). Ozari, Spry, Theilacker and Vredenburg (2016:552) confirm that perceived brand image from a consumer's viewpoint is constructed by the associations formed in the consumer's mind, as influenced by every brand contact point they are exposed to. The alignment between brand image and brand identity is the fundamental principle of brand equity (Ozari *et al.*, 2016:552). Chen *et al.* (2016:25) assert that brand contact points should exist where there is relevant contact with the product, people, media and the physical environment.

2.5 Purchase motivation

A consumer's decision to purchase consists of interrelated variables, such as consumer lifestyle, product price and quality, and motivation to purchase (Herawati & Prajanti, 2019:2). Depending on the nature of the item, a variable may impart a dominant influence when motivating the consumer to purchase (Herawati & Prajanti, 2019:8). Li and Nagasawa (2022:875–876) characterise purchase motivation as intrinsic or extrinsic, taking into consideration demographic, geographic, cultural, occasion usage and product categories that maintain the importance of luxury brands to understand what it is that motivates their consumer purchases. The following section considers a consumer's motivation to purchase by considering various theories and applications of luxury purchases. The section commences with the introduction of Veblen Theory, highlighting how consumer demand increases alongside an increase in price. Purchase motivation for luxury goods is further considered in terms of related motivations, such as the snob and bandwagon effects considered alongside a consumer's value attribution to luxury goods. Uses and gratifications theory is used to underpin a framework to better understand a consumer's needs that may exist and the gratifications sought to satisfy these needs. To better understand how a brand may connect with a consumer to drive purchases that are a reflection of the consumer, The Motive Matrix is used and applied to luxury alcohol. The section concludes by examining luxury brand perceived value to better understand the influence of selected value attributes that may motivate a consumer to make purchase decisions.

2.5.1 Purchase motivation for luxury goods

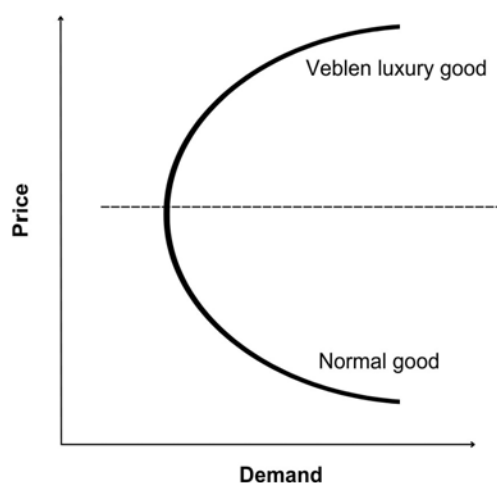
The Theory of the Leisure class by Veblen (1912:12, 13) introduces the notion that ownership and consumption of goods serves as a distinction between the leisure and working classes, conveying evidence of a consumer's wealth and prosperity.

Conspicuous consumption is introduced as the leisure class's consumption reflects their lifestyle of conspicuous leisure. Conspicuous leisure entails a lifestyle of social gatherings, clubs, sports, charity organisations, arts, drives and similar activities. The conspicuous consumption of goods denotes a lifestyle characterised by opulence and eccentricity, materialised by an individual's home, furnishings, trinkets, clothing and meals (Veblen, 1912:31).

The working class is to consume only what is needed, as luxuries and life's comforts are reserved for the leisure class. Specific reference is made to particular beverages, as these comforts are strictly to be associated with and consumed by those of superior class. The consumption of expensive alcohol is regarded as aristocratic and respectable, and intoxicating behaviour resulting from such consumption is similarly excused as the individual is associated with the wealth of being able to afford such luxury. Consumption of superior goods is indicative of wealth, respect and prestige. Therefore, consuming in moderation is associated with inferiority and failure (Veblen, 1912:36).

Bagwell and Bernheim (1996:349) explain the Veblen Effect in terms of a consumer who is prepared to pay a higher price for a product that possesses equivalent functionality to that of an alternative product of a lesser price. As indicated in Figure 2.4, the Veblen Effect's demand curve represents consumer demand for a product increase with an increase in the product's price. The Veblen Effect may be of significance when considering luxury goods, as luxury goods are not priced according to demand, but the price that consumers prefer to pay for the goods (Bagwell & Bernheim, 1996:349, 351).

Figure 2.4: Veblen Effect Demand Curve



(Adapted from: Bagwell & Bernheim, 1996:349; Leibenstein, 1950:189)

Leibenstein (1950:188) proposes that consumer motivation be classified according to functional or non-functional demand. Functional demand denotes consumer demand that exists due to a product's inherent qualities. Conversely, non-functional demand occurs when consumer demand for a product is attributable to qualities that are not inherent to the product. The external effect on utility is considered an important aspect of non-functional demand and encompasses the bandwagon, snob and Veblen effects. The external effects on utility indicate that a product offers increased or decreased value to a consumer, which results from the higher price tag of a product, rather than lower, or due to other consumers consuming or purchasing it (Leibenstein, 1950:189).

The bandwagon effect occurs when an increase in product demand is due to an increase in consumers purchasing or consuming the product. The bandwagon effect represents a consumer's desire to be regarded as fashionable, to be associated with an aspirational community, or to gain membership of selected communities. Conversely, the snob effect occurs when a consumer wishes to disassociate themselves from a commonly used product, as the consumer seeks individuality and exclusivity. The snob effect is a function of demand, entailing the decrease of a consumer's demand for a product due to other's consumption, or increased consumption, thereof. The Veblen Effect is a function of price and is referred to as conspicuous consumption. The Veblen Effect occurs when consumer demand for a product increases due to the product's increase in price (Leibenstein, 1950:189).

Majic and Majic (2011:133) note the importance of the Veblen Theory, as not only has it progressed alongside society's developments for the past century but it is exemplified in modern society because of such changes. In practice, these changes are understood as a result of globalisation and consumers' subsequent global connectivity, access to technology, media and information. The works of Wang and Griskevicius (2014:835) centre on consumer perceptions that lead to, and are a result of, conspicuous consumption of luxury goods. The consumption of such communicates status, wealth or discernment to specific individuals or collectives (Wang & Griskevicius, 2014:834).

Currid-Halkett, Lee and Painter (2018:85) emphasise that, while Veblen's theory of conspicuous consumption indicates that, when in effect, consumers purchase goods for social standing that possess no supplementary utility or purpose, it is to be considered that the value gained from such purchases is relative to whom such consumers are comparing themselves. Similarly, in the case of conspicuous consumption, the tangible good purchased is not of motivating value to the consumer, but the perceived influence,

importance and possible admiration and jealousy of others are (Siepmann, Holthoff & Kowalczyk, 2022:456).

Hung, Chen, Peng, Hackley, Tiwsakul and Chou (2011:457) maintain that luxury goods serve as a means for consumers to link themselves to their external environments by communicating their social influence. In context, consumers seek validation from their environments and may increase their consumption of luxury goods when exposed to an environment in favour and support of an associated image (Chen *et al.*, 2011:457). Chattalas and Shukla (2015:41) note that luxury goods deliver additional “social, personal and functional value perceptions” and that, while luxury is understood as a subjective term, studies indicate that functional and personal value have become increasingly important to consumers and may serve as predictors of purchase behaviour.

Wiedmann *et al.* (2007:5) propose a framework, indicated by Figure 2.5, to understand how consumers subjectively attribute value to luxury goods. The framework identifies a consumer’s antecedents to value attribution, which are categorised into first-order underlying variables of value attribution. These constitute the second-order underlying variable understood as luxury value. The value that consumers gain from luxury purchases is attributed to four latent luxury variables: financial value, functional value, individual value and social value. While these latent luxury variables are interrelated, each factor maintains its individuality (Wiedmann *et al.*, 2007:4).

The financial value indicates the quantifiable monetary value that the consumer had to part with in order to acquire the product. The cost of the product is the antecedent to financial value, as consumers make use of pricing cues to attribute a level of quality and prestige to a product (Wiedmann *et al.*, 2007:4).

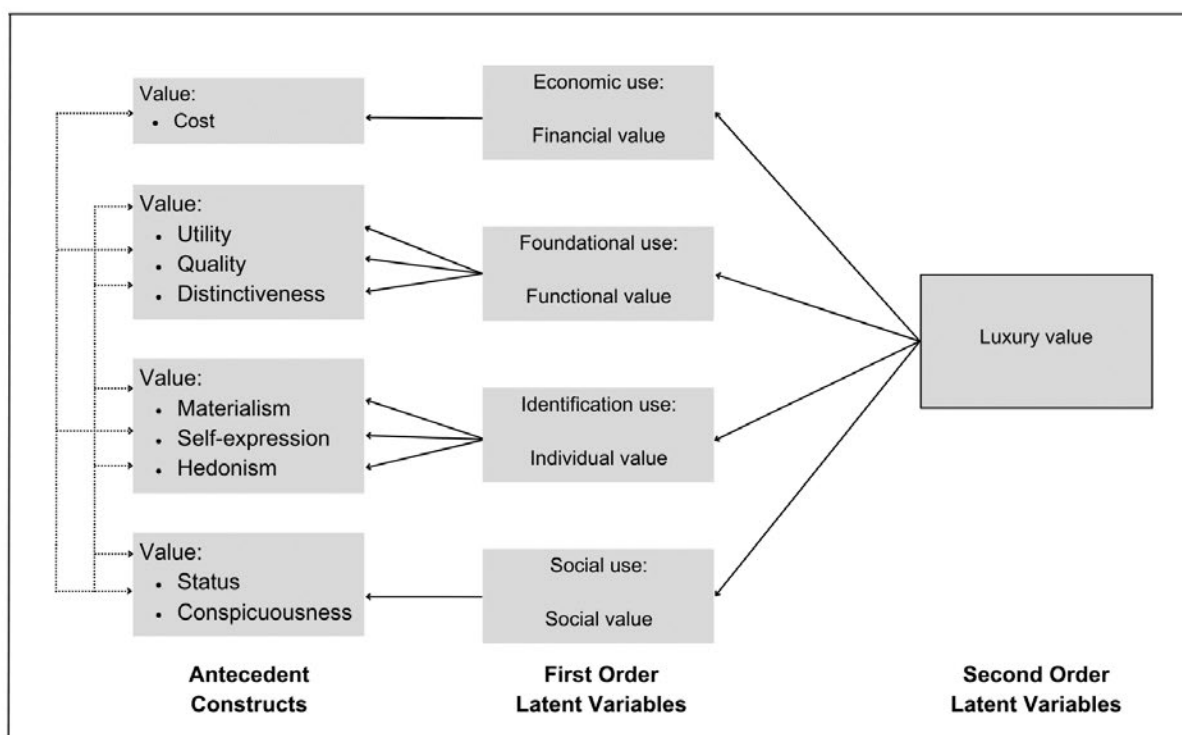
The functional value of luxury goods refers to the fundamental attributes and core benefits of the product. These values are materialised as quality, dependability and usability. The antecedents of functional value are prompted by the potential of the product to solve the consumer’s needs alongside the product’s technical specifications, its expected level of quality and desired distinctiveness. Consumers expect enhanced levels of quality and distinction when purchasing luxury brands, as the two qualities are often perceived by consumers as necessary elements of luxury (Wiedmann *et al.*, 2007:6)

Individual value recognises the personal inclinations of consumers as they use luxury goods to express their personality, materialism or hedonism. The antecedent constructs

indicate that consumers can make use of luxury brands to internally confirm or reject selected aspects of their personal identity, to simply provide positive emotional responses and feelings, or to satisfy the need to publicly own or consume goods for perceived status value (Wiedmann *et al.*, 2007:7).

The social value of luxury goods has a significant influence on a consumer's inclination to purchase, as it exists within the social groups of the consumer and is recognised in the consumer's perception of the conspicuousness and status derived from the purchase of a luxury good. The antecedents of the social value construct indicate that consumption occurs publicly, as the consumer uses the product as a tool to portray wealth and exclusivity, or as an indicator of the consumer's membership groups, significant values, lifestyle subscriptions or rejection of such factors in pursuit of status signalling (Wiedmann *et al.*, 2007:8).

Figure 2.5: Consumer value attribution of luxury goods: A conceptual framework



(Source: Wiedmann *et al.*, 2007:5)

2.5.2 Uses and gratification theory applied to luxury alcohol consumers

Uses and gratification theory (UGT) is a communications theory that is used to explain the means by which an individual consumes media within their environment in an attempt to satisfy their needs and attain their goals. The theory is outlined by five foundational elements. First, the media's audience is actively involved in the consumption of the

media, as consumption occurs to attain a specific objective. The nature of the audience's involvement is challenged, as circumstances in which media are consumed are considered alongside the purpose of the consumption and what the audience stands to gain from the experience (Katz *et al.*, 1973:510–511).

The second element states that the audience member's choice of media is dependent on the individual, as it is the audience member that makes use of the media and the media does not make use of the audience. The third element indicates that the need served by media competes with other needs to be satisfied. Therefore, the media's role in need satisfaction is to be considered alongside alternative ways in which the need can be satisfied. The fourth element recognises that audience members are able to account for and explain their interest and motivation regarding media usage to a certain degree. The final element states that the audience's culture is not of significant importance when considering the inclination of the audience's media usage, and that relationships and theories may be considered alongside this concept (Katz *et al.*, 1973:511).

The gratifications to be satisfied are understood as the needs that prompted the gratifications. Gratifications exist as diversions of emotional release, and escape mechanisms of daily life and problems. They exist as instruments of personal relationships, compensating for social needs and companion, and as extensions of the self, materialised as values, ethics, personality and behaviours. Conclusively, gratifications exist for surveillance, occurring as the need for knowledge or information (Katz *et al.*, 1973:513).

As indicated by Figure 2.6, UGT is applied and understood within the context of a consumer's need to purchase goods, instead of media usage. The consumer's personal characteristics, such as psychological factors, personal history and social status influence the individual's needs, motivations, behaviour and gratifications (Kuyucu, 2015:294). UGT commences with a consumer's need, as a need is central to the theory and prompts consumer behaviour (Gogan, Zhang & Matemba, 2018:20). Five categories of consumer need exist: cognitive, emotional, individuality, community and escapism (Tanta *et al.*, 2014:87).

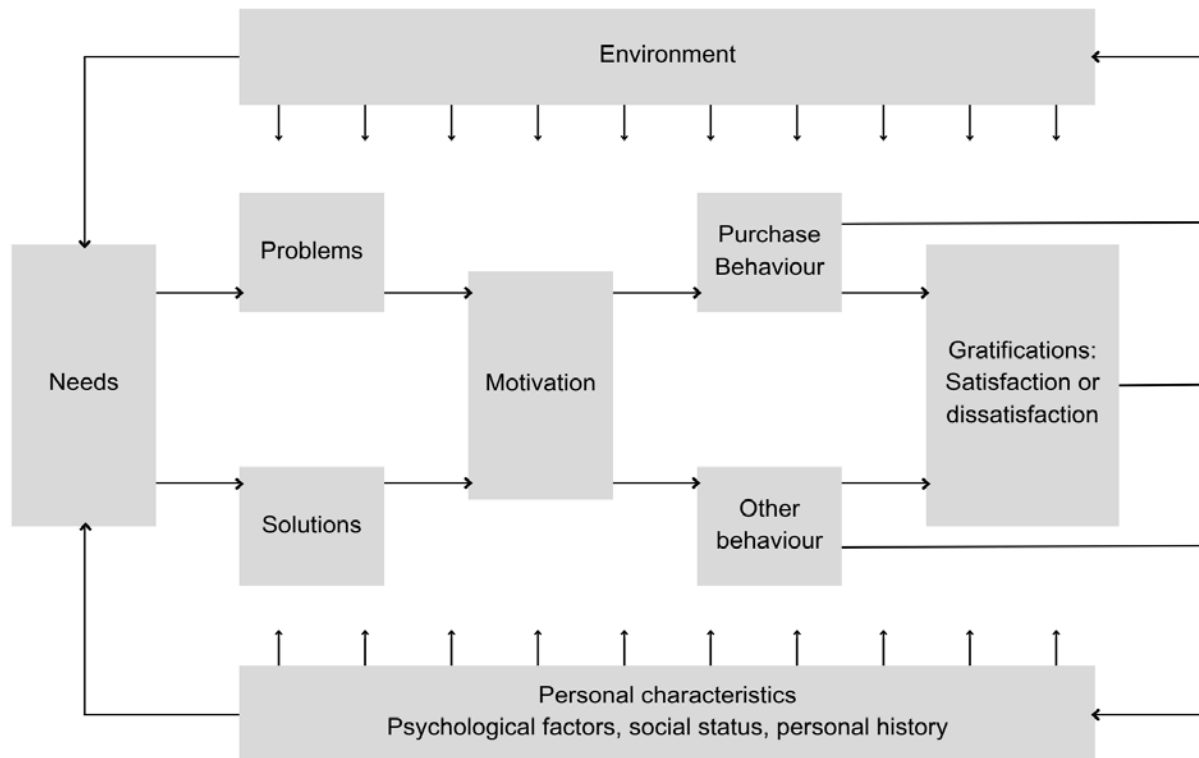
Kuyucu (2015:294) explains that a consumer believes that the existence of the need is associated with a problem and that a potential solution to solve this problem exists for the need to be translated into action. A consumer's succeeding motivation to satisfy the need is influenced by the consumer's reliance on the product, personal interest towards

the product and potential challenges in obtaining it (Ruggiero, 2000:10).

By applying UGT to the purchasing of luxury alcohol, the consumer's choice of product can be understood by examining the audience's medium of media consumption. An individual consumer's personal characteristics may influence their desire to purchase a particular product, as the consumer's personal characteristics shape their expected gratification to be obtained through purchasing the product (Krasonikolakis, 2022:2; Kuyucu, 2015:294). The gratification obtained from the product is subjective to the individual consumer; individuals can purchase luxury alcohol to fulfil different needs (Gogan *et al.*, 2018:3). A consumer can experience numerous gratifications depending on the context of the purchase and the individual's needs.

Lim and Ting (2012:50–51) propose possible gratifications as entertainment gratification, underpinned by the consumer's need for escapism, fun, aesthetic pleasure, emotional release and hedonism. Informativeness gratification represents an alternative gratification and encompasses the knowledge and information gained from the purchase, as well as the extent to which the consumer can make use of the information (Lim & Ting, 2012:50–51). Jere and Davis (2011:5) propose three categories of gratification. Content gratification exists when a consumer purchases luxury alcohol for the content associated with it, such as entertainment, functionality and personal development. Social gratification is attained when a purchase satisfies a consumer's need for communion and social engagement, such as friendship and relaxation. Process gratification applies when a consumer purchases luxury alcohol because they enjoy the activity associated with the purchase, such as the use of the product, information attained and self-development coupled with its use (Jere & Davis, 2011:6, 7, 15).

Figure 2.6: Uses and gratifications theory: An adapted conceptual framework



(Adapted from: Kuyucu, 2015:294)

2.5.3 The Motive Matrix

Consumers use brands to connect with their sense of self. Within this connection, consumers use certain brands of their choice to confirm or supplement how consumers sees themselves and how they exist within their communities (Tybout & Calkins, 2019:129).

Basten and Touyz (2019:1) define the sense of self as what it means to be a certain individual and how the individual experiences him/herself. The sense of self represents an individual's own subjective awareness of the individual's consciousness, survival and connection to the individual's own existence. Flury and Ickes (2007:281) explain that an individual with a weak sense of self is typically confronted with uncertainties when considering how they perceive themselves within the themes of who they are, their beliefs, their opinions and their thoughts. Individuals with a weak sense of self are often understood as less stable than those with a stronger sense of self, as the weak sense of self is associated with changes in opinions, predispositions, values and social groups. Conversely, a strong sense of self is associated with individuals who have a defined sense of who they are, their values, predispositions, opinions and have determined convictions on certain topics. These concepts are less likely to adapt to or coincide with another individual, as the strong sense of self is associated with explicit and enduring

personality traits (Flury & Ickes, 2007:282).

When a brand connects to a consumer's sense of self, a brand connects to the consumer's primary motives that prompt consumer behaviour. Three primary motives exist and are identified as coherence, agency and communion. Each motive is driven by an inward or outward focus (Tybout & Calkins, 2019:132).

The inward focus denotes the purchase of a brand intended for the individual consumer as the audience of the purchase. These purchases are inward transactions that allow the consumer to connect with the perceived associations of the brand, but maintain the connection within themselves. They do not seek to fulfil the purchase to be of value to others. The outward focus encompasses the individual consumer's purchases that are made with the aim of demonstrating to a social group who they are, or who or what they wish to associate with. The outward focus purchase audience is not the individual purchasing the brand, but individuals that the consumer wishes to communicate to via the brand (Tybout & Calkins, 2019:132).

Coherence refers to a consumer's need to confirm and explain who the consumer is and what they believe about themselves, and the possibility of seeking this endorsement from others. Consumers are subjected to the coherence motive at various stages in their lives and make use of particular brands to confirm their beliefs (Tybout & Calkins, 2019:132).

The agency motive encompasses a consumer's need to feel proficient and competent, as well as the achievement associated with this accomplishment. The agency motive enables consumers to communicate their abilities and achievements while instilling distinctiveness in their identities (Tybout & Calkins, 2019:132).

The communion motive represents a consumer's social needs, as a consumer seeks to belong to social groups and form relationships with others. Communion encompasses a consumer's need to be accepted by others, or the security and allegiance sought from associating with larger social groups (Tybout & Calkins, 2019:132).

To understand how a consumer may relate to a brand, The Motive Matrix (Figure 2.6) categorises a consumer's brand purchase within the three motives of coherence, agency and communion, while delineating the intended audience as inward or outward (Tybout & Calkins, 2019:133).

Table 2.1: The Motive Matrix: An application to luxury alcohol

		MOTIVE		
		Coherence:	Agency:	Communion:
		Fulfils the need to convey identity	Fulfils the need for accomplishment and capability	Fulfils the need for social acceptance
FOCUS	Inward: Brand consumption occurs privately; the consumer is the brand's audience.	Consumption of Moët & Chandon Champagne to support identity as a hard-working professional.	Consumption of Moët & Chandon Champagne after seeing a globally renowned model drink the product; the purchase makes the consumer feel fashionable.	Consumption of Moët & Chandon Champagne on one's birthday, because the consumer's parents used to consume the brand in such a manner.
	Outward: Brand consumption occurs publicly; other individuals are the brand's intended audience.	Consumption of Moët & Chandon Champagne to signal new identity of a hard-working professional due to a recent promotion at work.	Consumption of Moët & Chandon Champagne without hesitation or openness to alternatives to signal knowledge of superior and inferior luxury alcohol beverages.	Consumption of Moët & Chandon Champagne at a dinner with colleagues because all other members have ordered the brand.

(Adapted from: Tybout & Calkins, 2019:134)

2.5.4 Luxury brand perceived value

Petravičiūtė, Šeinauskienė, Rūtelionė and Krukowski (2021:3) explain that luxury brand perceived value is composed of functional value, experiential value and symbolic value. Perceived functional value refers to a brand's utility and physical product characteristics, encompassing aspects of product quality and craftsmanship (Petravičiūtė *et al.*, 2021:3–4). Functional value refers to the ability of the product to perform the utilitarian task that it is supposed to. However, in the context of luxury goods, functional value is primarily concerned with an acceptable level of quality, as well as a unique product associated with exclusivity and rarity (Zhang & Zhou, 2019:64).

Perceived experiential value refers to the meaning that the individual attaches to the brand, whereas perceived symbolic value encompasses what the brand means to others (Petravičiūtė *et al.*, 2021:3). The perceived experiential value encompasses the

consumer's emotional experience when consuming a luxury brand (Chen, 2023:240). Sener, Sen, Pedgley, Sener and Murray (2016:110) indicate that experiential value can be understood along the theme of personal luxury consumption – luxury consumption is for the hedonistic enjoyment of the individual. Perceived experiential value is relative to the subjective taste and experiences of an individual consumer and may be influenced by product presentation, sales representatives, environmental ambiance or personalisation of the experience (Sener *et al.*, 2016:110).

The perceived symbolic value of a luxury brand impacts a consumer's decision to purchase the brand, as the perceived symbolic value communicates to others the consumer's ability to afford the item, success and social achievements (Wei, 2022:279). Due to the distinctive and exclusive nature of luxury brands, a consumer may use the perceived symbolic value of luxury brands to communicate status, power or wealth to others (Chen, 2023:240). Qiu *et al.* (2017:95) explain that a consumer can use symbolic value to develop their self-concept, as brands are used to materialise abstract notions of the self-concept.

Luxury brand perceived value influences a consumer's intention to purchase a luxury brand. However, the level of influence is relevant to each aspect of perceived value (Petravičiūtė *et al.*, 2021:16).

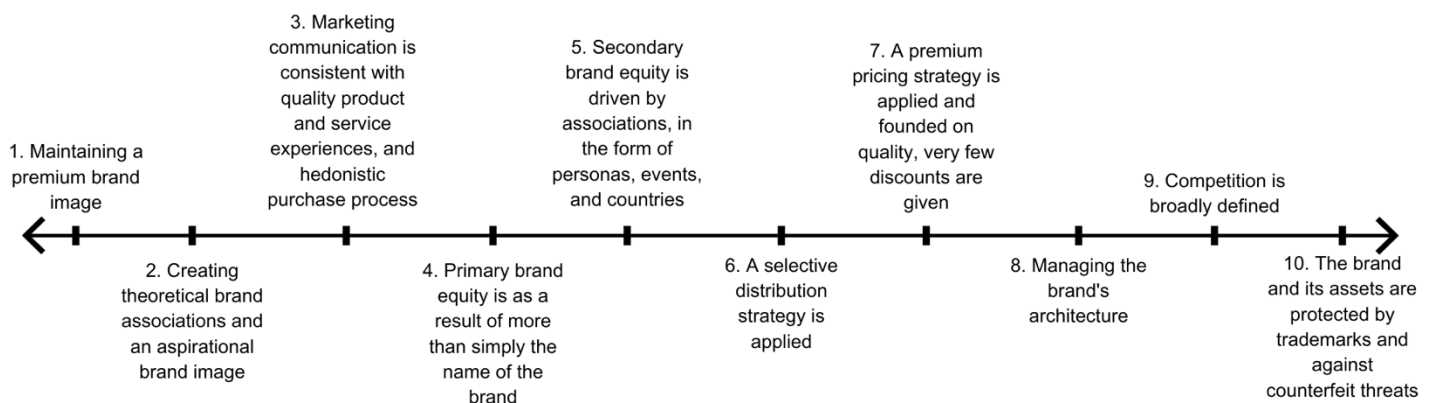
2.6 Luxury alcohol brands: An overview

Keller (2009:290) states that luxury brands represent the concept of a brand in the purest form. A luxury brand and its brand image are organisational profit drivers and value creators. The following section examines the characteristics of luxury brands with the aim of establishing a benchmark as to what is considered a luxury brand, thereby informing further luxury brand evaluations. Subsequently, luxury wine characteristics are examined to provide a deeper understanding and corresponding luxury brand attributes, to highlight an overview of typical luxury brand strategies. To support better understanding of how a brand may add value to a consumer, sparkling wine manufacturing processes are defined and explained, thereby indicating product similarities across different price points. The section concludes by considering the availability of luxury alcohol within the South African market, as numerous sparkling wine brands are identified and the prices of these brands comparatively examined across various sales outlets.

2.6.1 Establishing a benchmark: When is alcohol considered a luxury brand?

Keller (2009:291) and Kowalczyk and Mitchell (2021:439–440) suggest that luxury brands possess 10 characteristics, indicated in Figure 2.7 below, that separate them from non-luxury brands. The characteristics exist along a continuum and with contextual relativity to the brand in question.

Figure 2.7: Luxury brand characteristics continuum



(Source: Keller, 2009:291; Kowalczyk & Mitchell, 2021:439–440)

2.6.2 Luxury wine classification

To better understand and classify luxury sparkling wine brands, a study by Beverland (2006) is referred to, in which the author identifies six characteristics of luxury wine, as presented in Figure 2.8.

Figure 2.8: Characteristics of luxury wine

1	2	3	4	5	6
Heritage and pedigree	Aesthetic consistency	Commitment to quality	Connection to region	Production method	Marketing strategy emulating exclusivity

(Source: Beverland, 2006:253)

Although most brands have a sense of heritage, not all brands are considered heritage brands, it is a multifaceted concept and a subset of the brand's identity (Urde & Greyser, 2015:318). Brand heritage is understood alongside a brand's "track record, longevity, core values, use of symbols and particularly in an organisational belief that its history is important" (Urde & Greyser, 2015:318). The luxury wine market dictates that a luxury

wine brand cannot change its notable aspects along with evolving trends but is to gradually shift certain aspects while remaining authentic to what the product is known for (Beverland, 2006:254).

Thach, Charters and Cogan-Marie (2018:345) add that high price, status and sustainability are additional characteristics to consider when evaluating luxury wine. Luxury wine bears a high monetary price tag in relation to non-luxury wine. This price tag should be consistent, as the wine is to keep its value when sold at secondary markets, such as auctions (Thach *et al.*, 2018:345). Price as an indication of wine quality is to be considered alongside the notion that the price remains an indication of market demand and purchase patterns, and prices are therefore set according to recouping of production costs, the brand's image and the market's willingness to pay (Grainger, 2009:91–92).

Luxury wine brands are associated with tradition and distinctive anecdotes, and with services and product aspects of distinction, such as lasting product quality or exclusive clubs. This makes the consumer feel privileged to own the product and equates the consumer with a level of status. Recent studies indicate that consumers of luxury wine value the sustainability of their purchases, as they expect wine brands to respect the natural environment and employ ethical labour practices (Thach *et al.*, 2018:345).

Luxury wine brands employ marketing communications that focus on the brand's commitment to quality and discerning approach to raw material selection. Often associated with a high production cost, this discerning approach may include making use of the brand's own farm and subsequent grapes, attentiveness in selecting and processing the grapes, the labour used for processing and the time spent crafting the product (Beverland, 2006:254).

The overall quality of sparkling wine is observed in the wine's mousse, specifically referring to the consistency, amount and size of the bubbles. High quality Méthode Champenoise sparkling wines are associated with strings of small, pearl-like bubbles and are indicative of a product made through accurate processing in cool conditions and slow bottled secondary fermentation. The less expensive Martinotti-Charvat method is typically associated with fewer bubbles of inconsistent patterns. When consuming sparkling wine, inferior quality is associated with aggressive feeling bubbles, whereas a good sparkling wine denotes a creamy sensation and balanced carbonation (Grainger, 2009:54).

Wine industry marketing has focused on forming the consumer perception that the regional origin of the wine has an effect on quality, thereby leveraging the brand's location to enhance its product image and commercial value (Marangon & Kallithraka, 2021:1). Notably, when evaluating luxury wine purchases, the wine's region is considered by the consumer alongside the grape variety, indicative of taste, as well as the visual information conveyed by the product label (Wright, Yoon, Morrison & Šegota, 2022).

The majority of luxury wine consumers are primarily interested in the method of production due to the process revealing what the wine was made from. This production process indicates to consumers the origin of the wine, detailing whether the grapes are grown by the producer (brand) or procured externally, and whether the final product was a true and pure reflection of the wine's region or blended with various vineyards' grapes. Notably, consumers of luxury wine brands value the individual creating the wine, appreciating the identification of the individual and connecting such to the respective production method (Beverland, 2006:256).

To maintain their value, luxury wine brands communicate scarcity, authenticity, status and integrity that align with the brand's heritage and image (Beverland, 2006:256). Kapferer and Bastien (2009:476–477) indicate that “luxury” is a strategy used by organisations and that the strategy defies the conventional principles of marketing. Nagasawa (2009:22) supports this notion, indicating that the four P's (product, price, place and promotion) of marketing are not always conventionally approached by successful luxury brands.

This same author illustrates the luxury marketing approach in which luxury brands may limit the supply of selected products despite existing demand, they do not compromise on raw material standards and they maintain in-house production. Luxury brands limit sales, discounting and bundled product packages to preserve consistent pricing for all consumers and to charge prestige pricing. To support the sale of authentic products, luxury brand's control the sales channels through which their products are sold. Controlling these channels cultivates consumer trust in the brand, as the products are sold at consistent pricing with surety of the product's origin. This approach reinforces the luxury image of the brand, as prime locations are selected for distribution. Although luxury brands make use of paid mass media, stringent brand guidelines are applied to ensure the brand is experienced by the right audience and the correct message is conveyed. Luxury brands therefore highlight the use of public relations and consumer brand experiences to promote their products, allowing the brand to narrate an aspirational

image and add value to the consumer experience. Luxury brands do not focus on overt selling advertisements (Nagasawa, 2009:34).

2.6.3 Sparkling wine classification according to region and processes

According to Mafata, Buica, Du Toit, Panzeri and Van Jaarsveld (2018:132), sparkling wine is categorised according to geographic origin and the procedure followed to create the product. Due to a law passed in 1927, for a sparkling wine to be labelled as 'Champagne' it is to follow the traditional French fermentation method known as *Méthode Champenoise* and must originate from the French region of Champagne (Comité Champagne, 2023). *Méthode Champenoise* commences as grapes are harvested and gently pressed to attain grape juice (referred to as must). The must undergoes a pre-blending process and is stored in tanks for two or three weeks to undergo alcoholic fermentation, thereafter producing base wines (Cellier, Bérail, Barre, Epova, Ronzani, Van Leeuwen, Milcent, Ors & Donard, 2021:31). Base wines are blended at the discretion of the winemaker. The wines are then bottled with added sugar and yeast to commence the secondary fermentation process. Upon completion of secondary fermentation several months later, the bottles are stored with the dead yeast and bentonite for one to seven years. The yeast, bentonite and further sediments are disgorged from the bottle; these compounds are frozen with liquid nitrogen and naturally ejected as they settle at the neck of the bottle (Cellier *et al.*, 2021:2). Upon completion, bottles are topped up, corked and are sellable (Cellier *et al.*, 2021:31).

Méthode Cap Classique, also known as MCC, similarly follows the *Méthode Champenoise* method but geographically originates from South Africa (Mafata *et al.*, 2018:132). Established in 1992 (Mafata *et al.*, 2018:132), The Cap Classique Producers Association (CCPA) created the term 'MCC' as a means to standardise and recognise the product and its processes, locally and internationally (Cap Classique Producers Association, [n.d.]). The CCPA exists to ensure that quality and technical standards are established for the production of MCC and that winemakers approve of the base wines used for said production (Cap Classique Producers Association, [n.d.]).

Prosecco denotes sparkling and semi-sparkling white wine of Italian origin and process, following the Martinotti-Charvat or Italian Method (Thiene, Scarpa, Galletto & Boatto, 2013:526). Following similar primary harvesting and fermentation processes of the *Méthode Champenoise* method, the secondary fermentation of the Martinotti-Charvat method ensues when the base wines are transferred to stainless steel kegs, to be fed

yeast and sugar for further fermentation to desired levels, and then to be bottled from the keg (Škrab, Sivilotti, Comuzzo, Voce, Degano, Carlin, Arapitsas, Masuero & Vrhovšek, 2021:17). Carbonated wine is created by directly injecting the base wines with carbon dioxide (Culbert, Ristic, Ovington, Saliba & Wilkinson, 2017:170).

Sparkling wines made according to the Méthode Champenoise method are described as complex and textured, exhibiting caramel, nutty, biscuit and bread-like aromas due to their exposure to yeast. Conversely, sparkling wines made according to the Martinotti-Charmat method or method of direct carbonation are described as having enhanced fruit-like qualities (Culbert *et al.*, 2017:170).

2.6.4 The availability of luxury alcohol brands in South Africa

Within the South African alcohol market, out-of-home and at-home consumption prices ranked from highest to lowest indicate that brandy, whiskey and sparkling wine are the most expensive alcohol categories in the country (Statista, 2023c). Notably, the gin category indicated a higher variance between out-of-home and at-home consumption prices than these categories (Statista, 2023c). For the purpose of the study, it is therefore inferred that brandy, whiskey, sparkling wine and gin are considered luxury alcohol in South Africa. The focus of this study is sparkling wine and therefore a comparison of on-consumption and off-consumption prices for global Champagne brands and South African MCC brands was made according to Table 2.2, based on prices from various South African liquor shops and venues as per (Arcade Café, [n.d.]; Asoka, [n.d.]; Bar Keeper, 2023; Café Caprice, 2022; Checkers Liquor Shop, 2023; Grand Pavilion, 2023; Norman Goodfellows, 2023).

Table 2.2: A comparison of on-consumption and off-consumption prices for Champagne brands Méthode Cap Classique brands in South Africa

	Price in ZAR						
750 ml Product	Retail Outlet Online Store: Off-Consumption			Hospitality Venue: On-Consumption			
	Bar Keeper	Norman Goodfellows	Checkers Liquor Shop	Grand Pavilion: Pavilion Bar	Asoka	Arcade Café	Café Caprice
Champagne							
Louis	6 999,00	5 995,00	5 999,00	10 800,00	23 000,00		

Roederer Cristal Brut							
Armand De Brignac Brut Gold	5 999,00	5 899,00	5 999,00	11 500,00			
Dom Pérignon	4 199,00			6 500,00	9 550,00	9 000,00	8 500,00
Veuve Cliquot Rich	1 099,00		1 099,99	2 500,00	2 700,00		2 800,00
Veuve Cliquot Yellow Label NV	779,00		769,99	2 000,00	SQ	2 200,00	2 000,00
Moët & Chandon Imperial Rosé	869,00	849,00	869,99	2 200,00	2 150,00	2 300,00	2 250,00
Moët & Chandon Brut	699,00	659,00	699,99	1 850,00	1 850,00	1 900,00	1 800,00
Méthode Cap Classique (MCC)							
L'Ormarins Private Cuvée		519,00		1 200,00			1 100,00
Boschendal Brut Rosé	209,00	195,00	194,99				460,00
Krone Borealis Cuvée Brut	200,00	199,00	194,00		495,00		
Simonsig Kaapse Vonkel Brut	192,00	189,00	189,00	520,00			
Pongrácz Desiderius		539,00	450,99				1 100,00
Pongrácz Brut Rosé	189,00	179,00	189,00	455,00			460,00
Prosecco							
Martini	235,00	219,00		570,00	540,00	575,00	480,00

(Adapted from: Arcade Café, ([n.d.]); Asoka, ([n.d.]); Bar Keeper, 2023; Café Caprice, 2022; Checkers Liquor Shop, 2023; Grand Pavilion, 2023; Norman Goodfellows, 2023)

2.7 Conclusion

The literature review commenced with the introduction of product quality and its associated concepts. To establish a better understanding of product quality, product quality was presented as a concept that seeks to solve consumer needs and satisfy consumer expectations (Agyekum *et al.*, 2015:26). The various cues that a consumer may use to evaluate product quality were examined, along with the five layers that make up a product, supported by comparatively depicting the five product layers applied to sparkling wine products.

The concept of a brand was defined along with related concepts of brand identity, brand equity and brand value. As a central theme of this study, brand value was highlighted through the brand equity/brand value conceptual framework (Raggio & Leone, 2006:390). The framework explores the various concepts that contribute to brand equity as a driver of brand value, and provides the foundation to introducing the meaning of brand value to consumers.

To better understand what influences consumer perception and decision making, perception was defined and the shaping thereof was explored. By considering the various sensory stimuli that may influence a consumer's perception of wine, the section provided an insightful, useful body of work upon which the research was conducted. Brand contact points were presented to locate a consumer's exposure to a brand within the customer journey and provide the context of what may contribute to a consumer's perception of a brand, and when certain brand contact points are of more influence when making decisions.

As a central theme of this study, purchase motivation was discussed, considering various authors and their contributions to provide an in-depth understanding of what may influence a consumer's decision to purchase. The section commenced with the introduction of Veblen Theory and how increased pricing affects demand. Consumer motivation was further explored alongside the concept of demand with explanations of the snob and bandwagon effects. To better understand and categorise consumer purchases of luxury goods, a figure illustrating consumer value attribution to luxury goods (Wiedmann *et al.*, 2007:7) was presented, indicating the constructs and variables that influence a consumer to purchase a luxury good. Uses and gratifications theory by Katz *et al.* (1973) was used to introduce the underpinning theoretical framework of this study. The Motive Matrix (Tybout & Calkins, 2019:134) was explained and applied to luxury

sparkling wine. The section concluded with the concepts that constitute luxury brand perceived value.

Luxury brand attributes were highlighted and, to add context to the study, the theory focused on luxury wine specifically. To indicate possible consumer perceptions towards quality, luxury brand strategies were discussed, and an overview of how different sparkling wine is produced was provided. The literature review concluded with various sparkling wine brands comparatively considered in a table, highlighting the difference in cost when purchasing at on-consumption or off-consumption venues. The following chapter describes the research methodology that was implemented for this study. It is supported by academic literature which justifies the choice of methodology for this study.

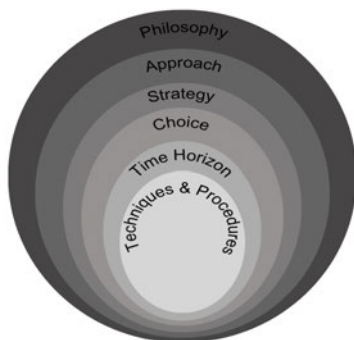
Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

By using Saunders *et al.*'s (2007:102) research onion, as indicated in Figure 3.1, the following section systematically introduces and explains the relevant considerations relating to the philosophical underpinnings, approach and design of this research. The chapter is structured by categorising the relevant concepts alongside the themes presented in Figure 3.1, explaining the choice of selected concepts and techniques and, where appropriate, relevant applications and limitations. The chapter commences with a foundational discussion of the research philosophy, supported by relevant concepts and applications of the research paradigm, epistemology, ontology, axiology, metatheoretical position and methodological position. Potential research approaches are described, detailing the approach of this study, and they are supplemented with an applied figure.

The research design is presented as the research purpose is proclaimed, indicating the usefulness of the study and what it aims to achieve. The research design applies uses and gratifications theory as an underpinning research strategy. To conclude the research design, the methodological choice of the research and time horizons are discussed with the reason for selected concepts. To conclude the research onion, techniques and procedures are discussed, along with categorising this study's population, sampling, data collection and data analysis. Within this section, the concepts are defined and justified alongside the limitations of their application. The concept of trustworthiness is applied to qualitative research, presenting the measures to be taken to ensure the research findings are accurate and of acceptable quality. The chapter concludes by presenting the ethical considerations that have been adhered to, and the potential ethical challenges that could have arisen during this study and how they were overcome.

Figure 3.1: The research onion



(Adapted from: Saunders *et al.*, 2007:102)

3.2 Research philosophy

According to Saunders *et al.* (2007:101), a research philosophy considers the evolution and the characteristics of the type of knowledge. A research philosophy serves as the foundation for the research strategy and research methods. It is predominantly influenced by the researcher's perspective of the association between knowledge and the means from which it is generated. A research philosophy is influenced by practical considerations as well, but to a lesser extent. Various research philosophies exist, and while one philosophy is not superior to another, certain philosophies are more suited to answer certain research questions (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:101–102, 116).

3.2.1 Research paradigms

According to Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.* (2021:23), a paradigm is a set of beliefs that can be used by a researcher to indicate and influence the subject of the study, how the research is to be conducted, and how it is to be interpreted. Within the context of research, the term paradigm refers to the way a social phenomenon is analysed to better understand and try to explain the phenomenon (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:112). A paradigm indicates to a researcher the way in which the topic is to be studied, the questions worth investigating and the processes that are applicable to answer these questions (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:24).

A researcher can make use of a paradigm to explain their assumptions regarding their outlook towards society and science's origins. A paradigm provides the researcher with insight into how other researchers have approached their studies and aids the researcher in developing and understanding how to plan their study, the possibilities thereof, as well as the direction (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:112–113).

This research was positioned alongside the interpretivist paradigm. Interpretivism is a philosophical position that is concerned with the means in which humans try to understand the world around them (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:113). Interpretivism is underpinned by the notion that humans and objects are inherently different and need to be studied accordingly. The interpretivist paradigm argues that humans are constantly changing and are influenced by their environments; they need to be understood within these environments, not in laboratories as objects would be. The aim of interpretivism is for the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of human behaviour by looking at the world as the individual who is being studied would look at it (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*,

2021:35).

Interpretivism does not seek to understand causal relationships to predict and control human behaviour, but seeks to understand how humans experience their surroundings and what they deem to be of value and relevance (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:35).

To better understand how the researcher will be influenced by and approach the research process, the concepts of epistemology, ontology and axiology are considered (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:102) alongside the metatheoretical and methodological positions (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:24).

3.2.2 Epistemology

According to Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.* (2021:29), epistemology is “the study of knowledge” and is concerned with the origin of knowledge, what is considered to be knowledge and associated restrictions of knowledge. Epistemology encompasses the beliefs surrounding knowledge and how knowledge is conveyed to others (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2019:133).

Within the interpretivist view of epistemology, common sense is to be understood, as the interpretivist believes that it is common sense that directs human behaviour (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:35). The importance of epistemology is highlighted by Sekaran and Bougie (2016:29) who state that an understanding of the epistemological approach enables the researcher to better understand and identify with previous research along with the related choices made and their approach to knowledge.

Interpretivism is underpinned by research that is conducted among humans instead of objects. This epistemology recognises humans as “social actors”, indicating that human action is a result of an individual’s interpretation or external influences. The individual interprets the part that humans play as members of social groups, their own and other humans’ social roles, the meaning attached to these roles and the individual’s own meanings (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:106–107).

The interpretivist epistemology is founded on the intellectual traditions of phenomenology and symbolic interactionism. Phenomenology encompasses the way in which humans try to understand the world around them. Symbolic interactionism recognises that humans are continuously trying to interpret the world around them by interpreting the actions of

those that they interact with, which changes the individual's own actions and meanings (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:107). The epistemological approach of interpretivism recognises that what is to be considered as fact is a subjective matter, as the interpretation of what is factual is dependent on and influenced by an individual's information processing and context in which the interpretation occurs. Therefore, explanations can only be presented alongside the occurring social context, and should consider relevant social aspects, such as values, views, norms and background (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:36).

The interpretivist epistemology is argued as particularly relevant in the marketing and business disciplines (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:107). These environments function as a collection of circumstances and related individuals, and are therefore both intricate and unique (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:107). Due to the relativity of truth recognised by interpretivism and consideration towards context, interpretivist studies do not expect nor aim for results that are universally applicable or generalisable, even in instances of similar attributes (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:36). Due to the constant change and organisational uniqueness of the business world, the interpretivist view maintains that generalisation is not of critical importance and any sense of generalisability would ultimately become irrelevant as change occurs (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:107). Another challenge of interpretivist epistemology is that the researcher employs an empathetic viewpoint, as they view and understand the world through the lens of the research participants (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:107).

3.2.3 Ontology

Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.* (2021:30) explain that ontology is concerned with existence and reality, thus questioning what is real. Viewed from a philosophical lens, ontology categorises and describes a selected view; it studies categories that exist or may exist within a specific discipline (Baek & Kang, 2014:104). According to Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.* (2021:36), the ontological position of interpretivism believes that reality is a social construct, which is influenced by the meaning that individuals attach to it as they subjectively perceive it. The interpretivist approach believes that the world is dynamic and inconstant, changing alongside individuals' changes in perception. Interpretivism recognises that individuals experience reality internally. Individuals may or may not experience reality identically as a result of personal aspects relating to past experiences, culture, background and similar internal aspects (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:36).

Aspects of ontology are understood as objectivism and subjectivism. Objectivism posits

that, in reality, social entities can be understood as external to the individual, whereas subjectivism indicates that social experiences are a result of the individual's perceptions and subsequent efforts. Concurrent with the interpretivist view, this research was positioned alongside the ontological aspect of subjectivism, also referred to as constructionism (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:108).

As within interpretivism, constructionism indicates that to understand an individual's actions, it is necessary to understand the individual's subjective meaning that has motivated the action. Constructionism confirms that reality is a social construct and an individual's perception of reality is a result of their subjective outlook of the world. Within this interpretation, the individual interacts with the environment and attempts to understand and ascribe meaning to occurrences within the environment. The individual's interpretation therefore influences their actions as well as exchanges with others. Other individuals may therefore interpret the individual's actions as contextually meaningful due to their own interpretation and social constructs. The researcher's role in constructionism was therefore to find purposeful, worthwhile coherence and understanding in individuals' motives, actions and aims to better understand their subjective realities (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:108–109).

3.2.4 Axiology

Axiology is concerned with values and value judgements. It considers the contribution that values have within research, their influence in shaping understanding and what is of importance in an associated research paradigm (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:31).

Axiology focuses on ethical considerations and whether the researcher's values can be incorporated into the research (Sultana, 2020:98). From an axiological perspective within the interpretivist paradigm, the researcher and observed phenomena are recognised as interrelated and subjective, and the concepts cannot be detached from each other (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:110; Sultana, 2020:100). The researcher's values are important when collecting and analysing the data, and when ensuring its credibility (Sultana, 2020:100). The interpretivist view of axiology highlights the value of the intricacies of unique realities. Therefore, to conduct valuable research, the research commences alongside the awareness and declaration of the researcher and participants' values and interpretations (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:38).

The research acknowledged the importance and influence of these values and increased

awareness and value judgements throughout the research process to preserve the credibility of the study (Saunders *et al.*, 2019:134).

3.2.5 Metatheoretical position

Metatheory refers to the theory about the relevant theory used to inform the study. It provides direction and better understanding of its relevant concepts. A research study is to be built upon a theoretical foundation, and to introduce and explain selected phenomena to better understand fundamental concepts and outcomes of certain theories. By using applicable metatheory, the researcher can better process their thoughts to deduce refined, knowledgeable conclusions to discuss or explicate the phenomena to be studied (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:30).

The metatheoretical position of interpretivism can be understood as rich, detailed narratives that describe how individuals within the selected context go about their daily lives. Research participants are directly quoted in interpretivist research, as the research aims to understand the relevant individuals' values and meanings attached to the related context and phenomena. Similarly, direct quotes are used to support the informal and subjective interpretivist writing style, as the approach attempts to convey the participant's subjective experience to the reader (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:37).

The interpretivist questions knowledge alongside the measures of whether the knowledge is transferable, credible, dependable and confirmable. The interpretivist's metatheoretical position does not seek agreement from everyone with their conclusions, but the conclusions are to be both reasonable and justifiable. The limitation of interpretivist metatheory is therefore a lack of replicability. Replication in the form of reliability that other research may replicate the study and attain identical results is not important to the interpretivist (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:37).

3.2.6 Methodological position

The research methodology serves as a guide for the research to solve the research problem. It is presented as qualitative, quantitative or mixed-method research. It encompasses the relevant methods for data collection and analysis of the phenomena to be researched. The methodological position of interpretivism requires qualitative research, as the research's aim is to attain an in-depth understanding of various realities, resulting from individuals' perceived experiences and ever-changing contextual realities

(Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:37).

The in-depth understanding provided by qualitative research is facilitated by the use of words as opposed to numbers. Numbers are used within a quantitative approach. Words are used throughout the data collection and data analysis phases of this research. Methods that are sensitive to the context of the phenomena are used to support the in-depth understanding sought by the interpretivist researcher. The research seeks to subjectively study reality through the lens of the participants. Within the methodological approach of interpretivism, the research seeks to empathise with the participants, as the researcher involves herself in their social values and regards their own personal feelings and assumptions as part of the process of studying the participants (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:38). Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.* (2021:38) maintain that the researcher becomes the primary research instrument within qualitative research, as the participants inform the researcher about their lives.

3.3 Research approach

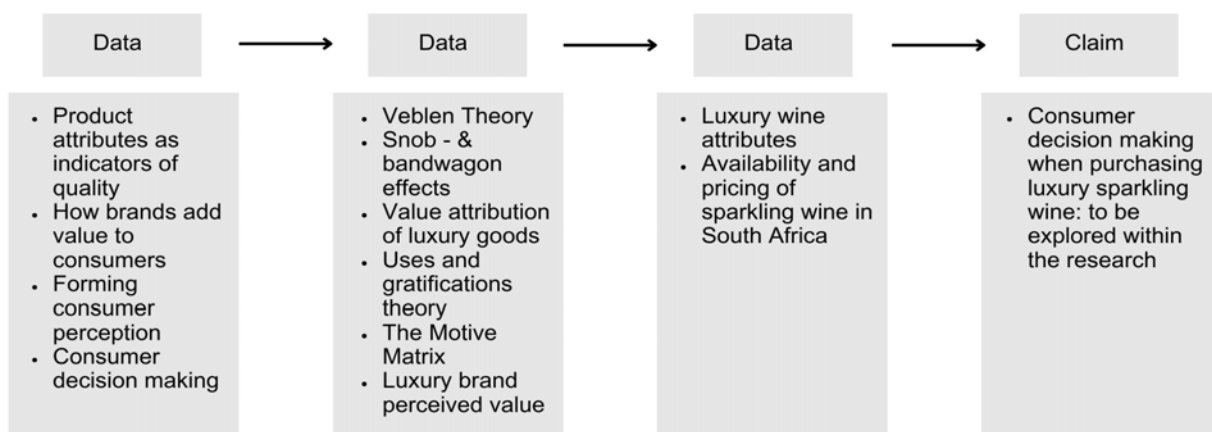
The reasoning employed by the research raised valuable questions regarding the theory testing, research design and theory development. Selecting an appropriate research approach is important as the research approach allows the researcher to make decisions regarding the chosen research design that are supported by knowledge. This knowledge affects the type and the source of the evidence to be collected and analysed, so that the initial research question may be answered as accurately as possible. Selecting an appropriate research approach enables the research to understand which research strategies are applicable and which are not, as well as realistically recognising the practicalities and limitations that may exist within the research design, therefore making provision for constraints and adaptations where needed (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:119, 152).

The research may adopt either inductive or deductive reasoning. Deductive reasoning is a pragmatic approach, in which the research uses theory-derived postulations to reach a conclusion (Saunders *et al.*, 2019:152). Deductive reasoning commences with a general view of the theory, working towards a focused, specific testable hypothesis that proves or disproves the original theory (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:26). In contrast, inductive reasoning commences with a specific approach, working towards a more general approach, as the research questions the specific occurrence of the phenomena. The general approach ensues as a particular phenomenon is observed, whereafter general conclusions are brought about in the form of theory generation (Sekaran & Bougie,

2016:26).

This study made use of inductive reasoning. Inductive reasoning was an appropriate approach as inductive reasoning recognises a gap in the logic between the observed phenomena and general conclusions. Inductive reasoning allows for the understanding of how individuals interpret the world around them (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:118). As indicated in Figure 3.2, according to Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.* (2021:127), inductive reasoning makes use of specific data and works towards formulating a more general claim. It recognises that human behaviour is a result of an individual's perception of their experiences, rather than an object that reacts mechanistically to its environment. Inductive reasoning emphasises the need to recognise the context in which the phenomena is observed, and maintains that making use of a small sample size is suitable to explore the differing outlooks related to the phenomena (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:118–119). Furthermore, concurrent with this study's research design, exploratory and qualitative studies often make use of inductive reasoning (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:26).

Figure 3.2: The inductive approach: An applied example of cause-to-effect reasoning



(Adapted from: Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:127)

The limitations of inductive reasoning are that it cannot provide conclusive evidence of connections between phenomena and conclusions, as with the deductive approach. The conclusions drawn from inductive reasoning are considered an “inferential jump” that may go beyond the presented findings. Therefore, while the conclusion may explain the phenomena, other conclusions may similarly explain it (Cooper & Schindler, 2014:68).

3.4 Research design: Research purpose

3.4.1 Research purpose

By categorising the research, the researcher better understands the purpose and objectives of the study (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:14). The purpose of this study was to conduct exploratory research.

Exploratory research seeks to obtain information that has not been researched previously, or where existing research results are not entirely clear, not much is known about the phenomenon specifically or in the event that the phenomena are to be better understood (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:14; Saunders *et al.*, 2016:175; Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:43). Exploratory studies are considered useful when seeking to discover what is occurring, thereby better understanding the topic of interest and the nature thereof (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:174, 175).

Exploratory research allows the research to explain and develop concepts in areas that are unclear, unknown or have evolved alongside social, technological or economic changes (Cooper & Schindler, 2014:129; Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:86). Concurrent with this study's proposed research methodology, exploratory research is suited to inductive research approaches and qualitative studies that use interviews to collect data (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:43). Saunders *et al.* (2016:392) confirm that exploratory studies which use semi-structured interviews apply an inductive approach which can assist the research to collect valuable contextual data and better understand the topic of the study.

Due to the necessary flexibility associated with exploratory research, exploratory studies do not always necessitate reliability and validity. The research must be adaptable to new findings and the results are not typically generalisable to the population (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:86; Sekaran & Bougie, 2015:43).

3.4.2 Research aim

The research aim of this study was to better understand perceived brand value and actual product quality as drivers of consumer motivation to purchase within the South African luxury sparkling wine market.

3.4.3 Research objectives

1. To identify attributes that enhance or reduce a product's perceived level of quality within the sparkling wine industry.
2. To determine consumer perception towards available sparkling wine brands in South Africa.
3. To determine how consumer perception towards available sparkling wine brands in South Africa was formed.
4. To determine how perceived brand value contributes to consumer decision making when purchasing sparkling wine.
5. To determine the need that a consumer aims to satisfy by purchasing a selected brand of sparkling wine.

3.5 Research design: Research strategy

Saunders *et al.* (2007:135) indicate that one research strategy is not fundamentally better or worse than another, but a particular strategy can be more suited to a specific study, the answering of its research questions and attaining the objectives.

Uses and gratifications theory (UGT) is regarded as an effective framework to better understand why consumers use selected media to satisfy a particular need, as well as their motivations and behaviours to support this selection (Karimi, Khodabandelou, Ehsani & Ahmad, 2014:54). In the context of the study, the media component of the UGT was applied to the selected luxury alcohol brand. UGT is best suited to the research design, as the theory aims to provide explanations for the reasons media (brands) are enticing to consumers, what motivates consumers to purchase the brands and the perceived gratifications gained from their use (Karimi *et al.*, 2014:54).

According to Karimi *et al.* (2014:55), the theory is divided into two parts to facilitate the understanding of consumer behaviour and motivation.

The antecedents of motivation are addressed by relating demographic, psychographic and socio-economic variables to consumption (Karimi *et al.*, 2014:55). The antecedents of motivation within UGT were examined alongside Wiedmann *et al.*'s (2007:5) proposed model to identify the antecedents of luxury goods purchases, recognising the individual value gained from the purchase.

Upon identification of the antecedents, the second part of the UGT aims to understand the consumer's motivation and behaviour (Karimi *et al.*, 2014:56). Consumption motivations are categorised as cognitive needs, affective needs, integrative needs, social needs and escape needs (Karimi *et al.*, 2014:56). To better understand consumer motivation and behaviour within the context of this study, UGT was applied alongside Tybout and Calkins' (2019:134) depiction of The Motive Matrix. This application integrated the needs recognised in the uses and gratifications theory alongside inward and outward coherence, agency and communion motivations of The Motive Matrix.

3.6 Research design: Methodological choice

Concurrent with the research's interpretivist philosophy of understanding social constructs of the phenomena to be studied, as well as the subjective nature thereof, the research was conducted qualitatively (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:168). Qualitative research often commences inductively, as the research design is used to develop a better understanding of the phenomena than what exists within associated literature (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:168). Qualitative studies refer to research that is collected and analysed through words rather than numbers (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:151).

This research commenced as a mono-method qualitative study, making use of a single data collection technique in the form of semi-structured interviews, and a related, applicable single qualitative data analysis procedure of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2021; Saunders *et al.*, 2016:168).

3.7 Research design: Time horizons

When considering time horizons, a study can occur as a longitudinal study or cross-sectional study. Longitudinal studies occur over an extended time frame, as the study commences over several months alongside monthly reporting (Cooper & Schindler, 2014:128). Cross-sectional studies are a reflection of a selected timeframe, as the study is carried out once to answer the research question (Cooper & Schindler, 2014:128; Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:390). A cross-sectional study may, however, span days, weeks or months (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:390).

This research was cross-sectional. It studied identified phenomena (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:200) of consumer motivation to purchase sparkling wine brands in South Africa when considering brand value, product quality, perception and luxury brands. A cross-

sectional study was used as it recognises the associated time constraints of this study and availability of respondents, while enabling a more cost-effective approach to the research (Cooper & Schindler, 2014:128).

The limitations of a cross-sectional study are that it does not possess the benefits of a longitudinal study. The increased time horizon of a longitudinal study enables the study of change and development over time, as well as the potential for enhanced control of the variables to be studied (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:200).

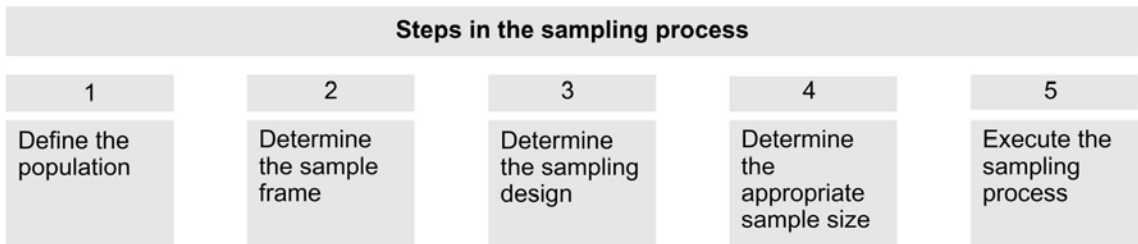
3.8 Techniques and procedures

3.8.1 Population and sampling

To commence this study's selected approaches to population and sampling, relevant concepts and their definitions were identified and presented to lay the foundation for the research's population and sampling decisions. Sekaran and Bougie (2016:394) define a population as the complete group of individuals, occurrences or items that the research is to investigate. Sampling refers to the process of selecting items from the population. Sampling is undertaken with the aim of generalising the selection to the population. Therefore, a sample refers to a portion of the population. The representativeness of the sample refers to the extent to which the selected sample is identical to the population from which it was selected. The sampling frame refers to the representation or list of elements from which the sample is selected (Cooper & Schindler, 2014:665; Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:396). An element represents an individual member of the population, whereas a subject represents an individual member of the sample (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:237, 391, 396). This study refers to members of the sample as "participants".

As indicated in Figure 3.3, sampling is a five-step process consisting of defining the population, sample frame, sampling design and sample size, and executing the sampling process (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:240).

Figure 3.3: The five steps of the sampling process



(Adapted from: Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:240)

The population for this study was identified as individuals over the age of 18 years who reside in the Western Cape province, South Africa. According to the Western Cape Government (2023:15), in the year 2022 there were 7 212 142 individuals residing in the Western Cape. Of these individuals 5 520 596, equating to 76.54% of the province's population, were 20 years old and older (Western Cape Government, 2023:15). The population for this study identified and included individuals over the age of 18 years, recognising the legal drinking age in South Africa. According to section 10 (1), Act 59 of the Liquor Act, 2003, a minor must not be sold or supplied with liquor (Liquor Act, 2004:15). A minor is defined as an individual below the age of 18 years old (Liquor Act, 2004:8). The sample frame for this study was individuals 18 years and older consuming or purchasing or consuming and purchasing sparkling wine brands in on-consumption venues in Cape Town's central business district. As the sampling frame excluded individuals who consume or purchase sparkling wine only on an off-consumption basis, coverage errors may have been present within the sampling frame (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:240). Coverage errors occur when the sampling frame is not identical to the population. However, the research recognised that the discrepancy was minor and implemented measures to minimise the impact of the error (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:240). The research did not redefine the population in an attempt to minimise the error but implemented additional screening questions applicable to the error to ensure that the population characteristic of off-consumption venue purchase and consumption was accounted for within the target population (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:240). Therefore, the additional screening questions were the following:

1. Have you purchased sparkling wine brands in South Africa from an off-consumption outlet, such as a liquor store or supermarket?
2. Was this purchase in the last 12 months? ^{*3}
3. Have you consumed sparkling wine brands in South Africa on off-consumption premises? Off-consumption premises refer to venues that the product was not purchased at, such as a privately owned or leased home.
4. Did this consumption occur in the last 12 months? ^{*4}

Notably, a respondent was not excluded from the study if the additional screening questions were answered "No", as the questions supported the inclusion and insights of the sample frame to more accurately reflect the study's target audience.

³ *Questions were only asked in the event that the respondent answered "Yes".

⁴ *Questions were only asked in the event that the respondent answered "Yes".

The study's sampling design consisted of nonprobability sampling, and used a combination of purposive and snowball sampling techniques. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2016:241), sampling design is an important consideration and the research is to review the following themes when determining the sampling design: target population for the study; outline of the study; availabilities of sampling frames; costs associated with the sampling design; and available amount of time allocated to data collection from the sample.

When using nonprobability sampling design, the elements do not have a defined or known probability of being selected as participants for the study (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:241). Nonprobability design was selected for this study as the design accommodates time and cost constraints. It requires less planning, financial contributions and time than probability sampling (Cooper & Schindler, 2014:358). Nonprobability sampling is further suited to this study as the design can be used in instances where the research aim is to conduct an in-depth, information-rich study focusing on the research question and objectives, not to generalise the findings to the entire population (Cooper & Schindler, 2014:358; Saunders *et al.*, 2016:297). Nonprobability sampling was used as a technique often used in qualitative studies, as the studies do not seek to make statistical inferences (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:265).

Cooper and Schindler (2014:358) explain the limitations of nonprobability sampling as the least reliable sampling design. The lack of reliability of nonprobability sampling is highlighted as the design lacks control to ensure the precision of the sample. Nonprobability sampling is considered technically inferior to probability sampling because nonprobability sampling is not intrinsically free from bias, nor can error ranges within the design be quantified to identify possible sampling errors (Cooper & Schindler, 2014:358).

A combination of purposive and snowball sampling was used in this study. The sampling commenced with purposive sampling, with individuals selected on their expertise in the subject of investigation (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:265). According to Saunders *et al.* (2016:301), within purposive sampling, also known as judgemental sampling, the researcher uses their judgement to include or exclude elements that will best allow for the answering of the research question and attaining of the research objectives. Purposive sampling was selected as an appropriate sampling technique for this study as it allowed the research to select elements that were informed on the matter of the study and allowed for the use of very small sample sizes (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:301). Judgemental sampling selects participants for the research who are best suited to supply

the necessary information or who are in the best position to do so. These participants have experienced the necessary criteria to provide informed outlooks, experiences and knowledge that contribute to rich, useful information (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:248).

Specifically, the research employed the purposive sampling strategy of homogenous sampling. Homogenous sampling recognises a single subset of which all members of the sample have similar characteristics. By focusing on a particular subset, the research can explore the subset in greater detail and differences within the subset will become evident. Homogenous sampling is an appropriate purposive sampling strategy, as this study aimed to explore elements of similar characteristics. The characteristics were identified as individuals who consume or purchase sparkling wine brands in South Africa. This study did not seek to focus on extreme cases within a subset to explain typical cases in the subset, nor did it consider the diverse characteristics that may exist within the sample (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:301–302).

The research recruited potential participants for the study by visiting on-consumption hospitality venues and requesting voluntary participation in the study from individuals over the age of 18 years old that were consuming, purchasing or consuming and purchasing sparkling wine in the venue. Potential participants were provided with an overview of the study. The research aim, data collection instrument, recording of the interview and the time needed from the participant to conduct the study was communicated. To ensure this information was accurately conveyed, potential participants were furnished with a hard copy of this information and the contact details of the researcher. The research considered that potential participants could be under the influence of alcohol at the time of the initial interaction and therefore requested the contact details of the willing potential participants to contact at a later stage, whereupon the participants were provided with the necessary consent forms and details of the study according to the guidelines as set by The IIE.

The limitations of purposive sampling are that it is not statistically representative of the target population (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:301). Similarly, the generalisability of the findings to the population is questionable, as the research makes use of a sample of individuals who are conveniently available (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:248).

Snowball sampling was included in the sampling design as a contingency measure, in the event that the initial purposive sampling did not provide the research with an adequate amount of participants. Snowball sampling was selected as it is often used when the

research struggles to find participants within the target population. It is regarded as an appropriate sampling technique for certain qualitative studies (Cooper & Schindler, 2014:360; Saunders *et al.*, 2016:303). Snowball sampling is a sampling technique in which participants refer the researcher to other individuals who have characteristics, backgrounds or outlooks that are similar or dissimilar to their own (Cooper & Schindler, 2014:152). Snowball sampling is regarded as a four-step process, commencing with the researcher contacting one or two elements within the population, whereupon the elements are asked to identify additional elements. The process repeats as new elements are requested to identify additional elements, and the process concludes once the sample is of the desired size or no new elements are provided (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:303).

The limitations of snowball sampling are that it has the potential for bias, as elements are anticipated to select potential elements that are of similar characteristics to themselves, thus presenting a homogenous sample. Similarly, the act of finding new elements poses a challenge within the technique (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:303).

Due to the social nature of sparkling wine consumption, the research used the participants identified within the purposive sampling phase, and requested from these participants whether they were able to suggest potential elements to participate in the study. To maintain a study of appropriate ethical consideration and value judgements, the research ensured sensitivity towards the initial participants' responses, therefore avoiding or commencing with the request depending on the participants' perceived comfort and willingness to share details of their experiences in the data collection phase.

Sample size refers to the number of elements selected for the sample, with the aim of representing the population's characteristics. Determining sample size is a challenging decision. The research takes into account six factors that exist as a function of sample size. These are the research objective; required precision; tolerable level of risk in predicting the required precision; time and cost restrictions; population size; and variance within the population (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:241).

Sample size is considered ambiguous when making use of nonprobability sampling. The choice of sampling design in relation to the research focus is of greater importance, as generalisation to theory is made rather than to the population. Within this qualitative study which used nonprobability sampling, the sample size was dictated by the research question and objectives, the information sought, what was considered useful and credible, and the availability of resources. Notably, the researcher's data collection and

data analysis skills had a greater influence on the validity, comprehension and insights obtained from the data than the sample size (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:297).

Saunders *et al.* (2016:297) indicate that a minimum sample size of between five and 25 participants is appropriate for both semi-structured and in-depth interviews. However, studies that do not require comparison among different groups can use small sample sizes. It is suggested that 12 participants are adequate for a study making use of in-depth interviews that aims to understand similarities within a relatively homogeneous sample and focused research question (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:297). Therefore, by considering the associated time constraints and semi-structured interview approach, this study's sample size consisted of 10 participants.

Data saturation occurs when additional collected data do not provide significant information or present new themes (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:297). Sekaran and Bougie (2016:266) explain that saturation cannot be predicted prior to the study, and that qualitative research continues the sampling process until saturation is reached. However, considering the time constraints, homogeneity of the sample and suggested sample size by Saunders *et al.* (2016:297), it was estimated that saturation had been reached around eight participants.

3.8.2 Data collection

This study used interviews as its primary data collection method. An interview refers to a conversation between two or more individuals with the aim of attaining information regarding the subject of interest. The nature of the conversation is guided, purposeful, concise and unambiguous as the researcher aims to establish rapport with the participant to obtain data that is relevant, valid and reliable (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:338; Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:113).

The research's interpretivist approach is reflected in the subjective approach to interviewing, as this approach recognises that participant's perspective and interview data emanate from social constructs. The subjective approach maintains that this socially constructed reality is due to both the researcher as the interviewer and the participants' participation in the research process. It highlights the researcher's fundamental role of constructing meaning, self-reflection and self-evaluation when interviewing (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:390).

This study used semi-structured interviews that were conducted online on an individual basis. A semi-structured interview is considered to be “non-standardised”, as the research makes use of a list of themes and potential key questions to be asked, rather than a predetermined, “standardised” set of questions. Within reason and relative to the research objectives and aim, the flexibility of a semi-structured interview enables the research to omit certain questions or change the sequence of the questions in the interview, as a result of the contextual findings and flow of conversation. The interview consisted of an interview schedule, detailing statements to commence the interview, themes and questions to be addressed, potential prompts to support interview questioning and discussions, and comments to conclude the interview (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:391).

The data were primarily captured by audio recordings of the interviews, with the researcher taking additional notes as required throughout the interview (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:391). The interviews were conducted synchronously (in real time) by means of electronic web conferencing software (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:424). Zoom was used to conduct the interviews, as it can record and automatically transcribe the interview (Zoom, 2022). To assist the researcher in managing the data after the interview had occurred, Zoom was selected for its capacity to provide closed captions of the interview, search for text in the transcript and save the interview as a cloud recording to share only with the relevant individuals while providing an additional, backup recording (Zoom, 2022).

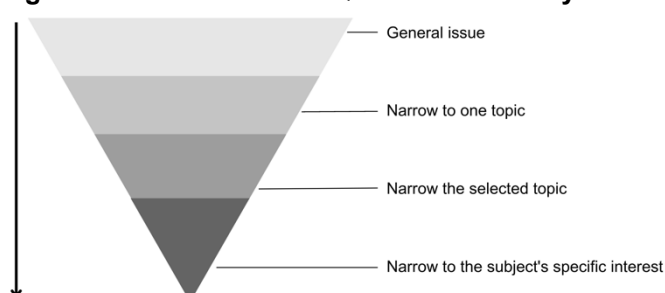
If the participant was comfortable, the visual capability of Zoom was used to enhance the interaction between the researcher and the participant (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:426). The initial transcription was done by Zoom’s generic transcription software. However, every sentence was checked by the researcher along with the audio-visual recording to ascertain accurate articulation and transcription. Any deviations were reported, and the efficacy of this research method was discussed in detail, thus contributing to the overall validity and reliability of the data collection strategy employed. The appropriateness of the data collection strategy is commented on in later chapters. It was foreseen that the envisaged data collection strategy would surpass all the expected thresholds associated with ethical research practices.

The electronic nature of the interview allowed both the participants and the researcher to participate in the interview in an environment of their choice that was suitable and comfortable, and not bound by geographic constraints or additional travel requirements. Collectively, the use of Zoom supported the research’s efforts to establish rapport with

the participants in an attempt to collect rich, meaningful data relating to the research question and objectives. The ethical concerns and measures related to electronic interviews are discussed in Section 3.10 Ethical Considerations. Prior to the participant's participation in the interview, each participant was provided with pre-interview information (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:426).

To support the research's attempt to obtain the required information from participants within the semi-structured interviews, the research made use of The Interview Question Hierarchy as depicted in Figure 3.4, which provided direction structuring the questions. The interview commenced with general questions that did not require intricate answers, with the aim of easing the participants into the interview questions and enhancing the participant's confidence in their ability and contribution to the study. Subsequent questions ensued, as the study moved from a general questioning approach towards increasingly focused questioning pertaining to the research objectives and aim (Cooper & Schindler, 2014:152).

Figure 3.4: The Interview Question Hierarchy



(Adapted from: Cooper & Schindler, 2014:154)

The semi-structured interview questions consisted of open-ended, probing and closed-ended questions. Open-ended questions permit the participant to answer as they see fit, thus allowing the participant to describe an event or phenomenon in an extensive and developmental manner (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:408; Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:146). Open-ended questions are useful when exploring the entire scope of the participant's outlook and occurrences that contributed to their formation (Cooper & Schindler, 2014:333).

Probing questions are worded similarly to open-ended questions, but employ a narrower focus, specific to the research topic. Probing questions can be used to better understand a participant's response by asking them to explain what is meant by a statement, thus encouraging them to expand on the topic. When making use of probing questions, the researcher remained impartial to the participant's responses (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:408–409).

Closed-ended questions provide the participant with a set of alternatives from which to choose their answers (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:146). Closed-ended questions are useful when introducing a specific theme and enable the participant's rapid response (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:408; Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:147). The closed-ended questions provide an exhaustive list of alternatives to avoid confusing a participant (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:147).

To support the questioning process, the researcher used various prompts to obtain a better understanding of participant responses, while being cognisant of ethical values, a stress-free environment and respect towards the participant. When appropriate, the researcher used various follow-up expressions, statements and questions, such as "Ah", "Oh", "Interesting", and "Please tell me more?" (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:409).

The interview schedule for this study is presented in Table 3.1. The schedule recognised the possibility that participants might not be available at certain times, and therefore made provision for additional timeslots to accommodate the 10 participants. While the interviews required approximately 20 minutes of a participant's time, an additional 15 minutes were allocated to make provision for unforeseen variables that could delay the interview, such as participant connectivity issues.

Table 3.1: Interview schedule

Date	Time
Saturday, 30 September 2023	13:00 – 13:45
Saturday, 30 September 2023	15:00 – 15:45
Saturday, 7 October 2023	17:00 – 17:45
Sunday, 8 October 2023	12:00 – 12:45
Sunday, 8 October 2023	15:00 – 15:45
Sunday, 8 October 2023	19:00 – 19:45
Tuesday, 10 October 2023	19:00 – 19:45
Wednesday, 11 October 2023	18:00 – 18:45
Wednesday, 11 October 2023	20:00 – 20:45
Thursday, 12 October, 2023	17:00 – 17:45

The questions for this study are presented in Annexure A.

3.8.3 Data analysis

3.8.3.1 The data analysis process

The collected qualitative data was automatically transcribed by Zoom, following which it was inputted into MAXQDA. MAXQDA is the software that was used to analyse the qualitative data. MAXQDA was selected for the data analysis of this study as the software makes provision for the analysis of transcribed audio and video recordings, pre-structured data relating to the semi-structured interviews, as well as text and tables that can be created in the form of note taking by the researcher during the interviews (Kuckartz & Rädiker, 2019:1, 3).

The data were analysed according to thematic analysis. Thematic analysis was selected for this study as it is considered a fundamental method of analysing qualitative data. Due to its flexibility and design, thematic analysis is regarded as an uncomplicated technique for data analysis, allowing the research to focus on meticulous data analysis instead of overinvesting time in alternative strict analysis options (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:580). Ultimately, thematic analysis is used to identify patterns or themes within the interview data that generate rich descriptions or explanations (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:579).

Specifically, the data were analysed according to Braun and Clarke's reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2021; Campbell *et al.*, 2021:2012–2013). The reflexive thematic analysis approach employs organic analysis of data, focuses on the results of the data and is independent of a rigid theoretical framework. It was thus best suited to this qualitative research conducted within the interpretivist paradigm (Campbell *et al.*, 2021:2021). Although reflexive thematic analysis is not dependent on theory or epistemology, it is maintained that theory and epistemology are still required by the researcher, but the onus is on the researcher to ensure the analysis coincides with the study's philosophical approach (Campbell *et al.*, 2021:2013).

The flexible nature of reflexive thematic analysis enables the researcher to decide what constitutes a theme within the data analysis, with the aim of addressing the research question. Classifying the data into semantic themes allows the researcher to capture respondents' explicit responses and interpret the superficial meaning thereof, whereas latent themes interpret the deeper meaning and gain an understanding of respondents' underlying standards, expectations and ideas (Campbell *et al.*, 2021:2014).

The flexibility of reflexive thematic analysis does not constitute deviation from methodology and, to maintain the integrity of the findings, the data analysis followed each phase of the six-step process, as indicated in Figure 3.5. The process accommodates the need to return to previous phases as the analysis progresses and as needed (Campbell *et al.*, 2021:2014).

Figure 3.5: An illustrated depiction of the six phases of reflective thematic analysis

The six phases of reflexive thematic analysis					
1	2	3	4	5	6
Familiarising of the dataset	Coding	Preliminary theme generation	Theme developing and review	Theme refining, defining, and naming	Writing

(Adapted from: Braun & Clarke, 2021; Campbell *et al.*, 2021:2014–2015)

The six phases of reflexive thematic analysis as indicated in Figure 3.5 are further explained below:

Phase One: Familiarising of the dataset

The purpose of phase one is for the researcher to become immersed in the data and to be intensely and confidentially familiar with the content thereof. Practically, phase one entailed listening to the audio transcripts and reading the transcriptions of the qualitative semi-structured interviews numerous times, while making succinct comments on any thoughts or concepts that were relevant to the dataset as a whole or as data items (Braun & Clarke, 2021).

Phase Two: Coding

Coding summarises and reduces the data by systematically analysing the entire dataset with an analytical, detail-orientated approach. By focusing on single, specific concept categorisation, coding identifies data sections that may bear relevance or interest to the research question. Coding can capture semantic or latent levels of data to be ordered as coding labels and organised with the relevant identified data sections (Braun & Clarke, 2021).

Phase Three: Preliminary theme generation

Themes represent broader, shared meanings and the generating thereof requires an involved, focused approach from the researcher. Themes are actively discovered by the researcher through applying knowledge and comprehension to the data with the aim of answering the research question. The researcher sought patterns among the datasets to create clusters of codes that centre on an identical concept. Preliminary themes were assembled alongside the research question, following which the coded data were assigned to the respective preliminary themes. Where applicable, the researcher kept informal notes and journaled from this phase onwards to support the final writing phase (Braun & Clarke, 2021).

Phase Four: Theme developing and review

Phase four entails reverting to the complete dataset to assess the relevance and suitability of the preliminary themes and the practicality of the analysis. The revision assesses whether the preliminary themes reveal important patterns or meanings in relation to the full dataset and coded extracts. Depending on the insights gained, preliminary themes may be discarded, amended, fused together or divided into new themes. Simultaneously, it is necessary to deliberate the relationships among the themes, and the existing knowledge relevant to the research question (Braun & Clarke, 2021).

Phase Five: Theme refining, defining and naming

Phase five encompasses refining the analysis to ensure that each theme is clearly defined and centres on a sound concept. It is necessary to identify what message the theme conveys to ensure that the theme contributes to the data as a whole, and to ascertain whether the theme is to remain or be omitted from the data. Each theme is to be supported by a brief summary and delineated with a succinct name (Braun & Clarke, 2021).

Phase Six: Writing

Phase six entails the analytic writing process by using the findings of phases one to five. The phase uses analytic writing to convey informed and insightful data findings that clearly contribute to the research question. Editing remains an integral part of the process on which the researcher focuses. The introduction, method and conclusion sections are written in this phase (Braun & Clarke, 2021).

3.8.3.2 The data analysis predetermined coding structure

By referring to previous studies that have applied UGT as a theoretical framework (Jung & Tom Diek, 2018:217; Falgoust, Winterlind, Moon, Parker, Zinzow, Chalil & Madathil, 2022:3–4) and applying the relevant themes to be explored in this study, Table 3.2 indicates the initial coding structure.

Table 3.2: Coding underpinned by UGT, integrating relevant theory and models

UGT Category	Applied Theory	Code
Cognitive	Five product layers	Quality, sparkling wine knowledge, sparkling wine brand knowledge, product benefit, value attribution
	Product attributes	Brand contact points, intrinsic cues, extrinsic cues, sensory experiences
	Brand value	Brand name, brand awareness, associations, perceived quality, consumer preference, brand contact points, consumer journey
Emotional	Brand value	Brand name, brand awareness, associations, perceived quality, consumer preference, brand contact points, consumer journey
	The Motive Matrix	Motive, audience
	Luxury brand perceived value	Value attribution, enjoyment, hedonism, symbolism, brand contact points
	Purchase motivation: - Veblen Theory - Bandwagon effect - Snob effect	Quality, price, status, product demand, value attribution, on-consumption, off-consumption, consumer journey
Individuality	The Motive Matrix	Motive, audience
	Purchase motivation: - Veblen Theory - Snob effect	Value attribution, on-consumption, off-consumption, quality
	Brand value	Brand name, brand awareness, associations, perceived quality, consumer preference, brand contact points, consumer journey

Community	The Motive Matrix	Motive, audience
	Purchase motivation: - Veblen Theory - Bandwagon effect	Value attribution, on-consumption, off-consumption, quality, product knowledge
	Brand value	Brand name, brand awareness, associations, perceived quality, consumer preference, brand contact points, consumer journey
Escapism	Luxury brand perceived value	Value attribution, enjoyment, hedonism, symbolism, brand contact points
	The Motive Matrix	Motive, audience
	Purchase motivation	Value attribution, on-consumption, off-consumption
	Brand value	Brand name, brand awareness, associations, perceived quality, consumer preference, brand contact points, consumer journey

3.9 Trustworthiness

In qualitative research, trustworthiness refers to the validity and reliability of the research. The researcher ensures trustworthiness of the study to support the accuracy and the quality of the conducted research. In qualitative research, trustworthiness is made up of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:295).

3.9.1 Credibility

Credibility is defined as the researcher's accuracy when interpreting the data alongside the participant's intended meaning or the practical interpretation of concepts that are true or false (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:295). Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.* (2021:295) states that prolonged engagement can be used to enhance the credibility of a study, as the researcher invests prolonged amounts of time with the participants to gain a better understanding of the participants and their experiences pertaining to the phenomena of the study.

The research used prolonged engagement to enhance the credibility of the study.

Considering the time constraints of this research project, the research applied the principles of prolonged engagement before the commencement of and during the data collection phase. The research ensured a deep understanding of the context in which the purchase and consumption occur, as well as the applicable theory of brand value, perception and luxury purchase motivation. Within the context of purchase and consumption of sparkling wine brands, the research ensured familiarity with available sparkling wine brands within on-consumption and off-consumption venues, associated pricing and brand- and marketing-related touchpoints that contribute to a consumer's purchase decision.

3.9.2 Transferability

Transferability is concerned with the research findings' applicability or use. Specifically, it considers the extent to which another study can be conducted in a similar context to deliver similar results or that the obtained results can be applied to alternative studies. The research enhanced the transferability of the study by ensuring that robust descriptions were provided when detailing participants' behaviour, experiences and opinions (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:296).

3.9.3 Dependability

Dependability is concerned with the cohesion between the method of qualitative data collection and qualitative data analysis. Dependability requires the study to provide meticulous detail that informs and enables other research to repeat, critique, follow or review the study (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:296).

To support the dependability of this study, the research presented and described the research design, indicating data collection methods and data analysis procedures used in explicit detail. This was supported by applicable theory on the use of selected procedures and the limitations thereof. These rich, detailed descriptions enhance the transparency of the study and enable the analysis to determine whether the chosen method and techniques were suited to the study and implemented correctly (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:297).

3.9.4 Confirmability

The confirmability of a qualitative study relates to the degree to which the collected data reflects the research's interpretations and findings, and demonstrates how clear the link is between the data and the findings (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:297). To enhance the confirmability of the study, the research meticulously described the chosen research design, which enables others to analyse and replicate the study to achieve similar findings (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:296).

The research made use of a reflexive journal throughout the research process to further enhance the rigour, confirmability and credibility of the study. The research practiced reflexive processing by continuously questioning potential biases and preconceptions that could exist and influence the research process. The research examined assumptions, experiences and beliefs to understand and reflect on the extent to which these could influence the research process, design and outcomes (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:297).

3.10 Ethical considerations

The importance of ethical research is highlighted by Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.* (2021:301). Behaviour and attitudes related to ethics have the potential to affect numerous stakeholders. The research was positioned alongside a deontological view of ethics. The research's actions were guided by rules, alongside the belief that deviation from these rules could not be justified. In the event that the rules were contested, they were to be re-evaluated accordingly, as the research would not attempt to act outside of the rules, particularly in an event in which the benefits could outweigh the consequences (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:240).

By considering the stakeholders of this study, the ethical considerations taken into account are presented below:

3.10.1 Ethical considerations relating to participants

According to Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.* (2021:301), research participants want to trust and feel safe with the researcher. They want to be treated with fairness, dignity and honesty. To ensure participants' interests were accounted for from an ethical viewpoint, the following measures and considerations were implemented within the research:

- Informed consent: All participants were provided with information explaining the research design prior to requesting their voluntary consent to participate in the study (Cooper & Schindler, 2014:31). Thereafter, participants were formally notified that their consent was required to participate in the study (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:302). For participants who gave consent, they were formally notified of their participation as well as what was required of them, how the results would be used, and the measures taken to protect their identities (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:302). All consent forms were signed by the participants and the forms have been kept on record, should they need to be referred back to in future (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:302). Due to the topic and questions related to alcohol and the purchasing and consumption thereof, all participants were over the South African legal drinking age of 18 years, as per section 59 of the Liquor Act, 2003 (Liquor Act, 2004:15).
- Voluntary consent: Participants taking part in the study did so at their own free will and were free to withdraw from the study at any time, or refrain from answering any questions that they did not wish to (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:244).
- Data collection: During the data collection phase, the research implemented various measures to ensure this phase was conducted ethically. Participants were informed that their identities would not be revealed in the study, and each participant was allocated a number for the research to identify and manage the obtained data after it had been collected. The research ensured that the interviews commenced at the scheduled times and did not include unnecessary questions, thereby respecting and valuing participants' time (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:302).
- Data collection and storage: The collected data was stored on a password-protected computer. The data was stored on a password-protected file which only the researcher has access to. The data will be stored for a period of five years, after which the researcher undertakes to delete the data. The data will be stored for this period of time to ensure the availability of the data to the researcher and supervisor throughout the dissertation submission's marketing and moderation process, as well as reference for the possibility of the researcher's further academic works relating to the topic of study and adherence to predetermined ethical considerations.

- Sensitive information: The interview questions focused on obtaining the data required to achieve the research aim and objectives. Participants were not asked intrusive or personal information (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:159).
- Avoiding harm: To avoid harming participants taking part in this study, the research avoided any risks that could cause physical, mental or emotional distress. The questions asked in the interview avoided distress, embarrassment or quarrelling with the participants (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:234).
- Anonymity and confidentiality: The research did not use the participants' names to link participant responses to the individual (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:305). After the data had been collected, the researcher did not use the participants' name to identify or manage the data, but used non-related numbers. In the event that the research was able to link a response back to a participant, the researcher undertook to keep the identity and response confidential (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:305).
- Deception: This study did not use any deception tactics in an attempt to reduce participant bias or enhance response rates (Cooper & Schindler, 2014:31). To avoid deception, the researcher accurately informed participants what the research was about, its purpose and what the research required from the participants (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:306).

3.10.2 Ethical considerations relating to the researcher

The research adhered to the following considerations to ensure the data analysis and reporting were approached ethically:

- Falsifying information: The researcher did not, under any circumstances, alter or fabricate any data. The researcher understands that the integrity of the data cannot be compromised and ensured that data collection and analysis were carried out honestly and that the research results were not manipulated to achieve a desired outcome (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:308).
- Distorting results: The researcher understands and undertook to ensure, to the best of her ability, the correct interpretation, analysis and reporting of results (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:160). The researcher did not deliberately exaggerate or

understate selected findings, or make use of numerical findings without the support of the applicable context (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:308).

- Integrity and bias: The researcher, at all times, behaved with integrity, understanding that the standard of the research was dependent on the researcher's honesty and transparency, as well as commitment to accuracy and objectivity (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:243). The researcher is aware of the possibility of bias and implemented a concerted effort to remain conscious of this possibility, thereby collecting, interpreting and analysing the data to represent accurate results (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:309).
- Information misuse: The data obtained from the participants has been used solely for the purpose of this study (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:309).
- Inappropriate research methods: The researcher undertook to use the proposed research design exclusively, as the methods and techniques were curated to this specific study (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:310).

3.10.3 Ethical considerations relating to the academic institution

To ensure the research upheld the integrity and reputation of The Independent Institute of Education and Vega, the research followed all guidelines as set out by the institution (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:301):

- The academic institution: The research only commenced once ethical clearance and institutional permission had been obtained and an ethical clearance letter confirmed such (The IIE, 2021:13). The research used the standardised participant consent form to ensure that all requirements were adhered to according to the institution's policy and ethical guidelines (The IIE, 2021:14). The research used the institution's audio-visual consent form to obtain participants' consent to being recorded during the interview phase (The IIE, 2021:14).

3.10.4 Potential ethical challenges

While ethical considerations were implemented to ensure the research was conducted with integrity according to best practices, the following potential ethical challenges were identified along with measures to minimise their impact:

- Sensitive information shared by a participant: In the event that a participant shared sensitive information of their own free will, the researcher undertook to keep the information confidential (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:713).
- Lack of participants: In the event that the research was unable to find a suitable number of participants for the study, the research refrained from using incentives to increase participation. Incentives were not used in an attempt to ensure the correct sample was extracted and participants did not respond to questions with the aim of pleasing the researcher (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:302–303). As a contingency measure, this research used snowball sampling as a secondary sampling technique to attain the required sample size.
- Respecting participant time and involvement: To ensure that the interviews did not waste a participant's time, the researcher was prepared for all interviews and designed an interview structure that asked only what was needed (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021). All interviews were scheduled at a time that was convenient for the participants, allowing for a buffer period before and after all back-to-back interviews to accommodate the possibility that an interview could run longer than anticipated or that an unforeseen event occurred.
- Bias: As the researcher's tone, choice of words and body language (in the event of video-enhanced interviews) can influence the way a respondent answers, the researcher endeavoured to maintain a neutral demeanour throughout the interviews. Prior to, during and after all interviews, the researcher reflected upon potential bias that could have interfered with the objectivity of the research as a result of the researcher's own outlooks, perceptions and frameworks (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:397).
- Voluntary participation: Prior to commencing with the interview questions, the researcher reminded participants that they were free to withdraw from the interview at any time and that they were not obligated to answer any questions that they were not comfortable answering (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:304; Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:48).

3.11 Conclusion

This chapter was structured using the research onion, as presented by Saunders *et al.*

(2007:102), which enabled the research to logically categorise the concepts related to this study's research methodology. The concepts were categorised sequentially, as each subsequent section was provided with context by the preceding section. The chapter commenced with a discussion about the research's interpretivist approach and application to epistemology, ontology, axiology, metatheory and methodological position. The inductive approach of the research was explained with a model specifically applied to this study, which incorporated the relevant data to be considered.

The study's research design reflected the research purpose, research strategy, methodological choice and associated time horizon. The exploratory nature of the study was discussed, providing an overview of the purpose of the study, as well as the aim and objectives thereof. Uses and gratifications theory was explained as the research strategy for this study and the theory was applied to indicate how this study was conducted by integrating antecedents of luxury value and The Motive Matrix into the theory. The research design further discussed the qualitative nature of the study, concluding with a motivation as to why the study was conducted cross-sectionally.

The final layer of the research onion, techniques and procedures, encompassed a thorough discussion of the population for this study, the sampling process, and two sampling techniques used in this study. Semi-structured interviews were presented as the data collection method and the section included the types of questions to be asked and technique according to which they had been formulated. Concepts relevant to the research onion concluded with a discussion on data analysis, indicating that thematic analysis was chosen for this study. Preliminary coding structures were presented by integrating relevant theory, underpinned by UGT.

Trustworthiness in qualitative research was discussed, as the constructs of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability were highlighted, indicating the measures that were taken to enhance the quality and accuracy of this study. The chapter concluded by considering ethics from the viewpoint of the participant, the researcher and the academic institution. Potential ethical challenges were identified along with measures to overcome them. The following chapter indicates how the collected data was analysed and presents the themes that emerged from the data. An overview of the sampling selection and trustworthiness of the study is considered alongside the data analysis.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis

4.1 Introduction

The following chapter uses the collected qualitative data to prepare, categorise and synthesise the data to be used to answer the research objectives and aim. The chapter is divided into four sections with various subsections. The chapter commences with a brief reiteration of the sampling techniques and criteria used, indicating the reason and utility thereof. An overview of the data analysis process is provided, linking its appropriateness to the research and its findings. The findings are presented as various themes, with each theme reported on and supported by participants' responses. The trustworthiness of the study is considered and reported on, conveying what measures were implemented by the research to support the credibility and reliability of the study. The chapter is presented incrementally to aid the understanding of the findings and context of the study.

4.2 Sampling

The study used nonprobability sampling design and a combination of purposive and snowball sampling techniques. The sample size was 10 participants.

The purposive sampling strategy commenced with homogenous sampling. Various on-consumption hospitality venues were approached in Cape Town's CBD to initiate the recruitment process. Supporting the homogenous purposive sampling strategy, potential participants over 18 years old were identified who were consuming or purchasing sparkling wine at the venue. The research recognised the subset of potential participants' shared characteristic of sparkling wine purchase or consumption.

The research also recognised that potential participants may have consumed alcohol at the time of the interaction. To ensure interested potential participants were of sound decision making, informed and able to consent voluntarily, they were furnished with an informal document as described in Section 3.8.1. The document enabled the participants to remain in contact with the researcher after the encounter, which enabled ethical data collection in the form of semi-structured interviews. A total of four participants were recruited using purposive sampling.

The research used snowball sampling to recruit the remaining six participants. The technique was employed by obtaining referrals of potential participants from those identified in the purposive sampling phase. The referrals were obtained prior to the one-on-one interviews with the initial participants. Excluding the participants' recruitment at an on-consumption venue, all criteria to participate in the study were identical to that of the purposive sampling technique.

4.3 Data analysis

The collected data were analysed according to the six phases of reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2021). The semi-structured interviews were recorded and automatically transcribed, and the transcriptions inputted into MAXQDA. To ensure participant anonymity, each transcript was given a randomised number bearing no association to the participant, such as their name, interview date or applicable sampling technique.

Phase One commenced as the researcher familiarised herself with the data within MAXQDA, by reading, listening and adding notes to the transcripts. The research used the coding structure as presented in Chapter 3 to commence Phase Two. To make sense of the data, the researcher created coding tags within MAXQDA and assigned an applicable tag to relevant concepts within the dataset. The tags followed a tiered categorisation approach, as presented in Table 3.2, thereby accounting for both latent and semantic themes within the dataset.

In Phase Three, the researcher generated preliminary themes by identifying patterns within the dataset, with the aim of answering the research question. Subsequently, Phase Four encompassed revision of the preliminary themes. Within this phase, themes were discarded, supplemented with additional code tags, merged or divided into more themes.

Phase Five summarised each theme to ensure each theme focused on a particular concept and contributed to the data as a whole. Each theme was appropriately named. Within the final phase, Phase Six, the researcher used the findings of all preceding phases to present the themes and contributions of the findings. The emergent themes and findings are discussed in the subsequent sections.

4.4 Themes

The following patterns were identified among the research participants' responses using reflexive thematic analysis. The patterns have been named and categorised into five major themes, as noted in Table 4.1. Where relevant, themes have been further categorised into applicable subsections and named accordingly. A summary of the findings is presented and supported with applicable quotes from the various participants.

Table 4.1: Major themes and subsections

Major Theme	Subsection
Occasion	Occasion associations
	Occasion experiences
	Occasion and need
Sensory experiences: Integrated perception of luxury and quality	Sensory integration
	Sensory preferences
	Sensory quality attribution
Perception towards MCC and Champagne	Knowledge
	Exclusivity and accessibility
	Exposure
Perceived brand value: Role and influence	Brands as expectation and experience
	Brands as benefits
	Brands as influence
Competing need satisfaction	

4.4.1 Occasion

i. Occasion associations

Participants indicated that the consumption of sparkling wine was associated with celebration, milestones, achievements, birthdays, social gatherings and notable personal or social events. Participant 2 described their association of sparkling wine as:

Usually as a celebration for someone's birthday or some good news at work or personal life, it's usually a celebration.

Participant 4 supplemented the response, noting the positive association that the consumption of sparkling wine holds:

... so that's the occasion normally like birthdays or the like ... we went out and got a bottle, it was because I passed my diploma. It's always kind of like something that is positive, like something good happened. And then you kind of associated with that, and you buy it for that reason, or it's meeting up with friends that you haven't seen in a long time, and you feel free and happy ... It's either extreme happiness celebrating a reward for working really hard and like passing something or achieving something, or it is something that's related to actually a very sad event. But if you drink that, it does bring back happy memories, because the underlying theme for me for sparkling stuff is happiness, and not like sad, depressive alcoholic drinking in a corner type thing.

Participant 8 shared the positive association towards sparkling wine:

... just happy times. Bubbly is happy times. Bubbly is happy drinking. It's not sad drinking. ... bubbly is celebratory. Bubbly is we're gonna have a good time.

ii. Occasion experiences

Notably, participants' recent sparkling wine consumption experiences were not solely attributed to celebratory events but associations of novelty persisted when consuming. Participant 1 described a recent on-consumption experience:

... not to mark the occasion, but as a little treat. It's like, we're out, things are good, to start the evening, just a bit celebratory, sort of like, life.

Participant 6 similarly attributed their recent consumption experience, highlighting the arrival at the venue:

It doesn't need to be an occasion, going out is the occasion. Champagne is a drink you drink when you arrive. You know you have 2 or 3 bottles, and you move on to harder stuff. I don't need an occasion. I just need to be out.

100% of the participants indicated that the act of consuming sparkling wine, both on-consumption and off-consumption, occurred in a social setting. When asked whether others shared the consumption of the sparkling wine, 90% of responses indicated that the bottle of sparkling wine was shared with others. Participant 4 indicated their preference for sparkling wine when in a social setting. Their personal preference for the

product was not influenced by others' choice of beverage but maintained consumption when surrounded by others:

... but they have it in smaller bottles. So sometimes you just want to drink it, but you can't drink the entire normal sized bottle. ... we'll drink together, and I'll just have mine, and he'll just have whatever he consumes, which is brandy.

iii. Occasion and need

100% of participants indicated that their most recent on-consumption and off-consumption experiences had occurred in a social setting. Off-consumption experiences were primarily linked to community and escapism needs. Participant 8 described a recent off-consumption MCC experience:

I was going to a friend's house, and we always drink bubbly together.

Participant 6 similarly described a recent off-consumption Champagne experience:

It wasn't really an occasion ... with my friend ... that's the Champagne we always drink together.

Off-consumption experiences were linked to community and escapism for both Champagne and MCC experiences. However, Champagne experiences and future experiences thereof were associated with conspicuous consumption. Participant 7 described a recent on-consumption Champagne experience, explaining their view on the associated pricing of the product:

... to myself, it doesn't make sense to spend that much on liquor, knowing that I can get it for cheaper. It doesn't. It doesn't add up ... 'cause technically, you are showing off within a club or a restaurant when you're purchasing bottles of that price.

Participants indicated that the occasion for the purchase influences their choice of sparkling wine brand. Of the participants, 30% indicated that they prefer to choose something that they have enjoyed previously, 20% stated that they enjoy experimenting and experiencing new brands, and 50% were open to experimentation but were aware of potential risks associated with the unknown purchase. Usage occasion was the primary

associated risk, as participants were concerned that a novel purchase would not meet their consumption expectations, potentially diluting the value of the occasion. Participant 1 explained:

The time I will experiment is like by the glass at a bar or in a restaurant. ... bottles to take to a lunch ... dinner ... Christmas or something, then I generally just go with tried and trusted.

... knowing that that's what I like and what it's going to be when I open it. I know what to expect and that it's going to be what I am expecting, I'm going to enjoy it. And not spending on a luxury item that may be disappointing. Nobody's got money for that.

Participant 5 shared a similar outlook towards purchasing a new brand relative to the occasion:

... if it's not an important occasion, I would experiment as much as I can. But if I'm celebrating something, I stick to something I know will not disappoint.

Participant 4 shared how the risk of a new purchase was minimised in an on-consumption setting because of product sizing availability:

That's how I got into Le Lude actually ... we went to ... market thing and then there you can buy at the stands ... you can buy a little glass ... that's how they introduced it.

Participant 4 explained their willingness and process to try new sparkling wine brands:

I like being adventurous. So if it's something that's completely new, that I've never seen before, I might have heard someone mention it. But it doesn't always have to be that I've heard about it. And the packaging draws me in.

... there was no choice ... So I did ... Google it. And most of the reviews were good beforehand. Okay, let's give it a try. It's not something that you normally would drink or that you think of as a good wine. It was actually quite enjoyable.

4.4.2 Sensory experiences

i. Sensory integration

The data indicated that participants' senses and stimulation thereof were experienced as part of the consumption process.

90% of participants associated the sound of a sparkling wine bottle popping open with the consumption experience. The association was conveyed with certainty and described with emotions of excitement and happiness. Participant 2 described the auditory association:

It brings joy, it adds another sense to experience and makes you feel even more exclusive because no one else is getting sparkling wine brought to their table.

Participant 7 expressed that the sound of the bottle popping open incited the association of another sense related to the consumption experience:

Yes, it's such an exciting sound. It just gets you hyped up and you just wanna feel the bubbles.

ii. Sensory preferences

Participants indicated their personal preferences for visual and touch cues associated with sparkling wine consumption and preference.

Visual cues were of importance when considering sparkling wine packaging, as participants indicated the aesthetic, informational and associative value thereof. Participant 6 explained:

... you could see that not just put together as a standard label, so care has been taken to design and colour.

Participant 9 highlighted the informational and aesthetic value of packaging:

I need to know clearly what I'm purchasing, whether it is a Champagne, whether it is an MCC. If I am spending the money, then I do want the autonomy of choosing

which brand or which farm, which of their product ... a beautiful label appeals to anybody who likes that label ... black and gold would really make me appeal to the luxury of the label.

Participant 3 indicated the informational association of aesthetics alongside additional brand cues when attributing luxury to sparkling wine:

I'm going to look for what's packaged nicer; the nicest and purely go on packaging and price as luxury.

Visual and touch cues were of value when considering the glass from which the sparkling wine was consumed. Participants associated the type of glass with aesthetics, the experience thereof and personal preference. Participant 2 explained:

I enjoy crystal glass with a very thin rim and the way it feels in your hand, I think it adds a lot of value to the experience. I think if you do pay money to have this experience that you're consuming, the better the glass, I don't know, all the surroundings, it's a more luxurious experience than if you drink out of a plastic cup. It doesn't taste quite the same whether subconsciously or consciously.

Participant 6 attributed a measure of utility but maintained an aesthetic focus:

... give me crystal. ... plastic ... probably destroys the bubbles. I'm not sure if that's true or not. But I feel like it's true ... I like being able to see the Champagne because then I can tell if it's flat or not. So the clearer the glass the better and I love aesthetics. So if it's beautiful, I'm way more likely to enjoy it.

Participant 10 focused solely on touch cues:

I don't really care about the shape of the glass. But I do prefer a thin glass. Crystal.

Participant 4 referred to the shape and size of the glass, maintaining a similar outlook:

... how delicate it is in my hand ... I want a long stem. I want it to be in my hand but I don't really want to feel it.

iii. Sensory quality attribution

60% of participants were concerned with the size of the bubbles, indicating their preference for smaller bubbles in terms of mouthfeel as well as attribution to quality. When asked about aspects of luxury and quality, Participant 3 explained:

The size is very important. I like fine bubbles ... not gonna be overpowering, cause they're gonna be tiny for bubbles.

Participant 6 indicated the informational value of the bubbles:

Continuous streams of bubbles, small bubbles. And I don't want them stuck to the side of the glass. I want them bubbling upwards, constantly moving. The moment the bubbles stop moving on my glass I won't drink it, because it means it's flat.

A combination of industry standards, subjective preferences and environmental variables were used to evaluate the quality of sparkling wine. Participant 1 presented the following attributes:

... how delicate the bubbles were ... the way that it feels in my mouth and the taste of it. Colour, I don't think would come into play so much for me, unless it looked very insipid.

Participant 6 described colour association as an indication of quality:

It's got to be pale. It can't be that dark colour. It mustn't be the colour of dessert. Champagne is supposed to be a beautiful, pale, creamy colour, almost. It can't be yellow.

Participant 2 incorporated environmental variables to evaluate the quality of sparkling wine:

The taste, the temperature, and the colour.

4.4.3 Perception towards MCC and Champagne

i. Knowledge

Participants primarily attributed Champagne to French origin when considering Champagne as a product. Champagne was associated with craftsmanship, quality and heritage. All participants were able to recall Champagne brands from memory, although pronunciation was not consistent across all participants. Participant 4 indicated uncertainty of pronunciation after having consumed the brands:

The ones that I've had before, Champagne wise, I can't pronounce it for the life of me.

Table 4.2 indicates the brands that were recalled as well as the number of recalls.

Table 4.2: Champagne: Brand recall

Brand	Moët & Chandon	Veuve Clicquot	Dom Pérignon	G.H.Mumm	Armand de Brignac Brut Gold (Ace of Spades)	Laurent-Perrier	Bollinger	Nicolas Feuillatte
Recall amount	10	5	6	2	2	1	1	1

Participant 2 indicated the following when comparing Champagne and MCC:

But I think subjectively it did originate there. So one would think the same way that we invented Pinotage, we would assume that our Pinotage is superior to the rest of the world. So I guess that just lingers in my mind, but I wouldn't say that I've definitely decided that it's superior to South Africa's wine.

MCC brands were recalled with more ease than Champagne brands, and respondents recalled a greater variety of brands from memory. MCC brands were associated with wine farms. Participant 10 indicated:

Almost everyone's got an MCC these days.

Participant 1 shared the wine farm sentiment with additional association:

... pretty much like every reputable wine farm that has Chardonnay and Pinot Noir cultivated.

Table 4.3 indicates the brands that were recalled, along with the number of recalls.

Table 4.3: Brand recall: MCC

Brand	Pongrácz	Simonsi g	Graham Beck	Steenberg	Krone	Durbanville Hills	Pierre Jourdan	Charles Fox	Spier	Warwick	L'Ormarins	Le Lude	JC Le Roux
Recall amount	6	4	3	2	4	2	3	1	1	1	1	2	2

Participant 4 associated MCC with the following production method:

I don't think MCCs are aged as long, and I don't think they've got the same amount of different grapes used, or like finer textures or things in. It's more of an easy drinking thing.

Participant 6 compared Champagne and MCC methods:

I've been to the chateaux...

Time, efforts, history, tradition. I don't think that the people at like, Spier, are turning the bottles 15 degrees every 2 days ... big wine farms or Champagne farms in Champagne are very pedantic about that sort of thing, so I think it's just time and effort, the amount of manpower spent on one bottle. One thing that's what creates quality.

ii. Exclusivity and accessibility

Participants were concerned with accessibility and exclusivity when considering Champagne and MCC. The concepts were not directly linked to participants' assessments of specific brands but influenced their perception of the different regions' products and associated extrinsic product cues.

However, when considering the quality difference between Champagne and MCC, Participant 8 initially ascribed quality to accessibility but, when considering the product itself, quality was attributed to the consumable product:

... French sparkling wine, I'm just gonna be like, wow, this is French sparkling wine. And it is gonna have a perceived higher value, because I can't necessarily replace it. So as I drink it, I'm gonna be very aware that this is French sparkling wine, whereas if it was South African sparkling wine, I don't think I would think it's so special, because I can just get it again.

I don't think one is better than the other. ... I don't think French is better than South African. I don't think South African is better than French.

Participant 5 commented on the regular accessibility of MCC:

We'll go wine testing every other weekend and we normally come back with a bottle.

Participant 6 indicated the role of pricing and their view thereof when choosing a Champagne brand specifically:

It depends on my current fiscal situation. But it's something I'll be aware of, but not something that will dictate what I choose ... I'm comfortable spending up to 1 500 ... It's not so much that I feel like it's reasonable ... I would rather spend money and have what I want than have the money and not what I want.

Participant 3 highlighted the pricing barrier of Champagne, as well as off-consumption experiences:

... but none of us can afford that in real life.

I literally drank one after the other, and I was like, I don't think I can drink MCC after the first time I was exposed to proper Champagne.

... this corner in the liquor store, or also depends which liquor store you go to that will have this really expensive like Champagne and then it will go to Prosecco, and then it will go to MCC. So it's almost like in the store, they categorising and

showing you what is more luxurious. ... advertising the more expensive stuff as luxury. And it really makes you want to buy it.

Participant 2 similarly described the pricing barrier when discussing reasonable and expected pricing:

No, that's why I won't purchase it, but if other people want to buy it for me, they are very welcome to.

iii. Exposure

Participants formed expectations of sparkling wine based on previous encounters with products. Price reasonability and market pricing were often perceived as interrelated concepts. Participant 8 indicated the acceptance of pricing at venues when discussing reasonability:

... realistically, it's gonna cost upwards of R300, probably closer to 350 ... I think you just accept that it's gonna be expensive. Anything in a restaurant is always horribly marked up, and it's the way it is.

Participant 9 shared this view, describing the additional value association obtained from higher pricing:

I feel like that is about the average current market price on the shelves. ... I understand that there's quite a mark-up on these products. ... it is a luxury product. So no, I don't think it's justified, but I think it kind of comes with what you're getting when you go for this product.

You are looking at a luxury product by design ... I would expect them to drive up the price because they are doing something superior. Doing something, perhaps learned or skilled in terms of making this wine. I can't buy the grapes and make the wine myself, and you know I need to buy it from a master, and I'm assuming that's what they are. And that's why they can charge those kinds of prices.

Consumption of Champagne and MCC contributed to participants' preferences. After consumption, Participant 3 favourably suggested Champagne:

So same process, similar ingredients. But it tastes different, and because it tastes different, it makes the quality difference.

Conversely, Participant 10 preferred MCC after having consumed both:

Certain countries have got different ways of doing or manufacturing ... and the grapes are different. I really love French Champagne, many of them, but in general, I think that an MCC is pretty much on par or even better.

The data indicated that participant expectations and subsequent purchase and consumption were not limited to the act of consumption or intended place of consumption. Responses indicated that sparkling wine expectations and transactions may be influenced by various brand contact points and associations, including brand-, partner-, customer-owned and externally owned. Participant 5 described their introduction to and association with Champagne:

... those people that go to clubs and buy expensive bottles ... one person had a tab of over R300 000 in a club ... posted the slip and the most expensive items were 2 bottles which were 16 000 each. ... I was like, okay, that's for rich people, that kind of brand is a luxurious brand. ... it's not even a friend of mine, someone from Twitter ... guys that go to clubs and do things like that.

Participant 1 described their introduction and associations to MCC:

... brands that I've known and been drinking like my whole life. And I do mean like a little child at Christmas time with my parents and that kind of thing. So real, like established, legacy brands in the industry.

Participant 9 mentioned their exposure to what may be considered a luxury sparkling wine:

... I've heard the stories of the places that do or did stock that Champagne, and what they were selling it for, and the kinds of bills that they were racking up. And I understood ... only the richest of the rich are buying that product.

Participant 8 explained the characteristics of what they consider as luxury sparkling wine and their exposure to a luxury sparkling wine brand:

... definitely the price and the reputation of the farm, the reputation of the brand.

... media, TV, shows and series. ... seeing its price on menus. It's usually in a setting in which people are spending money, and it's people that can afford it. ... always in a setting where people are wealthy and doing wealthy people things.

4.4.4 Perceived brand value: Role and influence

i. Brand as expectation and experience

Participants use brands, brand contact points and their related experiences to draw potential conclusions and expectations. Brands are used as information cues, offering symbolic value and subjective utility. Participant 6 explained how brands can be used to perceive quality:

If your product is something that you care about, you'll put a lot of effort into your brand's perception, and you'll make sure that the quality of everything across the board is consistent. If a brand is a good brand and they care about the brand, chances are that they care about their product as well.

Participant 5 indicated a similar outlook:

To build a brand, it takes time. I don't think you would have a good brand when you've been serving mediocre products for a long period of time. ...a good brand ... developed over a long period of time, means there's something you've been doing well, which, if you're selling alcohol, has to be accurately attributed to that.

Participant 10 indicated the symbolic value, the utility and development of brands:

Brands build trust and brands deliver on the trust with the customer.

In a certain sense, I believe that MCC has a certain way of producing things, so I trust the MCC brand or the Champagne brand ... other than that, I don't really pay attention to the ingredients.

Participant 4 described the associated expectations of their idea of a luxury sparkling wine brand:

It will be amazing! ... just be everything that I want in a Champagne ... meet every expectation, ... how I like things to be smelled, ... taste, ... looks. ... great bubble. ... like everything that I could think of. ... pure and absolute happiness from the pop of the bottle ... to pouring it and drinking.

ii. Brands as benefits

Participant 10 indicated that a brand's packaging can provide additional value to an experience or an individual:

I'm paying for the special occasion. I am looking for something special. It needs to look luxurious, nice and special.

... brand might play a role if I buy it for a present, but for myself I don't mind the brand, I look for taste.

Participant 5 explained associated brand value attribution when considering variables of occasion and affordability:

... it's a product you'll buy as a reward to yourself or you are celebrating a specific occasion ... prices ranging that bracket ... that makes me think reasonable.

... the balance between affordability and the benefit.

Depending on the environmental variables, Participant 6 explained that by purchasing a certain brand, an individual may seek to leverage the brand and its associations:

... Dom Pérignon ... the table across from us was ordering it, and my friend was like, "I could do better". And just decided every time that they ordered a bottle he ordered two. It was ridiculous. But that's one-upmanship.

... drinking good Champagne makes you feel fabulous. So yes, it does confirm things about you. ... the audience? Both. It makes you feel like you have

accomplished something. It makes you feel like you matter because you can afford to do this for yourself.

... everyone chooses the Champagne they can best afford, that will best reflect their personality, and they'll always choose the best one they can get their hands on.

iii. Brands as influence

The data indicated that exposure to or the lack thereof may contribute to how the brand is perceived and influence subsequent action towards the brand. Considering recent brand contact points, Participant 6 noted:

I can't remember the last time I saw a sparkling wine ad on TV, on YouTube, or even on Instagram.

I love it when things match. So if there's a bucket and a Moët umbrella and a Moët pillow, I'm not going to put a bottle of Veuve in there.

Participants' most recent memories of interacting with sparkling wine brands was primarily attributed to consumption experiences, linking to the likelihood of a future purchase. Participants' most recent interactions that were not linked to the consumption process, were generally not prompted by the interaction to purchase the brand again. Participant 1 stated:

My last experience would be consuming it, or seeing it in my fridge.

I probably wouldn't because I don't have the need for more than one bottle of MCC in my fridge right now. But were someone to drink that one this evening, I would go out and purchase the same one because it's just, there's a Graham Beck that lives in the fridge and it for some reason feels like it should always be there.

Participant 5 shared a recent interaction and its influence to purchase:

It was a part of Graham Beck's mailing list. So a couple of days ago, they had a competition. I didn't actually read much of that email.

*No ... Graham Beck is a once in a while purchase, and it's for certain occasions.
... not unless they had a sale.*

Participant 10 explained the additional value that can be added to a product to increase its value and their likelihood to purchase:

*I'm paying for the special occasion. I am looking for something special. It still looks
luxurious ... nice*

*... extra packaging. .. tangible ... different size bottle definitely ... a magnum for
the same, similar price as double the normal bottle. I would definitely do that.*

*It's difficult to pay more ... but if I'm in a setting and someone would explain the
heritage of the specific bottle and the way it has been aged ... I would consider
that to be a more sensible purchase ... special treatment into the specific bottle.*

*If you've got someone coming up to you, giving you a taste of whatever you're
gonna purchase, and it's a bit more than your budget is, and the person is
delightful. I would definitely purchase it if I like the product.*

4.4.5 Competing need satisfaction

The data indicated that participants used different components of the tangible sparkling wine product, their knowledge of and attitude towards the product, as well as previous exposure to the product and its associations to satisfy different needs. Although the needs to be satisfied competed with each other in theory, the needs were able to exist simultaneously.

Considering the quality differences between Champagne and MCC, Participant 1 indicated that they viewed the products as equal in quality. Upon considering a luxury sparkling wine brand, Participant 1 initially associated Champagne with luxury; however, they felt their statement to be contradictory due to their initial quality assessment of the two countries' products:

*... it might be like the quality of their raw materials might be different, but I wouldn't
say just based on being in a different country that it's necessarily different quality.*

... but having on the occasion that I have been treated to actual Champagne, I can't say that I think it's of vastly superior quality than what's produced as MCC in South Africa. I think it's pretty much the same.

... if we're going to buy a luxury bubble for some particular occasion, then I suppose ... then an actual Champagne, so maybe like a Veuve. I don't know how I can't think of any MCC off the top of my head that I'd be like, "oh, this is the treat yourself MCC."

I don't know. I suppose literally just the fact that it's French, which contradicts what I said earlier. So then I feel like it's the perceived value of it because it's not a local product, it's something a little more exclusive? Or it was. It probably isn't anymore.

Participant 4 attributed "easy drinking" to MCC when explaining their knowledge of MCC and Champagne. Participant 4 later described Champagne as "easy drinking", attributing the superiority of Champagne thereto:

... MCCs ... It's more of an easy drinking thing.

... French obviously, it tastes better. I don't know why. I don't know if it's the time, the depth, the amount, or whatever they put in there ... French is just easier drinking, I think. And a nicer experience.

Participant 6 considered the stringent production methods of Champagne and associated large wine farms with this quality measure. Maintaining their preference toward Champagne, Participant 6 later considered smaller wine farms to be more luxurious:

Some of the big wine farms or Champagne farms in Champagne are very pedantic about that sort of thing ... One thing, that's what creates quality.

You should be looking at the smaller wine farms if you actually want to get into luxury.

Participant 3 explained that price is not a consistent reflection of a product's quality and considered an individual's subjective preference assessment. Participant 3 indicated a personal preference for sparkling wine associations of a higher price point:

... I think the quality will be better, because obviously the making of it will be a better process. But sometimes, something cheaper is actually a lot easier drinking than something more expensive. I think it depends. I think it depends on the person's palette. Everyone's palettes are different. So I think it entirely depends on the individual.

... because if it's like a super cheap bottle of sparkling wine, you're gonna have big bubbles and it's not gonna taste great.

Participant 9 made use of packaging to satisfy a cognitive need, but additional needs were also to be satisfied:

I need to know clearly what I'm purchasing ... I do want the autonomy of choosing which brand ... farmer ... products I'm buying.

I want to say no, but I think making a beautiful label appeals to anybody who likes that label, you know, and if they were to hit some spots in terms of like, maybe black and gold think that would really make me appeal to the luxury of the label ... it would definitely make me interested in the product.

I guess when you think of the most luxurious, you kind of skyrocket with the price, and I can think of one champagne called Aces with the golden bottle and the beautiful ace on the outside, and the big price tag. You probably aren't getting any better quality, but you are getting a very, very beautiful bottle. And the psychological effect of purchasing that in front of probably a group of people.

4.5 Trustworthiness, credibility and reliability

When conducting qualitative research, trustworthiness encompasses the reliability and validity of the study, affecting the accuracy and quality thereof (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:295). The research considered and implemented the following measures to support the trustworthiness of the study.

4.5.1 Credibility

The research used the principles of prolonged engagement to support the credibility of the study (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:295). Prior to and during the data collection and

analysis phases, the research ensured a thorough understanding of the environments in which sparkling wine purchases and consumption occur to support the understanding of participant responses. The research made use of Chapter 2 as a framework to support the contextual and theoretical understanding of sparkling wine purchase and consumption. In addition, throughout the duration of the study, the researcher remained cognisant of on-consumption and off-consumption sparkling wine brand touch points that a customer may be exposed to throughout the customer journey, as indicated in Figure 2.3.

4.5.2 Transferability

To support the transferability of the study, where applicable to the context of the study and research objectives, the research provided detailed descriptions of participants' behaviours, experiences and opinions. The research noted the different roles of participants in ascribing the correct context and associated variables. The roles were differentiated as purchaser and consumer, and variables were presented as previous and future on- or off-consumption experiences and respective associations. The research provided thorough, sequential details regarding the study's research methodology in Chapter 3. The methodology adhered to all conventions proposed in Chapter 3, including the population, sampling techniques, data collection instrument, data analysis software and coding, and data analysis process.

4.5.3 Dependability

The research considered the dependability of this study by ensuring cohesion between the qualitative data collection method and qualitative data analysis (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:296). The data collection method and data analysis were carefully considered by the research and presented in Chapter 3. The applicability of selected methods and techniques were selected for their practical cohesion, limitations and relevance to the research design, problem and aim. Throughout the data collection and analysis phases, the researcher remained cognisant of the need for cohesion, procedures to be followed and limitations to be expected. Considering the descriptions of techniques and processes employed in Chapters 3 and 4, the research supports the dependability of the study, as the methods and techniques were applied and implemented accordingly.

4.5.4 Confirmability

The research considered the confirmability of this qualitative study by presenting the link between the data and the findings (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:297). The chosen research design was thoroughly described and supported with applicable theory to allow others to analyse and replicate the study to achieve similar findings. The links between the data and findings have been presented as themes in Chapter 4, and are explained by means of the research problem, major findings, recommendations and conclusions in Chapter 5. The research used a reflexive journal throughout the research process to ensure an awareness of potential biases that may exist. This supported impartial data collection and analysis that focused on the research problem, aim and objectives while adhering to the research design.

4.6 Conclusion

The chapter commenced with a reiteration of the sampling techniques and criteria used, highlighting the practical appropriateness and capabilities thereof, while considering the research design and objectives. A retrospective overview of the data analysis process was briefly discussed. The discussion encompassed the research's methodology and adherence to the research design, supporting the appropriateness, completeness and accuracy of the data analysis. The data were synthesised and grouped into respective themes, and the patterns and insights obtained from the data were presented. The themes conveyed insights relating to the research problem, aim and objectives. The chapter concluded with a reflection of the measures applied by the research to support the trustworthiness of the qualitative study. By using emergent themes, subcategories and applicable literature, the following chapter indicates the research findings, recommendations and conclusions.

Chapter 5: Findings, Recommendations and Conclusion

5.1 Introduction

The research problem is that the relationship between perceived brand value and actual product quality as drivers of consumer motivation to purchase is misunderstood in the South African sparkling wine industry. South African sparkling wine brands may be purchased less frequently than international brands, lessening the potential sales revenue of South African sparkling wine brands. The purpose of this study was to conduct exploratory research to better understand the topic being studied by explaining and developing concepts.

The research aim of this study was to better understand perceived brand value and actual product quality as drivers of consumer motivation to purchase within the South African luxury sparkling wine market. The objectives, to be discussed in Section 5.2, were formulated to support the study in obtaining relevant insights to achieve the research aim.

This chapter is the final chapter, indicating the findings, recommendations and conclusion of this research. With reference to the preceding chapters, the research problem, aim and objectives are considered and the findings are summarised. The chapter is presented as a critical discussion of the research findings and recommendations, and as a reflection of the research limitations.

5.2 Findings

This section presents the findings obtained from the study's collected data and analysis, supported by Chapter 2's Literature Review. To support the research aim, the findings are presented alongside the study objectives.

5.2.1 Objective 1

To identify attributes that enhance or reduce a product's perceived level of quality within the sparkling wine industry.

The findings indicated that the perceived quality is influenced by both intrinsic and extrinsic cues when assessing the perceived level of quality. The associations formed about core benefit and basic product intrinsic cues do not lessen the perceived quality of

a sparkling wine. However, sensory experiences associated with the basic product, such as the auditory association of the cork popping open, may enhance the consumption experience, thereby potentially enhancing the perceived quality level of the associated brand's product (Section 2.2.2).

The expected product layer is used to assess the quality of sparkling wine. The taste of sparkling wine is a subjective indicator of quality and is primarily attributed to personal preference, rather than industry standards and associations. Consumers who are concerned with the product's colour and bubble size and associated mouthfeel make use of industry benchmarks to gauge the quality (Section 2.4.1). Within these assessments, these intrinsic cues are strongly linked to French sparkling wine, indicating this associative brand value to be perceived as the augmented product. Although intrinsic to sparkling wine's product design and theoretically categorised into the expected product, place of origin is used as an influential indicator of quality and is experienced as the augmented product (Sections 2.2.2 and 2.6.2).

The augmented product's extrinsic cues are used to assess the quality of sparkling wine, brand name, brand awareness and brand associations based on past experiences. Exposure is used as a frame of reference, establishing an expectation of quality. Pricing is not used as a standalone cue to assess quality but is used to confirm cost and value attribution alongside previous experiences (Section 2.4.4). Higher pricing is consistently associated with luxury and does maintain associative value of superior quality (Sections 2.5.1 and 2.6.2). Product labelling is subjectively used as an indicator of sparkling wine quality. The aesthetic value, as well as perceived professionalism of the sparkling wine label design, is considered (Section 2.4.1).

Within the potential product layer, the owned brand contact points of sparkling wine brands do not directly influence product quality assessments but may influence perceived brand value at the point of sale (discussed in Section 5.2.4). However, the type of glass used to consume sparkling wine is strongly associated with the consumption experience, as the associated touch and visual cues enhance or reduce the overall consumption experience, which is understood as part of the potential product (Section 2.4.1).

The aspects that enhance or reduce the perceived level of sparkling wine quality remain consistent in on-consumption and off-consumption settings. Depending on the purchase or consumption variables, consumers may increase or decrease the importance of attributes to assess quality. Consumers could consider variables of occasion, place of

consumption, individuals present at the place of consumption and availability of finances (Sections 2.5.1 and 2.5.2).

5.2.2 Objective 2

To determine consumer perception towards available sparkling wine brands in South Africa.

Champagne and MCC are understood to be different, primarily being separated by place of origin and subsequent associations. Champagne is understood with certainty as sparkling wine of French origin. It is associated with quality, craftsmanship, heritage, wealth and exclusivity. Champagne's origin is similarly associated with quality ingredients, stringent production and quality (Section 2.6.2). MCC is generally understood to be sparkling wine of South African origin but is not associated with Méthode Champenoise (Section 2.6.3). MCC is considered to be of equal, inferior or superior quality to Champagne. Irrespective of quality assessment, MCC is regarded as an accessible product and is linked to its manufacturing wine farm's name when recalling MCC brands (Sections 2.4.2 and 2.4.3).

Considering the influential and standardised association attached to place of origin, "Champagne" is used by consumers as a brand itself, indicating an expected benchmark of quality and craftsmanship. Although "MCC" has a similar utility of brand identity when favourably viewed by a consumer, it is generally used as an information cue that categorises the product as a sparkling wine.

Champagne brand awareness is predominantly associated with Moët & Chandon, Veuve Cliquot, and Dom Pérignon. Although the brands were not recalled alongside their product-line extensions, such as Moët & Chandon Imperial Rosé or Veuve Cliquot Yellow Label, the manufacturing brand was associated with exclusivity and sparkling wine craftsmanship. Notably, as the most recalled Champagne brands, Moët & Chandon, Veuve Cliquot and Dom Pérignon were similarly individually regarded as luxury sparkling wine brands. MCC brand awareness was primarily associated with Pongrácz, Simonsig, and Krone (Section 2.6.4). MCC brand awareness is dispersed among consumers, as consumers are aware of many different available brands and do not consistently associate MCC with selected brands.

Considering the pricing aspect of sparkling wine, consumers correctly attributed current market pricing for MCC and Champagne to on-consumption and off-consumption vendors. Off-consumption MCC pricing was considered reasonable but on-consumption pricing was not considered as reasonable as consumers relate the on-consumption price back to their knowledge of off-consumption prices. Champagne pricing was generally not considered reasonable for both on-consumption and off-consumption purchases and, generally, pricing differences between vendors were not calculated.

5.2.3 Objective 3

To determine how consumer perception towards available sparkling wine brands in South Africa was formed.

Various brand contact points within the customer journey were used to shape consumer perception towards sparkling wine brands. Perception was influenced by the consumption experience of a sparkling wine brand. The influence of gustatory, audio, touch and visual sensory cues was subjective to the individual, consumption occasion and environment. Although the cues did not consistently influence perception, these sensory cues could all be considered part of the brand contact pattern, existing with relative purpose to the individual and consumption environment as the first brand contact point, the last contact point, points of frequency, points of impact and points of resonance (Sections 2.4.1, 2.4.2 and 2.4.3).

Perceptions towards sparkling wine brands' pricing cues were formed by a consumer's exposure to associated pricing in on-consumption and off-consumption venues. While not necessarily noted as the first point of contact, sparkling wine pricing could be used as an indicator of what to expect from the product's quality and brand value attribution.

Points of frequency within the theme of luxury, status, wealth, exclusivity and quality consistently shaped consumer perception of Champagne brands. Consumers had been exposed to Champagne brands through partner-owned and externally owned brand contact points, and by means of product placement in media off of which the respective brand was able to leverage and associate with the lifestyle, activities and aspirational personas. Similarly, customer-owned and externally owned contact points exposed consumers to Champagne, as these contact points integrate Champagne products into their messaging, potentially seeking to associate themselves with the brand. Consumer perception towards Champagne was further influenced by partner-owned contact points,

as point-of-sale displays and pricing were used to communicate exclusivity, conspicuousness, connection with the brand and subjective levels of quality (Sections 2.4.2, 2.4.3, 2.4.5, 2.5.1 and 2.5.3).

Consumer perception towards MCC was primarily formed by practical exposure to MCC brands. The exposure included knowledge of various wine farms in South Africa, as well as accessibility to these wine farms and their MCC-associated pricing. Exposure that had contributed to consumer perception of MCC included the act of consuming the product with others and, consequently, linking the brand of consumption to the associated individual. The accessibility of MCC similarly influenced perception; customer-owned contact points of consumption influenced perception because consumers associated MCC brands with inconspicuous consumers and familiarity.

5.2.4 Objective 4

To determine how perceived brand value contributes to consumer decision making when purchasing sparkling wine.

Brand value influences consumer decision making, as consumers consider a brand's emotional value and utility (Gupta *et al.*, 2020:212). Sparkling wine consumers believe that a brand is a reflection of the product's quality and craftsmanship. Various brand contact points were considered in this assessment, such as the tangible product and its associated visual cues or the individual's intangible expectation formed by associations. The culmination of brand contact points communicates an expectation of the brand, which simplifies consumer decision making.

Consumers who purchase luxury sparkling wine for its symbolic value may attribute additional value to the potential product of the associated brand. Depending on the need to be satisfied with the purchase (discussed in Section 5.2.5), the potential product may be understood and experienced by the internal individual or external audiences as reflecting status, wealth, enjoyment or exclusivity. Although product pricing was attributed to the augmented product, product pricing could be used to satisfy consumer needs and wants, thus influencing perceived brand value as an aspect of the potential product.

The augmented product provided additional value to sparkling wine consumers, as this layer increased the conspicuousness, exclusivity, luxury and knowledge of a brand. Brand-owned contact points, such as bottle size and packaging, as well as brand-owned

and partner-owned contact points that engaged with the consumer in an informative manner could increase the perceived value of the brand.

5.2.5 Objective 5

To determine the need that a consumer aims to satisfy by purchasing a selected brand of sparkling wine.

Sparkling wine is primarily associated with celebration, joy, achievement, noteworthy occasions and community. However, the practical consumption occasion, place of consumption and existing associations towards sparkling wine indicates that consumers seek to satisfy different needs by purchasing selected brands of sparkling wine. Consumers use sparkling wine brands to fulfil cognitive, emotional, individual, community and escapism needs. Relative to an individual's quality and luxury attribution, an individual may perceive a brand to satisfy a certain need or numerous needs simultaneously.

The act of consuming a selected sparkling wine brand was associated with the escapism need for both on-consumption and off-consumption purchases. The need for community was satisfied and connected to the satisfaction need, as consumers associated the consumption of sparkling wine with social occasions, irrespective of where the brand of sparkling wine was consumed. Consumers may select sparkling wine brands to reinforce their social connections, as individuals associated brands with those who were exposed to or exposed them to the brand. Similarly, consumers selected a certain brand of sparkling wine as it was associated with sparkling wine consumption when with another individual. This brand may not be the initial consumer or companion's brand of choice but it became the brand of choice as an extension of their experiences.

A consumer fulfils their cognitive need when seeking to purchase a brand of sparkling wine that they have experienced before or have a trusted expectation of. The cognitive need minimises the consumer's perceived risk of the associated purchase, as the respective brand is coupled to the information sought by the consumer. Sparkling wine brands can fulfil cognitive needs for both on-consumption and off-consumption purchases and services the individual as the internal audience.

Although other emotions may be satisfied, sparkling wine was associated with feelings of joy for both on-consumption and off-consumption purchases. The emotional need was

fulfilled as a consumer associated with their brand of choice upon purchase or consumption. A consumer's emotional need was relative to personal variables, as the emotion could be incited by the joy brought about from the purchase and its associations or the existing emotional association that spurred the purchase and recreated the emotion of joy.

Sparkling wine brands were used by consumers to satisfy their individual needs for both on-consumption and off-consumption purchases. On-consumption purchases of Champagne brands were generally linked to conspicuous consumption with both the individual and others as the audience for the purchase. A consumer might use a selected brand to associate with its prestige and luxury, thus enforcing their status and personal image. Off-consumption purchases of Champagne brands were generally linked to internal audiences, focusing on the individual themselves, which served as a reflection of their achievements and success (Sections 2.5.2, 2.5.3, 2.5.4 and 3.5).

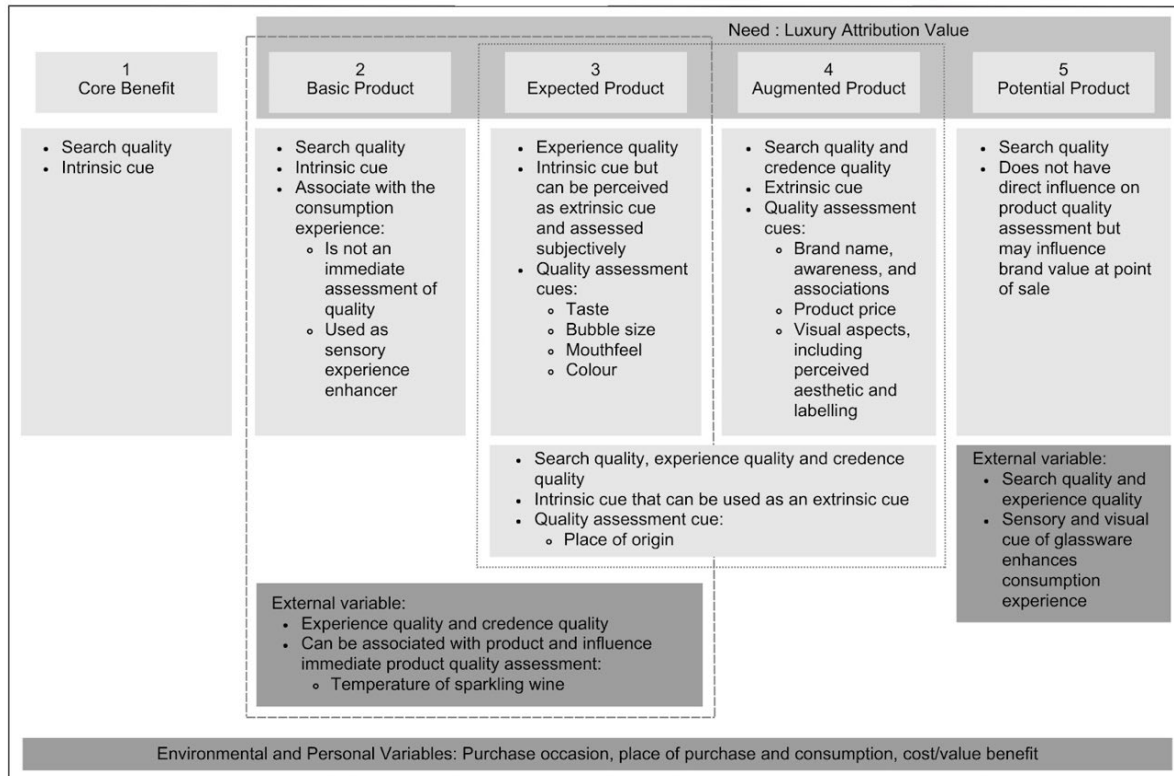
5.2.6 Major findings and outcomes

In conclusion, the research indicated that the environment in which a consumer purchases or consumes a brand of sparkling wine influences their attribution to quality and luxury, which subsequently influences the need to be satisfied. By considering sparkling wine product layers, each layer of sparkling wine provides a consumer with cues that may impact their assessment of luxury and quality. However, the research indicated that, when considering a brand of luxury sparkling wine, product layers do not exist in silos. Although a layer's design is presented in theory, a consumer may use this cue for a different purpose than what it exists for. This phenomenon was specifically identified between the external variables of the basic product and expected product, and the expected product and augmented product.

The research further indicated the importance of brand contact points, as a consumer's perception of luxury and quality of a selected sparkling wine brand was assessed by using external variables over which a brand has no control. Brand contact points were further considered, as product layers 2, 3, 4 and 5 are the layers in which a brand can communicate and confirm perceived luxury. By understanding the layers and their respective brand contact points in which luxury and quality can be attributed, the research indicated where perceived brand value could be created and why, by both the sparkling wine brand and the consumer. The research indicated that, depending on the need to be satisfied by a consumer, perceived brand value and actual product quality were relatively

interpreted as drivers of purchasing a sparkling wine brand.

Figure 5.1: Sparkling wine luxury, quality and value attribution



5.2.7 Limitations

Limitations refer to the restrictions of the study (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2021:314). The following limitations were identified for this study:

- The following limitations were identified as a result of this study's research methodology:
 - The study's inductive approach indicates that although the study's conclusions may explain the phenomena, other conclusions may similarly explain it (Cooper & Schindler, 2014:68).
 - The cross-sectional nature did not allow for the research to study change and development of the variables of study over time (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:200).
 - The study's use of purposive sampling means that the sample was not statistically representative of the target population and cannot be generalised (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:301; Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:248).
 - The study's interpretivist metatheoretical position limits the replicability of the study (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:248).

- The study did not consider the brand contact patterns that contributed to consumers' perceptions of Champagne superiority, particularly focusing on heritage and place of origin.
- The study was limited to participants residing in Cape Town, Western Cape. The participant's exposure and access to the area's wine routes can therefore not be generalised to sparkling wine consumers residing outside of this geographic region.
- The study focused on the luxury sparkling wine industry and cannot be generalised to other luxury alcohol industries or luxury goods.

5.3 Recommendations

5.3.1 Managerial implications

- MCC brands are to be aware of the influence of first and last brand contact points that a consumer may be exposed to when consuming or being introduced to their brand, alongside consumer reluctance to try new brands due to the potential risks associated with the purchase. It is therefore recommended that MCC brands strategically align with existing luxury brands in different industries, to associate MCC with the other brand's existing perception of luxury. An example in practice would be for MCC brands to explore serving their product by the glass at a luxury clothing outlet or gifting bottles of their product in additional packaging to enrich the purchase experience.
- It is recommended that The Cap Classique Producers Association (CPPA) invest in the long-term brand of MCC by educating consumers about the points of parity and points of differentiation in relation to Champagne. The CPPA is to position MCC as a product of equal quality, heritage, craftsmanship and origin, appealing to the cognitive needs of consumers. Luxury wine marketing principles are to be applied within this campaign, as place of origin is not an objective measure of quality but a subjective marketing tool to infer exclusivity and superiority. MCC brands are to implement luxury wine marketing strategies to ensure consistency, and create brand contact points that support the purposeful positioning and repositioning of MCC as a brand.

- As consumers are not influenced to buy sparkling wine due to the brand's own marketing communications, such as advertisements or point-of-sale displays, MCC brands' brand strategies are to emulate brand contact points used by Champagne brands in on-consumption venues. Consumers preferring Champagne to MCC in on-consumption settings are drawn to conspicuous consumption and brand associations. It is recommended that MCC brands initiate positioning and awareness campaigns using selected, exclusively perceived partner-owned contact points, and supplying on-consumption venues with branded items that enhance the consumption experience from a utilitarian and aesthetic perspective. Brands are to strictly manage the contact points to ensure they reflect the quality and aspiration of the brand. They could make use of branded pillows, umbrellas and ice buckets, instilling the brand's positioning which could support sales conversions as a longer-term strategy.
- MCC brands are to understand the need that consumers seek to fulfil when purchasing luxury sparkling wine brands in both on- and off-consumption settings. The relevant escapism, individuality and community needs are to be attributed to various target consumer profiles, ensuring appropriate brand contact points along the consumer journey. The brand contact points are to exist in synergy with each other, ensuring that they do not detract from another consumer's experience. In practice, a consumer purchasing luxury sparkling wine from an off-consumption venue to fulfil the escapism need would not be drawn to a theatrical, engaging display highlighting the consciousness of the purchase. This display may be more suited to a consumer seeking to fulfil escapism and social needs in an on-consumption venue, whereas the former individual may be drawn to additional packaging which communicates the quality of the product.

5.3.2 Future studies

- Future studies could consider the role of the consumer in relation to their preference for Champagne or MCC, and their scope of influence on the purchase decision, monetary contribution and consumption habit.
- A study may seek to better understand packaging as a visual cue to enhance consumer perception of quality and interest, understanding the subjective

factors that contribute to the aesthetic value of the product. Such a study could specifically consider the colour of the sparkling wine bottle, the labelling materials used and design principles of the layout in the contemporary marketplace.

- A quantitative study of a similar research aim may incorporate demographic and psychographic variables to better understand specific target consumers' consumption habits and preferences in the luxury sparkling wine industry.
- A quantitative study may consider a blind tasting to compare consumers' preferences and opinions of Champagne and MCC against industry benchmarks and consumer benchmarks of sparkling wine quality.

5.4 Conclusion

By considering the research aim and objectives, this chapter presented the research findings by addressing each research objective individually and providing a consolidation of how perceived brand value and actual product quality exist as drivers of consumer motivation to purchase luxury sparkling wine brands in South Africa. The findings indicated that a consumer makes use of the different product layers of sparkling wine, assessing product quality against subjective perception and industry benchmarks of quality. The findings showed the importance of perception towards sparkling wine brands in South Africa, with the identification of brand contact points that contribute to consumer perceptions.

Although consumers are aware of the existence of MCC brands, Champagne is generally perceived to be of superior quality and luxury and thus higher perceived brand value. The findings indicated that consumers perceive Champagne as a brand, rather than a product category. This informs the potential for the MCC industry to strengthen the perceived brand value of the MCC brand. It is expected that the research findings can be used to inform the positioning strategies of MCC brands, indicating the brand contact points that need to be focused on to attain similar brand value to that of Champagne. Although the study is not without limitations, it is anticipated that the limitations would not compromise the practical workability of the findings, as MCC brands could benefit from applying luxury wine marketing strategies at different brand contact points for different target consumers.

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Annexure A

Semi-structured interview questions: Six sections

Section 1: Contextual Introduction	
1. As an individual that consumes or purchases sparkling wine, how often do you purchase or consume it?	
2. Are you familiar with the differences between Champagne and Méthode Cap Classique, also known as MCC?	If the respondent answers yes: 2.1 a) Can you name a few champagne brands that you are familiar with? b) Can you name a few MCC brands that you are familiar with? If the respondent answers no: 2.2 Can you name a few sparkling wine brands that you are familiar with?
3. What do you consider to be a luxury product?	
4. Do you consider sparkling wine to be a luxury product?	
5. In a general sense, what do you think can be considered as a quality product?	
6. Do you think price can be a reflection of a product's quality?	
7. Do you think a brand can be a reflection of a product's quality?	

Section 2: Off-Consumption Purchases	
<i>Moving on to off-consumption purchases, the following questions relate specifically to the purchases that occur at a supermarket, liquor store or online shop. These purchases are then consumed away from the place of purchase, such as your home.</i>	
1. Have you purchased sparkling wine from an off-consumption venue in the last 12 months?	If the respondent answers yes: 1.1 Do you remember the brand of sparkling wine that you last purchased? 1.2 What was the occasion for the purchase? 1.3 Was there anyone else present when making the purchase?

	1.4 Was anyone else present when you opened the sparkling wine? 1.5 Was anyone else present when you consumed the sparkling wine? a) If yes: Did they consume it with you? b) If yes: Did others know what you were drinking? If so, how did they know? 1.6 What do you think is a reasonable price for a bottle of sparkling wine at a supermarket, liquor store or online store? a) Please expand on why you think so? What influences you to feel this way?
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Section 3: On-Consumption Purchases

Moving on to on-consumption purchases, the following questions relate specifically to the purchases that occur at a venue, such as a restaurant or nightclub. These purchases are then consumed at the place of purchase.

1. Have you purchased or consumed sparkling wine from an on-consumption venue in the last 12 months?	If the respondent answers yes: 1.1 Did you purchase it, consume it or both? 1.2 Do you remember what brand it was? a) If yes: Do you remember what made you decide on that brand? b) If no: What do you consider when choosing a sparkling wine brand to purchase at a venue such as a restaurant or nightclub? 1.3 Who was with you during this time? 1.4 Do you recall if other people in the venue were also ordering and drinking sparkling wine? a) If yes: Do you remember some of the brands that they were ordering?
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	1.5 What do you think is a reasonable price for a bottle of sparkling wine at a venue such as a restaurant or nightclub? a) Please expand on why you think so? What influences you to feel this way?
2. Unrelated to your last experience, when ordering a bottle of sparkling wine in a restaurant or nightclub, what would the occasion be?	

Section 4: Sparkling Wine: Perceptions of Luxury and Quality	
1. When purchasing or deciding on a brand of sparkling wine, do any of the following attributes matter to you?	1.1 Product packaging a) If yes, what about it matters to you? 1.2 Ingredients used to produce 1.3 Place of origin 1.4 Price a) If yes, what about it matters to you? 1.5 The brand's own marketing communications, such as a recent ad or point-of-sale displays 1.6 The venue in which you are purchasing's brand communications, such as branded ice buckets or actual product visibility?
2. When drinking sparkling wine, do any of the following attributes matter to you?	2.1 The sound of a sparkling wine bottle popping open 2.2 The glass from which you drink a) If yes, what about it matters to you? 2.3 The size of the bubbles 2.4 The environment in which you drink it a) If yes, what is your preferred environment? 2.5 The smell of the sparkling wine

	2.6 The colour of the sparkling wine 2.7 The taste of the sparkling wine a) If yes, what do you look for when it comes to taste? 2.8 The feeling of the sparkling wine in your mouth
3.	If you were given two different glasses of sparkling wine in the same style of glass, without knowing their brands, what aspects do you think would contribute to the quality of the sparkling wine?
4.	Suppose that the above brands were manufactured using similar ingredients but an identical process, but they were made in different countries. Do you think that there would be a difference in quality?
5.	In light of the above, what do you think about the difference in quality between French sparkling wine and South African sparkling wine?

Section 5: Brand Associations, Brand Contact Points, and Motivation to Purchase

1.	Prior to this study and its associations, can you remember the last interaction you had with a sparkling wine brand? This can be anything from a social media post, consuming sparkling wine or seeing it in a store.
2.	Do you think that this encounter led you to purchase or not purchase that particular brand?
3.	When it comes to choosing a sparkling wine brand, do you like to experiment with different brands or do you regularly choose the same? 3.1 Please expand on this, what drives this decision?
4.	What do you regard as a luxury sparkling wine?
5.	Can you name a brand that you regard as such?
6.	What exposure did you have to the brand that contributed to your decision?
7.	If you were to buy this specific brand, what do you think the experience of drinking it will be like?

Section 6: Needs, Motives, and Decision Making

1.	When considering this brand, do you think that purchasing it will confirm or deny something about you as an individual? If the respondent answers yes: 1.1 What do you think it will say? 1.2 Who will the audience be for this message? Will it be yourself, others, or both?
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2. Still considering this brand, do you think that purchasing it will be a reflection of your knowledge of the brand or the sparkling wine industry?	If the respondent answers yes: 2.1 What do you think it will say? 2.2 Who will the audience be for this message? Will it be yourself, others, or both?
3. Still considering this brand, do you feel like purchasing it will contribute to you in a social sense?	If the respondent answers yes: 3.1 How would this brand specifically contribute?