



Research

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BCom Honours in Strategic Brand Management

Exploring the relationship between brand ambassadors and consumer purchasing behaviour.

Summative Research Report

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

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Abstract

This study aimed to look at the relationship between brand ambassadors and consumer purchasing behaviour in South Africa in relation to the footballing industry and the brands in the sports apparel industry. It found that there was a connection between the two areas in the study and was looked at through a cross-sectional qualitative uni-disciplinary method that used non-probability convenience sampling as there was a gap in the available research. In the sample that was a part of this study the relationship between brand ambassadors and the consumer purchasing behaviour was that brand ambassadors did have a role to play in their overall purchasing behaviour but was not the only deciding factor that was considered. Other factors were price, quality, fit and style. The sample in this research could be seen as having strong ties to their chosen team but can change the individual brand ambassadors they follow more frequently. An ambassador is only effective if the participant feels a personal connection to that ambassador. Longevity of success as a brand ambassador could only be found in football's most successful player like Messi and Ronaldo being mentioned by almost all of the participants.

Introduction

Contextualisation

Before there were influencers, there were brand ambassadors, which were introduced as far back as the late 1800s (Britton, 2020). Companies started by sending a free product to an influential person in the hope that they would help to spread the word (Britton, 2020). Traditionally, brand ambassadors were typically celebrities who were paid to endorse a brand by appearing in advertisements and promotional material (Keyhole, 2019). Over the past few years, the terms brand ambassador has become synonymous with the term influencer and they are used interchangeably, and it is important to understand the difference between these terms for the purpose of this paper.

Following the explosion of social media and its role as advertising game changer, brands were no longer the only ones with the power and influence to convey their messages (Entwistle, 2017). Social media has put the power in the hands of the individual and these individuals have networks that extend far beyond the reach of brands and can be extremely beneficial if used properly (Entwistle, 2017). These individuals who have a dedicated social following are viewed as experts within their niche and are known as influencers (Chen, 2020). The difference between these concepts is that brand ambassadors are people who have agreed to collaborate with a brand on a long-term basis and this results in them becoming the “face” of the brand (Keyhole, 2019). Brand ambassadors typically consist of professional athletes, celebrities, or even fictional characters that will grow with the brand and increase brand recognition and awareness (Entwistle, 2017). Influencers are content creators for niche audiences and can therefore be ordinary people, however they have the power to affect purchasing decisions (Influencer Marketing Hub, 2020). Brands usually partner with Influencers for a single campaign and Influencers do not exclusively promote a single brand (Keyhole, 2019). Essentially, a brand ambassador is always an influencer, but an influencer does not always become a brand ambassador. The trend of using brand ambassadors to develop relationships with customers has become more popular across many different industries (Brain, 2020), therefore it would be advantageous to explore the practice of brand ambassadors in order to understand the relationship with consumer purchasing behaviour.

According to Olenski (2016), brands using ambassadors could affect sales, brand equity, could enter into new markets or widen market scopes and develop competitive advantages. This can only be achieved if the relationship between the brand and ambassador are well planned out and aligned to what customers expect from all parties. Consumers may also feel more connected to individuals than a large organisation as they can develop a trust that is more meaningful to them as it is someone they respect and admire. When selecting the ambassador, a brand should aim to have some overlap in followers with the selected ambassador to ensure it will be effective for their strategies as well as the following of the individual ambassador. For the brands this knowledge that will be developed in the research allows them to ensure that they positively influence consumer purchasing behaviour.

The focus of this study will be on the sports industry, specifically the European football industry. In 2018 the European footballing industry had a valuation of R523.70 billion alone as the sport becomes more popular and profitable (Wilson, 2018). The sports apparel industry has been value at R2,878.37 billion at the same point in time with a growth rate of 28% (Statista, 2019), this growth is due to lifestyle changes where consumers are becoming healthier, the development of new technology and fashion trends (Market Insider, 2017). A deeper understanding of these trends and business strategies will be developed through an analysis of the literature.

Rationale

Brands traditionally use brand ambassadors to boost their brand awareness, connect with their audience and develop relationships and accomplish growth. While traditional marketing is in decline, the digital world has become the new marketing platform where brand organisations compete to create brand awareness and develop relationships with consumers. Consumers lost faith in traditional marketing techniques, shifting to recommendations from individuals they could trust (Talkwater, 2018). With approximately three billion active social media users worldwide, just posting content to a feed does not give a brand the edge. Today's digital consumers crave authenticity and want to build a personal relationship with brand and therefore look for guidance in their decision-making (Taulbee, 2019). Using a brand ambassador will result in active promotion of products and services, building a relatable face for the brand, increase brand awareness and increase the customer base (Barron, 2016).

The English Premier League (EPL) is valued at 10 billion US Dollars or 145 billion South African Rand (Transfer Markt, 2019). These results indicate the global appeal of EPL in terms of consumer market size as well as potential earning power. The last FIFA World Cup had a viewership of 3,5 billion (Talmazan & Bailey , 2019) which makes football (soccer) a large part of the world's culture and should be understood by individuals and business to ensure that it is run in an effective and ethical manner. Researching footballers and large brands in the industry will allow people to gain understanding of the social climate of football (soccer) consumers and their purchasing behaviours. It is important to explore the relationship between brand ambassadors and the consumer purchasing behaviour, specifically within the context of South African.

In this study the relationship between brand ambassadors and consumer purchasing behaviour will be explored by reviewing and critically analysing previous literature. This will be done to gain a deeper understanding of the use of international football players such as Cristiano Ronaldo and Paul Pogba as brand ambassadors for sport apparel brands such as Nike and Adidas. The study will explore the relationship between these brand ambassadors and consumer purchasing behaviour.

Problem Statement

It has become a trend to use brand ambassadors to develop a relationship between brands and their consumers (Brain, 2020). The use of recognised footballer players as brand ambassadors allows consumers to achieve an emotional tie and several associations with the endorsed brand, giving the brand a point of differentiation and a source of competitive advantage. As a result, these brand ambassadors can lead to a positive brand image and equity. For the brand to stimulate higher awareness through brand ambassador marketing, there needs to be a connection between the brand ambassador and the target market through symbolic meaning and related transfer in order to stimulate interest in the brand (Keller, 1993). Brand ambassador endorsements need to be authentic inspire trust in the target market.

Brands select brand ambassadors that have an established online presence, have a knowledge or appreciation of marketing, are professionals, have relationships with their followers, display natural leadership skills and are able to provide innovative insight (Kapadia, 2019). The practice of using celebrities as brand ambassadors has evolved as consumers interest have evolved. Today's consumers have been saturated with media and

advertising and no longer associate with the celebrities of old, instead they are looking for real people and real connections with shared values (Fromm, 2019). Sports are one of the most important modern entertainments, because they are no longer limited by physical and geographical constraints and they spread the characteristics of the culture they are inserted in (Zardini, 2016).

Sports stars often hold superhuman status as they are truly talented at what they do, their achievements are admirable and their journey to success often includes overcoming obstacles, setting goals and hard work (Middlemas, 2018). Consumers both admire and connect with their sporting hero's because the skills and characteristics embodied by these athletes are transferable into everyday life (Middlemas, 2018). Consumer communities are formed as a result of members attachment to brands and to each other (Moura & de Souza-Leão, 2020). This attachment is defined as the value attributed by consumers to brands and are underpinned by the symbolic value and sense of belonging fostered by the brand (Moura & de Souza-Leão, 2020).

Previous research has established the influence of brand ambassadors on consumer purchasing behaviour (Garud, 2013; Gauns, Pillai, Kamat, Cheng & Chan, 2017; Deshbhag & Mohan, 2019; Pourazad, Stocchi & Pare, 2019; Zardini, 2016). Other research focuses on the use of brand ambassadors as a marketing tool (Karlsson, 2018), the evolution of celebrity endorsements (Yang, 2017), sport's brands attractions and international fans (Bodet, Geng, Chanavat & Wang, 2019), celebrity endorsement and brand equity (Dwivedi, Johnson & McDonald, 2015), the exploitation of brand equity in football clubs (De Angelis, 2016), and consumer attachments to international sports (Moura & de Souza-Leão, 2020). Most of the previous research makes use of the quantitative method and there has been little research utilising qualitative methods to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon.

This research will give the reader insight into the relationship this activity would develop between consumers, brand ambassadors and the brand allowing the reader to gain an understanding of the relationship between these different elements. This research will focus on the football industry with the sports apparel brands (Nike, Adidas and others), sporting athletes as brand ambassadors (Paul Pogba, Cristiano Ronaldo and others) and consumers interested in football. Having an understanding of this topic allows brands and consumers to make more informed decisions when advertising products or purchasing them.

Research Questions

What is the relationship between brand ambassadors and consumer purchasing behaviour?

Objectives

- To explore the relationship between brand ambassadors and consumer attention.
- To explore the relationship between brand ambassadors and consumer interest.
- To explore the relationship between brand ambassadors and consumer desire.
- To explore the relationship between brand ambassadors and consumer action.
- To explore consumers perceptions towards the use of brand ambassadors.

Literature Review

Conceptualisation

To gain insights from the purposed research one needs to have an understanding of the concepts and constructs involved in the topic. They are brand ambassadors, brands, football (soccer) as a sport, the sports apparel industry and consumer purchasing behaviour. The definitions for these terms are:

1. Brand ambassadors (Sonntag, 2019):

A prominent character in popular culture that is associated with and adds value to a brand through their persona and messaging. Terms such as brand endorsers, celebrity endorsers and sponsorships will be referred to as brand ambassadors for the purpose of this literature review.

2. Brand (Kotler and Armstrong, 2013)

A brand is the name, term, sign, symbol or combination of these that identifies a producer or seller of a product or service. Terms such as organisation, business, company will be referred to as brands.

3. Football (Merriam-Webster, 2020):

A game where two opposing teams of eleven players aim to score goals in a net without using their hands or arms. This may also be referred to as soccer. The term football refers to soccer and is used in reference to the English Premier League.

4. Sports apparel industry (Kumar & Deshmukh, 2019):

The clothing industry that aims to sell items that can be worn during exercise. Terms such as athletic apparel industry and supporter apparel will fall under this category. For the purpose of this study, the brands used are Nike, Puma, Adidas and New Balance.

5. Consumer purchasing behaviour (Oxford College Marketing , 2016):

The way people choose to spend their money and on what they spend it on. This can also be referred to as consumer purchasing behaviour.

Consumer buyer behaviour is considered part of marketing and according to Kotler and Keller (2011) consumer purchasing behaviour is the study of the ways of purchasing and disposing of goods, services, ideas or experiences by the individuals, groups and organisations in order to satisfy their needs and wants.

Kumar (2010) defines consumer purchasing behaviour as the purchasing behaviour of final consumers, individual and households, who buy goods and services for personal consumption.

Consumer purchasing behaviour has various factors as part of it and these factors are believed to have some level of effect on the purchasing decisions of the customers (Dudovskiy, 2020).

For the purpose of this study, specific aspects of consumer behaviour include the reasons behind consumers making purchases, specific factors influencing the patterns of consumer purchases, analysis of changing factors within the society and others.

Theoretical Foundation

The mission of an advertisement is to attract the attention of the consumer in a way that prompts an interest to engage with the advertisement, which will then convince the consumer to take action (Chi, 2018). The theoretical framework that will be used in this research is the AIDA Model known as an advertising effect model that identifies the stages a consumer goes through during the process of purchasing a product or service (Corporate Finance Institute, 2017). The first stage is where the brand manages to capture the attention of the consumer through exposure of the brand advertisement (UK Essays, 2017). Brand ambassadors are used to attract consumers attention.

Consumers may be attracted to the brand message due to the use of the brand ambassador, however interest in the brand needs to be present to convince the consumer to consider the brand when making purchase decisions (UK Essays, 2017). Interest is developed through the brand message by focusing on the superior brand attributes. Desire is the stage that drives purchase intention, by triggering consumers emotions and highlighting the benefits of the brand (UK Essays, 2017). Brand ambassadors are used to trigger emotions, such as acceptability in society and success thereby driving purchase intention of consumers who

relate to these emotions. The final stage involves convincing the consumer to purchase the brand through action. Brands make use of brand ambassadors as consumers tend to believe their statements and claims.



Figure 1: AIDA Model (Corporate Finance Institute, 2017)

The theoretical framework of the AIDA model will allow the reader to understand the purchasing behaviour of consumers related to sports apparel brands making use of brand ambassadors. The ultimate objective of the AIDA model is to determine if organisational marketing and advertising has resulted in consumers taking action. For the purpose of this study, it is accepted that research has shown that brand ambassadors influence consumer behaviour, therefore the AIDA model will be used to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of brand ambassadors and consumer behaviour.

Review of Literature

In 2016, Nike announced a lifetime deal with global soccer icon Cristiano Ronaldo worth approximately \$1 billion (Badenhausen, 2016). This is an example of shifting marketing strategies where brands partner with brand ambassadors for advertising purposes. Globally, the use of brand ambassadors represents 15 percent of advertisements, proving it to be a popular advertising strategy (Dwivedi *et al.*, 2015).

Previous research looks at the concept of ambassadors, Temperly and Tangen (2006) conducted a study on consumers attitudes and associations towards celebrity endorsement, using a Reebok marketing campaign. The research found that the concept of celebrity endorsements could be summarised through the attitudes and associations of consumers as the “Pinocchio factor”, where the brand controls the celebrity for the purpose of creating a certain behaviour from consumers (Temperly & Tangen, 2006). The study looked at the ease and effectiveness of managing the brand ambassador and consumer expectations in a complex consumer market. The study found that there must be compatibility between the brand and the ambassador, and that the ambassador should represent what the brand is

trying to achieve. In research conducted by Malik and Sudhakar (2014) and Tsiotsou and Alexandris (2008) the focus was on the use of sports celebrities as ambassadors due to the attachment of fans to sporting teams. These studies found that fans are attracted to brands that are associated with sporting teams and that these brands are perceived as reliable. This helps the reputation of the brand through word of mouth. The studies also looked at how brands could position themselves in relation to the ambassadors they chose to work with or how customers interact with them and the brand. The study found that consumers would be more interested in a brand that seems to show expertise in their chosen sport.

Understanding the behaviours of target consumers ensures that brands will be more productive and efficient (Brosekhan & Velayutham, 2013). It is essential for brands to focus on the consumers behaviour in terms of perceptions, personalities, how promotion effects them, the market research that allows for the most valuable and what motivates people.

In Ramanathan, Subramanian and Parrotts, (2015) study it was found that consumers are more likely to post about their level satisfaction or dissatisfaction with a product on social media than any other system of review. Consumers felt that by posting they were more likely to receive a response. Social Media is a large part of what many brand ambassadors do for a brand and a great way to promote a product. It is used by many prospective consumers and has the ability to track valuable data for the brand. This data provides the brand with useful quantitative information, in order to gain a deeper understanding of the reasons for these behaviours requires qualitative research, as proposed in this study. Looking at trends on Social media would be helpful to the study as long as the users fall into the target population and parameters.

Dwivedi *et al.*, (2015) conducted a quantitative study that investigated how consumers sense of self is more strongly linked to an ambassador than an organisation or brand. The reason for this is that consumers see certain aspects of themselves or a trait that they would like to have in the ambassador. This is linked to the ideas of brand equity and the brand's ability to be more valuable in the minds of consumers. This link that has been developed could be seen as similar to the steps in the AIDA model and could allow the researcher to draw insight from these findings.

Bodet *et al.*, (2020) quantitative study attempted to gain an understanding of what draws fans in China to support football teams in England. This was done using demographics and characteristics of participants. The study made use of the AIDA model as a theoretical framework, linking it to how consumers develop an attachment to a specific team.

In a study by Emerald Group Publishing Ltd. (2013), the value of brand ambassadors provides insight on the successful implementation of brand ambassadors, resulting in a better market share by encouraging consumers to engage and purchase their offerings. This study explored the value of sports stars as brand ambassadors, which could increase sales by 4% per year. Various aspects related to the use of brand ambassadors as a marketing strategy were identified as contributing factors, namely; the commitment of the brand, higher spending led to greater returns, the sales boosts often decrease over time, planning is key to the success of the strategy and the brand ambassador must align with the brand. The study used David Beckham, to show how successful a brand ambassador can be when risk is minimised and proper planning and thought are part of the strategy. This article shows that planned research is something marketing experts considering, which shows that the study may still have gaps that brands would like to fill. As it uses sales to explain the benefit of using brand ambassadors it would link to consumers behaviours and increases in purchasing activities.

According to Pourazad *et al.*, (2019) in their study on understanding what drives consumers to be passionate when choosing sports apparel brands in Iran, social media following did not result in higher brand loyalty. However, there was a strong relationship between brands and consumers when the brand delivered on its promises, which also resulted in more passion and loyalty. Consumer purchasing behaviour would be effected by brand loyalty and brand ambassadors.

Previous research by Deshbhag and Mohan (2020) studied the influence brand ambassadors on the purchasing behaviour of consumers when purchasing fast moving goods. The focus of the study was on brand ambassadors that were considered trustworthy, credible and increased the attractiveness of the brand. This study was a quantitative study that made use of surveys to gather data. that the results indicate that consumers value expertise and trustworthiness as these limit the sense of risk s. This study makes use of ambassadors and consumer purchasing behaviour but is limited to an Indian context and makes use of a different theoretical framework to develop findings.

Yang (2018) made use of a qualitative critical literature review design to find trends and difficulties of using brand ambassadors in the hospitality industry. The findings of the paper state that more research is needed to fully understand the practice of using brand ambassadors in the industry. The article also gives tourism brands an insight to effectively use brand ambassadors. This paper states that brand ambassadors are an effective tool when advertising, gaining brand recognition, recall and consumer purchasing behaviour.

A mixed method study on the influence of brand ambassadors on purchasing behaviour of soft drinks in India, found that brand ambassadors did not have a significant influence on consumer behaviour as consumers purchased brands that offer the taste they prefer (Goutam, 2013). This study shows that brand ambassadors are effective in some markets but might be a waste in others. This is in contrast to most of the other studies and literature that has been reviewed and gives the topic a different dimension.

Garud (2013) conducted a study on the influence of celebrity endorsement and product advertisement on consumer behaviour and building brand image. The research developed a theoretical framework which considered the physical attributes of the ambassador, their trustworthiness, alignment to the brand and advertisements chosen. The study found that brand ambassadors have a positive effect on consumer purchasing behaviour if there was alignment of values.

Links to the proposed study

Many papers have discussed the importance of the link between trustworthiness of an ambassador and brand credibility and attractiveness to the consumer. This could lead to more people becoming involved in the steps that are outlined in the theoretical framework of AIDA which makes the value of the ambassador evident to the brand as well as allowing consumers to feel safe when choosing which brands to purchase.

The method used by most of the previous studies is quantitative, which could represent a gap in the topic, requiring a qualitative approach to develop a deeper understanding of the phenomenon through exploratory research.

There were no studies found for the South African market.

Research Design and Methodology

Paradigm and Tradition

The paradigm and tradition that will be used for this study is interpretivism, which aims to observe and describe, to gain a deeper understanding of the topic that is being researched (du Plooy-Cilliers, F., Davis, C. & Bezuidenhout, R.-M., 2014). Interpretivism distinguishes between people and things with a view that people change over time and the goal of this paradigm is to analyse and explain noteworthy societal actions. Interpretivism has been shaped through the intellectual traditions of hermeneutic, phenomenology and symbolic interactions, which analyses peoples' behaviours and opinions on a specific topic and does not make use of subjective or neutral facts.

The paradigm views knowledges as being gained from empathetic understanding of how people experience the world around them. It values common sense and views facts as subjective with a focus on social context. People's sense of reality is seen as subjective and internal in this type of research as it is established through personal experiences. This study attempts to gain an understanding of the relationship between brand ambassadors and consumers purchasing behaviour. This can only be achieved by understanding personal experiences.

This paradigm aims to tell a subjective story and uses quotes to develop an in-depth understanding of the topic that is being researched. It allows the reader to see how people in a specific context draw meaning and cultural values. This study will gather the personal subjective experiences of participants, which will be analysed by means of subjective interpretivism.

This paradigm makes use of smaller sample sizes and aims to give detailed information on the topic that is being researched. In this methodological position the views of the researcher are taken into account and can be measured against other people's perceptions and influences.

This type of research does not make judgements but rather aims to understand how different people are influenced by the topic. This directly links to understanding the perceived influence a brand ambassador has on their purchasing behaviour.

Research Approach and design

The research design approach will be cross-sectional qualitative uni-disciplinary and will be conducted through in-depth interviews using video calling. The research will be exploratory in nature. It will make use of a phenomenology design.

This study is inductive as there is no theory that is being proven and the codes and interpretations will be developed by the data collected.

Population and Sampling

Population

The population that was developed for this study was all people that have an interest and desire to follow and purchase sports apparel brands, the sport of football and the athletes (brand ambassadors) of the industry. They would be an active participant in the researcher's fantasy football league that is linked to the English Premier League.

The target population was people that live in South Africa and are interested in purchasing sports apparel brands, the football teams that use them and the athletes that work as ambassadors in both the top European football leagues as well as local football.

The accessible population would be the people that are part of league on the Premier League this group is made up of football fans. Most of these people have attended Vega or have some knowledge of branding which allows them to have formed meaningful opinions on the topic of brand ambassador and the relationships they have with them. This knowledge would allow them to answer questions without the need for the researcher to explain the topics involved as they have a good level of understanding.

The unit of analysis was the individuals themselves. They could talk about the topic as they are passionate about football and interact with the brands, ambassadors and sport that is involved in the study. Through their further business and branding related education they would have a good grasp on the concepts that were to be discussed such as ambassadors and consumer purchasing behaviour. Their input could be seen as relevant to the research as the form part of the target market that is valuable to brands in the sports apparel industry and are interested in purchasing their products as discussed.

Sampling

The sampling method that was used was nonprobability sampling as the research makes use of qualitative methods in an interpretivist paradigm. Nonprobability sampling is the technique of not giving all people in the population an equal chance to be a part of the research (Explorable , 2018). This is used in exploratory research to allow the researcher to gain an understanding of how people in the population feel about a topic rather than collecting generalised and objective data or facts. This type of sampling method cannot be generalised to represent the views of the wider population.

This technique is valid as it ensures that the sample that is used has the correct characteristics and that it can be collected in a timeous manner. Costs are also kept low when using this type of sampling and ensures that the researcher has access to the population that is being studied. This made the sampling more effective and efficient when collecting the data.

The types of nonprobability sampling that were looked at were accidental, convenience, purposive quota, snowball and volunteer. The two methods that were most seriously considered were the convenience sampling method and purposive sampling method (Maree and Pietersen, 2020).

Convenience sampling (Crossman, 2019) is greatly linked to the situational context of the researcher that is conducting the research. The sample is easy for the researcher to interact with as they would be people that are known by the researcher and would have the required traits that were described in the population. This makes the researcher surer that they will provide a good level of information that would be relevant to the study and the understanding of the topic.

Purposive sampling (Crossman, 2019) allows the specific characteristics of the sample to be targeted by the researcher. These characteristics were based on the research objectives and questions that were developed in the concept document and are important as if the characteristics are not met the researcher can reject them from the study. This ensures that the information and data that is collected will be valid, useful and reliable to the researcher.

In this research the most appropriate method identified by the researcher was convenience sampling due to its cost and time effective qualities which are important to this study as it needs to be completed in a set time frame with little to no funding. It also ensures that the topic is generally understood by the individual participants and would make logical sense to the research when conducting the research. The population size is also small and accessible

enough to suggest that convenience sampling would be effective. The sample size for this research would be 3 to 6 individuals.

Data Collection Method

Method

For this research the data collection method will be an online in-depth interview. An in-depth interview (Guest, Namey & Mitchell, 2013) is a qualitative research technique that requires intensive one on one interviews. It allows for freedom to both the interviewer and interviewee to explore different aspects and change the conversation allowing the researcher to gain more insight into the opinions of the individual. Online interviews were suggested due to the ongoing Coronavirus Pandemic to ensure the safety of participants and the researcher.

This data collection method was aligned with the paradigm of the researcher as it aims to gain a more insightful understanding of the opinions of individuals in relation to the topic. This method allows the interviewee and interviewer to gain a better understanding between one another in order to develop solutions. It looks to gain deeper insights into the topic rather than finding objective facts that can be generalised (Reddy, 2016).

The benefits of this method align with the type of research that is being conducted. It allows the researcher to understand the individual participants in great detail. It can be a quick process as it is similar to normal conversations that people understand and feel comfortable way. The amount of information that can be collected from one interview is large and allows for insight to be developed. Understanding and commonality can be developed between the parties involved to ensure that it is useful to the study. As it is comparable to a conversation this type of data collection is more relaxed than other methods (Reddy, 2016).

Application

The steps that were used in conducting the in-depth interviews were (Newbold, 2018):

1. Enlist interviewees

The researcher ensured that they had access to the people that they wanted to interview and that they were happy to give informed consent to be a part of the study. As no organisation is involved in the study no gatekeeper consent was needed.

2. Record interviews

The interviews were recorded using the Voice Memo Application on an iPhone or online recording software and will later be transcribed in the data analysis process. The consent of the participant was asked for before recording the interview.

3. Develop questions

The questions were developed to ensure that the interviewer had a guideline for interview and would gather information that was relevant and useful. They will be based on the theoretical foundation of the AIDA model.

4. Conduct interview

The interview was conducted at an agreed upon time and location as agreed upon by the researcher and participant that was convenient for the participant and researcher.

5. Compile results

Through listening and further questioning the interviewer could ensure that they understood what was meant by the interviewee. If the researcher is unsure of what something that was spoken about meant further research may be needed to draw a meaningful insight from the statement. The recording was reviewed by the researcher to ensure that no important information was left out.

The research framework of AIDA was also kept in mind during question development and during the interviews themselves to ensure a complete set of data was collected. This data collection method is an example of field research. This is an activity that is aimed at collecting primary data (Business Dictionary, 2019).

Data Analysis Method

Method

Through the data analysis method of phenomenology, a thematic analysis has been conducted to develop the findings from the data that was collected. Some information that was obtained in the collection of the data may have been excluded due to assumptions and bias towards the topic being research but through this method the data analysis can be more thorough, valid and relevant as it takes a step-by-step approach to ensure all relevant data is compiled. Through this process clear patterns can be developed and analysed by the researcher. This method aims to identify patterns that are present in interview data and is a valid way of analysing interviews (Mortensen, 2019). It allowed the data that is spread out and messy in an interview and through continuous development of themes and patterns the data can be more easily understood and analysed.

Application

All the steps in transparent thematic analysis were present to endure that the results were relevant and help gain an understanding of what participants feel about the topic. This would ensure that the work would stand up to criticism and have a clear record of all data that was collected.

The steps that were involved in this process of thematic analysis were understanding and working with the data, design a coding system to group responses or ideas, look for patterns, review themes, define and name themes and report findings (Mortensen, 2019).

1. Understanding and working with the data

This step was listening to the recordings and transcribing the interviews. This allows the researcher to become familiar with the topic and what people are expressing. This process can require a researcher to go over the interviews and create a deep understanding.

2. Design a coding system to group responses or ideas

This was grouping different ideas into a group or main heading to ensure that a theme can be found. These needed to follow a logical and valid set of rules. This was the start of dealing with analysing and reporting the data into findings.

3. Look for patterns

Looking for patterns makes the data easier to assign to groups and headings. Once this was achieved the research results become more focused and patterns begin emerging.

4. Review themes

Ensuring that the themes are relevant to the topic and question. This allows some data to be grouped into more appropriate themes.

5. Define and name themes

The codes and themes that were developed are clearly defined to allow a reader to gain insight and understanding of the relationship between brand ambassador and the consumer purchasing behaviour.

6. Report findings

The researcher finally takes these themes and report on them and make conclusions on what the research and data have taught them.

By using this thematic analysis answers from participants can be grouped to allow a conclusion to be made. This would allow the researcher to understand and explore the relationship between brand ambassadors and consumer purchasing behaviour in regard to the sporting apparel industry.

Findings and Interpretations of Findings

Findings

In this section the main data findings will be discussed. The areas that have been identified are football teams that were supported, brands that were considered, ambassadors that were mentioned, the role brand ambassadors played for participants, the role brand ambassadors played in relation to the participants consumer purchasing behaviour, when brand ambassadors were most effective and the relationship between purchasing drivers of the consumer and purchasing behaviour.

According to Koenigstorfer, Groeppel-Klein and Schmidtt (2010) in a focus group study of fans English Premier League clubs, revealed that a genuine relationship between fans and their clubs are not only associated with high levels of commitment, but also with intimacy, mutuality, interaction, and trust. Fans, as consumers are intensely loyal to their chosen club and favourite football stars (Bridgewater, 2016).

Football Teams, brand sponsorship and influence

Constanti (Constanti, 2020) did a study defining the relationship that EPL football fans have between their Fantasy League involvement and traditional football team loyalty there was clear evidence to suggest that participants possessed high loyalty towards their supported EPL club. The importance of participants' chosen football team may provide insight into their sporting apparel purchasing behaviour and brand preference. Participants 1 and 3 supported Arsenal, Participants 2 and 6 supported Manchester United, Participant 3 supported Liverpool and Participant 5 supported Tottenham Hotspur. In terms of the 2020-2021 Premiership, Adidas sponsors Arsenal and Manchester United and Nike sponsors Liverpool and Tottenham Hotspur (Score and Change, 2020). Participants were asked to comment on whether their football team influenced their buying behaviour. Participant 3 and 4 both answered, "*yes it does*", while other participants were unsure stating "*It doesn't influence my preference towards brands*" and "*sort of, it depends on the brand and team*" and "*not necessarily, it doesn't really influence me.*" Despite the initial hesitancy, Participants 1 and 2 both stated that they would be influenced by Arsenal.

Brand preference

Participants' preferred sporting brands were Nike and Adidas. This aligns with research conducted by World Clothing Shoes and Hats Network (2018) indicating that Nike continues to top the list, followed by Adidas. The two brand giants take up 56% of the world's market share, far ahead of other brands. Adidas, Nike, New Balance and Puma were mentioned.

	Reason for brand preference
Participant 1	<i>"Adidas has powerful marketing campaigns and Nike's professionalism. But that all comes second to quality."</i>
Participant 2	<i>"Funnily enough my preferred brand is Nike, even though Arsenal is with Adidas. But I think it started off when I started supporting Arsenal Nike was their brand."</i>
Participant 3	<i>"I've had my eye on Marcus Rashford, he's really made a mark on what I've seen and happen to follow, so Nike."</i>
Participant 4	<i>"It would come down to the product itself, but I am completely influenced by players that I liked. For example, Adidas was worn by players that I knew like Sadio Mane"</i> <i>"My favourite cricket player used a Stuart Sturridge cricket bat when I was younger, I always wanted a Stuart Sturridge cricket bat."</i>
Participant 5	<i>"Nike because of football boots. I always used to buy new, buy Nike stock standard. They were the best and I've got weird feet. So, they used to fit my feet properly."</i> <i>"Adidas because of their clothing, their shorts, their playing shorts are really, really nice, their socks...shoes are by far insanely, insanely comfortable"</i>
Participant 6	<i>"Probably Adidas. Uh, but mainly because I prefer them as a running shoe, which, uh, which has a big influence and I don't, so much have a sort of overall preference in terms of style or anything like that."</i>

In Table 1 above, it was only Participant 2 that made reference to the football team sponsor when providing the reason for brand preference. This was to explain the fact that the preferred brand was not the same as the football team's brand sponsor. However, only two of the participants had corresponding preferred brand and football team brand sponsor, indicating that for this sample, brand preference is not necessarily influenced by the football team supported. This aligns with research (Pillai, 2014) on the perception of sports brands that sports team endorsement does not impact on preference for brand or brand choice and does not influence which brand is selected. Reasons given by participants related to quality of the brand, fit and comfort, marketing and influence. Previous research found that attributes or features distinguish brands from each other as stated by Pule, van Heerden & Nthangeni (2012) with aspects related to choose including comfort, quality, cutting or fitting, performance of product and promotion (Pillai, 2014).

Ambassadors

The football brand ambassadors that were mentioned most frequently by participants were Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang (Nike), Bruno Fernandes (Adidas), Paul Pogba (Adidas), Sergio Kun Aguero (Puma), Sadio Mane (Adidas), Cesc Fàbregas (Nike), Michael Owen (Nike), Lionel Messi (Adidas), Harry Kane (Nike) and Cristiano Ronaldo (Nike). A majority of brand ambassadors were linked to Adidas and Nike which could be due to the established reputation these two brands already have in the sports apparel industry.

Other sporting ambassadors involved in cricket, tennis, rugby, skateboarding and golf were also mentioned when prompted. Participants specifically mentioned Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo and explained that they had the most influence on their purchasing behaviour due to their longevity and level of performance over a sustained period of time. Interestingly, Participant 6 stated *“I don’t really associate any particular footballers to any brands.”* this could be due to the ever changing landscape of footballing brand ambassadors and brands that choose to work with different teams and players depending on their perceived popularity at the time.

Brand ambassador value

Many participants discussed the fact that they did enjoy or value the use of ambassadors by brands but that it was more a way to gain their attention and interest in the brand rather than the more consumer purchasing behaviour linked aspects of desire and action. One participant stated that these advertisements or collaborations placed the player and the brand as “top of mind” when thinking about possible brands to purchase but stated that cost and quality were still more important than the ambassador.

Brand ambassadors and consumer purchasing behaviour

The role brand ambassadors played in relation to the participants consumer purchasing behaviour was that people did consider it to have a sway on their behaviour with one participant stating that it would not sway them in anyway as they would only see it as a mark of quality which they feel has already been established due to the brand’s (Nike in this case) position, market status and their own personal experiences with the brand.

When brand ambassadors were most effective

When participants interacted with brands' and brand ambassadors' content which had the largest sway on their behaviour was when they were younger and more actively involved with football. Many of the participants recalled purchasing a pair of football boots based on the players that they were interested in at that time of their lives.

Purchasing drivers and consumer purchasing behaviour

The relationship between purchasing drivers of the consumer and consumer purchasing behaviour when related to football ambassadors is that they do play a role in developing trust in the minds of consumers but the purchasing drivers which are the reasons for the purchase came down to three main areas of cost, style and quality.

Interpretations

In this section the data will be interpreted to allow for a more meaningful understanding to be developed by exploring why participants feel the way they do when discussing the relationship between brand ambassadors and their own consumer buying behaviour.

Supporting the best of the best

The teams that were supported by participants all finished in the top 10 clubs in the English Premier League (EPL) in the 2019/2020 season (Premier League , 2020). The ambassadors that were mentioned would be seen as some of the best and most prolific footballers of this generation by any football fan that watches the EPL. The sports apparel brands that were mentioned are some of the most valuable in the world with valuations between \$36.8 billion and \$4.1 billion (Ozanian, 2019). This shows that participants choose to support and follow brands that have been proven to provide success and a sense of security when purchasing or choosing who to support or follow.

Timing

All of the participants discussed being influenced by ambassadors near the time they were going to purchase items related to football such as footballs, boots or apparel. More than half stated that they were more swayed by ambassadors in their youth and have since valued aspects such as cost, style and quality as being more important than what an ambassador is linked to. This shows that although participants are still influenced later in life, they are more perceptible to the brand ambassadors in the formative years when they were more actively participating in playing football. As they have grown older individuality and a sense of self is more based on one's own values rather than that of an ambassador or brand offering and this is how their consumer buying behaviour is developed.

As teams have an ambassador role to play in football with shirt sponsors and the like many participants confused this collaboration to be between the player and the brand. An example of this could be the fact that a participant state that Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang was an Adidas ambassador when his club Arsenal were sponsored by them, but his sponsorship deal is with Nike this may show that brands should attempt to unify their brand ambassador's in terms of clubs and players to have a more effective relationship with consumers. This also shows that participants were more focused on the team they support rather than the individual ambassador. This links to timing the collaboration to ensure that it is effective for the brand and ambassador in the minds of consumers.

Relationship between consumers & ambassadors

More than half participants spoke about ambassadors that play for their supported teams. This shows that the collaboration between player and brand will only be effective if the consumer is already a fan of the play and could limit the number of consumers that could be targeted by a specific ambassador.

More than half participants stated that they like brand and ambassador collaborations stating that it is something they enjoy and grabs their attention and makes them more interested in the brand. Even though they feel the practice of using ambassadors to promote a brand was positive and developed a positive association with the human aspects of the ambassador it did not directly lead to the changes in their consumer purchasing behaviour.

In the minds of consumers, they did feel influenced by brand ambassadors but were not a necessary aspect to inform their purchasing behaviour it was merely an addition link when it came to the quality of the product which was much more important for the consumer when purchasing from a sports apparel brand.

Findings in Context

The AIDA Framework

The relationship the findings had to the AIDA model is that it links more to the aspects of attention and interest as the participants spoke about the use of ambassadors making them aware of the brand and consider them when making a purchase but the aspects that they felt lead them to actually act on the desire for a product was more linked to their own personal style, the cost of the item and the overall quality.

Quality was also linked to the AIDA model as it could be seen to make the product more desirable in the minds of consumers and this was an area that was discussed by participants as they felt if the product was good enough for a highly skilled athlete and ambassador then it was good enough for them.

Relations to reviewed literature

The previous literature made reference to the importance of trustworthiness. None of the participants discussed this directly and they were all influenced by international ambassadors and not local which was in line with the other studies that have been conducted by other researchers.

Relations to purchasing behaviour

Participants stated that their purchasing behaviours were influenced by the use of brand ambassadors.

Validity, reliability and trustworthiness

As the aim of this research is qualitative in nature and looks to foster understanding of a specific occurrence (consumer purchasing behaviour) within a particular situation (the use of brand ambassadors) the findings cannot be generalised for the larger population. Trustworthiness looks at four main areas which are credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (du Plooy-Cilliers, et al., 2014).

Credibility refers to the accuracy of the researches interpretation of the data they receive from participants. The researcher will spend time with the participants to ensure that the experience, and context of each participant is understood. It also allows the research to fully develop the research methodology and data collection methods. Credibility also ensures that the answers and data are believable in the context of the participant. This area of trustworthiness is internal when compared to quantitative research.

Transferability refers to the ability to use findings in a similar setting thereby giving the researcher comparable results. This is not the same as generalisability of quantitative findings as the sample is not representative of the population. This aspect of trustworthiness is external when compared to quantitative research.

Dependability is the synthesis of the processes used by the researcher in the data collection method, analysis and theory development phases of the research. This can be shown through having a clear outline and thread in the research and making sure processes follow a recognisable flow. This ensures that the research is reliable when compared to quantitative research.

Confirmability links the data that is collected to the findings and interpretations that are made by the researcher. The researcher needs to ensure that the research will stand up to scrutiny from other and that they work in a transparent way by limiting bias, studying the data and developing meaningful codes. This ensures the objectivity of the research when compared to quantitative research.

These aspects must be considered in all areas linked to the research to ensure that the research will be seen as useful when gaining knowledge about brand ambassadors, brands and consumers' purchasing behaviours.

Conclusion

Addressing the Research Question, Objectives and Problem

Research Objectives

The objectives of the research were:

1. To explore the relationship between brand ambassadors and consumer attention.

The relationship between brand ambassadors and consumer attention was strong when the ambassador was an athlete that the participant was already aware of and invested in. If the ambassador was linked to a rival team the ambassador would be a slight relationship between the brand ambassador and customer attention, therefore ending the advantages of using one for the brand but would not detract from what the consumer thought about the brand as they may have other areas that they value more.

2. To explore the relationship between brand ambassadors and consumer interest.

Football Brand ambassadors enhanced the relationship between customer interest for the brand in question when the football player was someone they valued or had a positive mindset about.

3. To explore the relationship between brand ambassadors and consumer desire.

The relationship between brand ambassadors and consumer desire would only be impacted if the consumer was greatly attached to the ambassador and the brand in question. This would also only represent a small contribution to the overall consumer purchasing behaviour of the participants.

4. To explore the relationship between brand ambassadors and consumer action.

Participant 2 said there was a link brand ambassador and consumer action as there are areas that are seen as more important for the consumer when choosing to buy sports apparel. These areas were cost, style and quality.

5. To explore consumers perceptions towards the use of brand ambassadors.

Most participant had a positive perception towards brand ambassadors and felt that it gave them a sense of connection to the brand as it humanised the brand and made them feel a connection to the brand. It was somewhat linked to the final decision to buy a product but mainly drew attention to the products that the brand offered and made the brand more interesting to the consumer.

Research Question

The research question was “What is the relationship between brand ambassadors and consumer purchasing behaviour?”. From the data that was collected from the six participants the relationship between brand ambassadors and consumer purchasing behaviour could be expressed as being linked to the attention and interest steps of the AIDA model. The relationship could be described as constructive in allowing consumers to feel a sense of safety in relation to limit risk of purchasing and a sense of pride as they are in line with the ambassador that they value.

Research Problem

The research problem was to allow an insightful understanding to be developed into the relationship brand ambassadors have to the consumer purchasing behaviour with regards to football and the sports apparel industry. Through developing this insight, we can see if the practice of using brand ambassador improves or hinders the performance of the brand. Through the in depth interviews the understanding that was developed showed that it did improve the performance of the brand as the attention and interest in the brand would increase.

Final Conclusions

In the sample that was a part of this study the relationship between brand ambassadors and the consumer purchasing behaviour was that brand ambassadors did have a role to play in their overall purchasing behaviour but was not the only deciding factor that was considered. Other factors were price, quality, fit and style.

The sample in this research could be seen as having strong ties to their chosen team but can change the individual brand ambassadors they follow more frequently. An ambassador is only effective if the participant feels a personal connection to that ambassador.

Longevity of success as a brand ambassador could only be found in football's most successful player like Messi and Ronaldo being mentioned by almost all of the participants.

Ethical Implications

The areas that were considered in regard to ethical consideration of the research were the importance, issues for the participant and issues for the researcher. Ethics in research ensures the stakeholders are not negatively affected in any way, the research is done with integrity and it is done in a conscientious manner. It ensures that the research meets the standards of the community that would be associated with it.

The importance of ethics can be seen as the standards that one sets for themselves and how they react to others in their general life, not limited to the field of research. This is particularly important as there are many stakeholders that could be affected by the research. They are the participants, the wider public, research communities, academic institutions, funding bodies, the direct community, policy makers and the researchers themselves. The research should aim to add value to the lives of all these groups to ensure that they empowered and informed.

The main two stakeholder groups that were focussed on are the participants and the researcher. For the participant informed consent, collecting data, dealing with sensitive information, providing incentives, avoiding harm, confidentiality vs anonymity and deception are all areas that need to be looked at during the research.

- Informed consent

Participants must know that they are a part of the research. They should be happy to be a part of the research. They should know what is expected of them and what the information will be used for. Written consent forms will be used in the proposed research.

- Collecting data

When collecting data, the physical and psychological wellbeing of the participant must be considered. This can be achieved through transparency between the researcher and participant, avoid embarrassing questions in the presence of others, time management, ensure there is a plan when collecting data and all aspects of the participants life and context.

- Dealing with sensitive information

If sensitive information is given the researcher should protect it as a matter of principle and will not allow subjective feeling to interfere. The information should not be disclosed to any tertiary party.

- Providing incentives

Offering incentives will change certain aspects of the research and should be limited in the proposed research. It can affect who chooses to participate and how they answer the questions to allow them to gain that incentive.

- Avoiding harm

The participant should not be physically harmed by the research in any way. The research should not make the participant recall negative memories, ask questions that may embarrass them in anyway, participants prospects could be damaged and making the participant feel less intelligent, relevant or valuable.

- Confidentiality vs anonymity

Confidentiality ensures that only the researcher can link the participant to the answers given but will not be disclosed to anyone else. Anonymity ensures that the participant will remain unnamed and anonymous throughout the research. This must be taken extremely seriously and must only be promised if it can be guaranteed.

- Deception

This should be avoided as much as possible but can be necessary to produce trustworthy results. If they have been deceived, they should be told how, why and give consent through a debriefing. This will not be needed in the proposed research.

The areas the researcher needs to look at regarding their own behaviour is falsifying information, distorting results, being influenced by bias, misusing information and using inappropriate research methods.

- Falsifying information

This is the deliberate act of creating or changing data and is always unethical. Reasons for this may be to save one's reputation, ensure funding of the research, please employers, to avoid doing the difficult work or to get the desired results.

- Distorting results

This is done though highlighting one area over another that have equal relevance and quoting things without giving the correct context. This is done for similar reasons to falsifying information and is highly unethical.

- Being influenced by bias

This is more subtle and can be linked to the context of the researcher. One should take time to ensure that they react in an objective manner when dealing with the data to ensure that they are behaving ethically.

- Misusing information

The data that is collected for the research may not be used for any other activity. This may only be done if the participant has given the researcher permission to do so. The research found in the proposed study may not be used for any other reason outside of the research paper.

Limitations of Study

Limitations are restrictions or boundaries of the research that cannot be controlled by the researcher (Du Plooy-Cilliers, et al., 2014, pp. 275-276). Here the limitation will be discussed in relation to the research topic outlined.

The research needed to be completed in a maximum of 12 months as it was used for the honours program at Vega and this was the given timeframe. This limits how much information can be gathered and how long the interpretation of the collected data could take.

The research had no external funding, and all costs needed to be covered by the researcher. As the research was based on interviews and planned not to use incentives to attract participants this did not present a major challenge in the planning phase, but unforeseen costs may have become an issue for the research.

Some of the proposed accessible population chose to decline the opportunity to be a part of the research for personal reasons. This made it more challenging to get the required sample size for the research to be trustworthy. It also added more time constraints to the research.

The society that the accessible population was found in may have had an unexpected shift that changes their context and leads them to not fit the targeted population parameters. This could have been changes in their social, economic or other areas of their daily lives. This would have negatively impacted the study and the ability to draw a meaningful understanding from the data.

The research needed to be conducted in the last 4 months of the year as the deadline for the academic year is the 14th of December 2020.

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Appendices

Consent Form Example



Consent Form

Title of research:

Exploring the relationship between brand ambassadors and consumer purchasing behaviour.

Researcher: Michael Walsh



Degree: BCom Honours in Strategic Brand Management
Institute: Vega Bordeaux, Johannesburg

I understand that my participation in Michael Walsh's research paper: "Exploring the relationship between brand ambassadors and consumer purchasing behaviour" is voluntary, and I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.

I acknowledge that my participation involves being interviewed by the researcher. The interview will last about 30 minutes and will take place via an online platform meeting (WhatsApp, Zoom or other) or in a safe face to face environment. I allow the researcher to take written notes and record (video and audio recording) the interview.

I acknowledge that there is no compensation for my participation in this study.

Name of Participant

Signature

Date

Michael Walsh



Name of Researcher

Signature

Date

Interview Outline Example



In-depth interview guideline and questions

Exploring the relationship between brand ambassadors and consumer purchasing behaviour.

Before beginning the interview ensure that they have signed a consent form. This would give the researcher the information that would allow you to determine if they fall into the accessible population that has been outlined.

1. Which EPL team do you support?
2. Does your support for this team influence your sporting brand preference?
3. What is your preferred sporting brand?
4. Can you explain your choice of this preferred sporting brand? Prompt for information on the brand ambassador used by the brand – do they know who the ambassador is?
5. Would you/Do you purchase only from your preferred brand or do you purchase from other brands?
6. What is your opinion on the current use of brand ambassador as the representative for your preferred brand?
7. Can you recall any previous ambassadors used by your preferred sport brand?
8. Which other sporting brand ambassadors are you aware of? Prompt for “is there any specific reason you are aware of these ambassadors or brands?”
9. Can you explain if the use of the brand ambassador used by your preferred sporting brand influence your purchasing decisions in any way?
10. When purchasing sporting apparel (other than football supporter apparel), which brands do you consider and what is the final deciding factor for your purchase?
11. Has the use of a brand ambassador by any brand, ever influenced your purchasing behaviour or decision? Prompt for details (If no, why not? If yes, explain the influence – was it the ambassador – was it the product?)

Ethical Clearance Letter



12 October 2020



Student name: Michael Walsh

Campus: Vega Bordeaux



Re: Approval of RESE 8419 Proposal and Ethics Clearance



HONOURS ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER

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



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

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

We wish you all the best with your research!

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Inanda Greens
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Wierda Valley 2196
P.O. Box 2369
Randburg 2125



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

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GENERAL CONDITIONS TO BE FULFILLED IN RELATION TO RESEARCH

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

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

Permission is granted subject to the following conditions:

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

Supervisor: Dr Tish Taylor



Campus Postgraduate Coordinator (CPC): Dr Tish Taylor



Originality Report

Please see on Safe Assign as the researcher does not have access at time of submission.

Document Summary Table

Annexure A: Final Research Report Summary Document Template

TITLE: Exploring the relationship between brand ambassadors and consumer purchasing behaviour.

[illegible]