



*EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BRAND DESIGN ELEMENTS AND
CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR.*

By:

Rhianne Wood

A research project submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the
Bachelor of Commerce Honours in Strategic Brand Management

at the

Independent Institute of Education: Vega School

Supervisor:

Amalia van Schalkwyk

Submission date:

November 2023

Word Count:

8 804 words

Pages:

60

ABSTRACT

This quantitative study aimed to identify the relationship between brand design elements (logo shape, logo colour and typeface) and consumer behaviour (consumer decision-making). Although both topics have been studied extensively within the marketing industry there has been limited research conducted to uncover the relationship between consumer behaviour and brand design elements, specifically concerning logo shape, logo colour and typeface, within the past 5 years. 205 anonymous individuals participated in this research by completing an online survey via Google Forms. The findings of the research identified that based on participant's preference in terms of shape, colour and typeface, in some instances, correlates with the brand logo they prefer which as a result has an impact on their decision to choose one brand over the other. Alongside primary research, the assumption could be made that although participants stated that they do not purchase from brands solely based on the look of their logos consumers may subconsciously be attracted towards specific logos based on the logo shape, colour and typeface, resulting in them selecting one brand over another based on their logo, impacting their consumer decision-making.

Key Words: Brand Design, Consumer Behaviour, Brand Identity.

DECLARATION

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

Signature

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Date 20 November 2023

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1 INTRODUCTION

This study aims to identify the relationship between brand design elements and consumer behaviour.

When conducting preliminary research on this topic, limited studies had been conducted specifically regarding the relationship between brand design elements/visual brand identity factors such as colour, shape, typeface and consumer behaviour over the past 5 years. Therefore, this study aims to uncover new, updated, and relevant insights into the topic and to uncover whether there is a relationship between the two main variables, brand design elements and consumer behaviour.

Information regarding the relationship between brand design elements and consumer behaviour may benefit businesses and marketing teams by giving them a clearer understanding of how these variables are potentially linked and a better understanding of how to implement a brand strategy that can benefit the brand. When utilising brand identity to the fullest a brand can differentiate itself within the market and gain a competitive advantage (Ekhlassi *et al.*, 2018).

The purpose of this study is to investigate and explore whether there is a relationship between brand design elements, such as logo shape, logo colour and logo typeface, and consumer behaviour, particularly in the context of consumer decision-making when opting to purchase from one brand or another.

This paper discusses the paradigm under which this study will fall, uncovers a theoretical foundation, defines the key terms utilised and goes into detail regarding previous research that has been done on this topic to provide a clear foundation for this study. This paper then further discusses how research has been conducted and collected. Lastly, this paper highlights and interprets the findings collected during the research and overall comes to a final conclusion.

1.1 CONTEXTUALISATION

Within the marketing industry, both brand design elements and consumer behaviour have been studied extensively and are both broad topics of interest (Burtler and Scalia, 2022).

Various articles have been written regarding consumer behaviour such as the 2006 book *Consumer Behaviour* by Blackwell, Miniard and Engel, furthermore, various articles have additionally been written on brand design elements, including David Aaker and Erich Joachimsthaler's book *Brand Leadership* written in 2000 (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000; Blackwell *et al.*, 2006). Despite this however, it has been found that there has been limited research conducted regarding the relationship between consumer behaviour and brand design elements, specifically concerning logo shape, logo colour and typeface, within the past 5 years. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to investigate and explore whether there is a relationship between brand design elements and consumer behaviour, particularly in the context of consumer decision-making when opting to purchase from one brand or another.

1.2 RATIONALE

As mentioned previously, both brand design elements and consumer behaviour have been studied extensively within the marketing industry and are two broad topics of interest (Burtler and Scalia, 2022). Yet previous research has shown that there has been limited research conducted to uncover the relationship between consumer behaviour such as when opting to purchase from one brand or another, and brand design elements, specifically with regards to logo shape, logo colour and typeface, within the past 5 years. This finding has been supported by a statement made by Machado (2015:1) who stated in their research that "little systematic research has been undertaken to examine the effect of logo design on affective response toward the brand". Therefore, the information that currently exists regarding this topic may be outdated which could potentially be misleading to businesses, graphic designers, and marketers who rely on these factors as they are continuously being improved upon (Thomas, 2023).

This information may be beneficial to businesses, graphic designers and marketers and could be utilised to inform and improve brand strategies, potentially leading to increased brand recognition and customer loyalty (Duberg, 2023).

Overall, the findings of this study have the potential to contribute to the existing literature on branding and consumer behaviour, providing valuable insights for academics and marketers. By shedding light on the potential impact of visual branding on consumer decision-making, this study can inform and enhance the development of effective brand strategies, helping businesses to differentiate themselves in the market, increase their brand recognition and gain a competitive advantage (Duberg, 2023).

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

As mentioned in the above statements, the topics of both brand design elements and consumer behaviour have been studied extensively within the marketing industry and are two broad topics of interest (Burtler and Scalia, 2022). Yet preliminary research showed that there has been limited research conducted to uncover the relationship between consumer behaviour and brand design elements, specifically with regards to logo shape, logo colour and typeface, within the past 5 years. This finding has been supported by a statement made by Machado (2015:1) who stated in their research that “little systematic research has been undertaken to examine the effect of logo design on affective response toward the brand”. Therefore, the information that currently exists regarding this topic may be outdated which could potentially be misleading to businesses, graphic designers, and marketers who rely on these factors as they are continuously being improved upon (Thomas, 2023).

1.4 RESEARCH AIM/PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of this research study is to explore, better understand, and uncover new, updated and relevant insights concerning the relationship between brand design elements and consumer behaviour to uncover the potential impact that visual branding may have on consumer decision-making. This study specifically aims to determine whether or not the visual appearance of a brand, specifically in the context of logo colour, logo shape and typeface, can influence how consumers respond to stimuli and how it potentially influences consumers' perceptions and associations concerning a brand and as a result how consumers behave towards a brand, for example, consumer-decision making, particularly when opting to purchase from one brand or another.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study intends to answer the following research questions:

Main Research Question:

- Is there a relationship between brand design elements and consumer behaviour?

Sub-questions

- Is there a relationship between logo colour and consumer behaviour?
- Is there a relationship between logo shape and consumer behaviour?
- Is there a relationship between logo typeface and consumer behaviour?

1.6 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND/OR HYPOTHESIS

Based on the above, the hypotheses below are proposed:

H₀: There is no relationship between brand design elements and consumer behaviour.

H_{1a}: There is a relationship between colour and consumer behaviour.

H_{1b}: There is a relationship between shape and consumer behaviour.

H_{1c}: There is a relationship between typeface and consumer behaviour.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

2.1.1 BRAND IDENTITY PRISM

The Brand Identity Prism highlights six facets that make up a brand's identity (Kapferer, 2008). The six facets include physique, personality, culture, self-image, reflection, and relationship (Kapferer, 2008). Kapferer (2005 cited in Jimenez and Tulabut, 2022) states that the Brand Identity Prism helps Brand Managers better understand the strengths and weaknesses of the brand. Kapferer (1996 cited in Lombard, 2018) argues that the above six elements can be used to build strong brands that can communicate clearly and are easily recognisable.

This research study aims to identify the relationship between brand design elements, aspects of a brand's identity, and consumer behaviour. The Brand Identity Prism highlights six facets of brand identity and how they impact consumers. Therefore this model can be used to assist in better understanding the elements that make up a brand's identity and how consumers perceive them.

2.1.1.1 PHYSIQUE

Physique refers to a brand's "physical specificities and qualities" also known as its physical appearance (Kapferer, 2008: 182). Kapferer (2008) states that these attributes are the salient features that immediately come to mind when a brand is mentioned. Kapferer (2008:182) Goes on to note that "physique is both a brand's backbone and its tangible added value". Kapferer further states that physical appearance is important (Kapferer, 2008). A brand's physique includes flagship products that represent its quality, an example of this would be the traditional Coca-Cola bottle as well as its dark colour (Kapferer, 2008).

2.1.1.2 PERSONALITY

Personality refers to when a brand builds character through its communications giving it a “personality”, human characteristics and traits (Kapferer, 2008). A brand's personality furthermore includes aspects such as celebrities, spokespersons or characters that represent a brand (Kapferer, 2008). An example of this would be McDonald's and Ronald McDonald (Twisted, 2021).

2.1.1.3 CULTURE

Culture refers to “the basic principles governing” a brand such as its products and communication (Kapferer, 2008: 184). An example of this would be Apple representing the new frontier (Kapferer, 2008). Kapferer (2008:185) adds that “culture is what links the brand to the firm, especially when the two bear the same name.”

2.1.1.4 SELF-IMAGE

Self-image refers to how consumers see themselves when they look at a brand (Lombard, 2018). Kapferer (2008:186) states that “self-image is the target's own internal mirror”. Self-image refers to how consumers associate themselves with certain brands, for example, Lacoste portrays its clients to picture themselves as members of an elegant sports club, even if they don't play sports (Kapferer, 2008).

2.1.1.5 REFLECTION

According to Kapferer (2008:186), “A brand will always tend to build a reflection or an image of the buyer or user which it seems to be addressing”. Lombard (2018) states that self-reflection refers to how customers see themselves when it comes to a brand, these can include factors such as stereotypes. For example, a brand can be associated with being for young people or old folks (Kapferer, 2008).

2.1.1.6 RELATIONSHIP

According to Lombard (2018), relationship refers to the relationship between the brand and its customers such as the services offered and how the brand communicates with its audience. For example, Apple is considered friendly and IBM conveys orderliness (Kapferer, 2008).

Within the Brand Identity Prism these six facets are interrelated (Kapferer, 2008). Physique, relationship and reflection are all social factors that make up the outward-facing expression

of a brand (Kapferer, 2008). On the other hand personality, culture, and self-image speaks to the brand's "spirit" (Kapferer, 2008).

Overall the brand identity prism helps Brand Managers better understand both the brand itself as well as retail identities (Kapferer, 2008).

2.2 CONCEPTUALISATION

2.2.1 BRAND DESIGN AND BRAND IDENTITY

2.2.1.1 BRAND DESIGN

Brand design refers to the elements such as a brand name, symbols, logo shape, colour, and typeface that help identify a brand and differentiate it from competitors (Henderson and Cote, 1998; Walsh *et al.*, 2012).

2.2.1.2 BRAND IDENTITY

Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000:40), define brand identity as "a set of associations that the brand strategist aspires to create or maintain". Kapferer (2008) states that a brand's identity creates a brand's uniqueness and value. Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) go on to add that brand identity is a key pillar in creating a strong brand and highlights what a brand stands for. Additionally, a brand's identity helps an organisation resonate with customers and differentiates a brand from competitors (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000). Logos and symbols are a form of brand identity that can be used to differentiate a brand (Matúšová, 2021). Ekhlassi *et al.* (2018) go on to state that brand identity should differentiate a brand creating a competitive advantage. Ianencko *et al.* (2020) add that brand identity is an external expression and a set of identities that reflect the characteristics of a brand that assist in creating brand recognition and shaping the uniqueness of a brand.

This research study aims to identify the effect of brand design elements on consumer behaviour; therefore, brand identity can be considered a key component. Within this study, brand design elements are considered an aspect of brand identity and include elements such as its colours, logo, symbols, and typeface that differentiate a brand from competitors within the market providing the brand with a competitive advantage.

2.2.2 CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR

Consumer behaviour can be understood as the activities consumers go about doing when obtaining, consuming or disposing of a product or service (Blackwell *et al.*, 2006). Kumar and Kumar (2019) add that consumer behaviour is not identical. Roberts-Lombard *et al.* (2022) agree that consumer behaviour is not a once-off phenomenon. Roberts-Lombard *et al.* (2022:1) define consumer behaviour as “how consumers react and respond to products and services offered to them through the marketing actions of companies”. Furthermore, they add that consumer behaviour studies individual groups and organisations and the processes they follow when it comes to selecting, purchasing, using, and disposing of products and services to satisfy their needs and the overall impact on society (Roberts-Lombard *et al.*, 2022).

As mentioned above, this research study aims to identify the relationship between brand design and consumer behaviour, therefore consumer behaviour would also be considered a key component. Within this study consumer behaviour is understood as how consumers respond to stimuli to build a perception of a brand and how they respond to the marketing activities of an organisation impacting their overall consumer decision-making.

2.3 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.3.1 BRAND AND BRAND DESIGN

Kotler *et al.* (2018:667) define a brand as “a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination” that differentiates a brand from competitors. Ekhlassi *et al.* (2018) state that a brand visually differentiates organisations from one another. Henderson and Cote (1998 cited in Lieven *et al.*, 2015: 148) define brand design as elements such as “names, signs and symbols” used to represent a brand including “brand name, logo shape, colour and font type”. It can be seen that these elements are consistent with the elements that represent a brand as a symbol below.

2.3.2 BRAND AS A SYMBOL

According to Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000), a brand as a symbol includes aspects such as visual imagery, metaphors, and brand heritage. This refers to anything that represents a brand, including its colour, logo, packaging and more (Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000). Matúšová (2021: 127) states that a logo is the “visual expression of a brand”. A brand's name, logo and colours are significant brand identifiers (Matúšová, 2021). With strong

symbols, a brand can create cohesion and structure resulting in improved brand recall and recognition (Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000). This study aims to specifically identify how brand design such as its colour, logo, and typeface can have an impact on consumer behaviour (Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000).

2.3.2.1 LOGO

A logo refers to the graphic design of a brand's logo and is a physical manifestation of a brand (Henderson and Cote, 1998). A well-designed logo can help build a strong brand which is favourable in the marketplace (Mizik 2014). According to Luffarelli *et al.* (2019), literature shows that asymmetrical logos are more arousing and are linked to brands with exciting personalities. When it comes to logo design, it has been found that colours and patterns can influence brand equity (Luffarelli *et al.*, 2019). Furthermore, research shows that logo design also has an impact on consumers' perceptions of a brand (Henderson *et al.* 2003). Lastly, according to Schechter (2010), logo design can impact a brand's image.

2.3.2.2 COLOUR

According to Roberts-Lombard *et al.* (2022), colour is a powerful way to bring attention to a product or brand providing it with a distinct identity. Bridger (2017) adds that colours can affect individuals emotionally.

According to Singh (2006), colour appeals to emotions rather than rationality and is more persuasive than shapes. Jin *et al.* (2019:50) go on to add that colour plays a role in communication and is a visual language where “direct and specific verbal expression is difficult”. It is furthermore said that colour reinforces the brand image and creates an emotional experience (Jin *et al.*, 2019). The colour associated with a brand additionally helps build a brand association (Jin *et al.*, 2019).

When it comes to colour and their effects on consumer behaviour Bridger (2017) highlights that blue is the most universally liked colour whereas dark yellow is the most disliked. Research has found that red is a colour in particular that evokes many emotions and has a universal effect (Bridger, 2017). According to Bridger (2017), the colour red evokes excitement. Kadavy (2011 cited in Bridger, 2017) observed that the colour red makes individuals more likely to spend more money than they intended to as the colour red is often associated with sales.

Based on the above, it can be seen that colour can both provide a brand with a distinctive identity as well as subconsciously have an effect on consumers' emotions and how they behave (Bridger, 2017; Kadavy, 2011).

2.3.2.3 TYPEFACE

Ottaway (2020) highlights that the typeface used by a brand can influence consumers' perception of a brand. Chu *et al.* (2021) note that typeface is both an important visual element and a marketing tool that is used to attract consumers and can have an impact on a brand's image. Velasco and Spence (2018) add that typeface can express and reinforce brand associations.

Ottaway (2020) goes on to state that typefaces that are rounded are associated with sweet tastes whereas those that are angular are associated with other tastes. Furthermore, a script typeface is associated with femininity in comparison to display typefaces that are associated with masculinity (Ottaway, 2020). Bridger (2017), states that human brains prioritize things that stand out in comparison to their surroundings and adds that there is a universal appeal for minimalistic design as for consumers they are simpler and easier to process.

Therefore, it can be seen that the typeface used by a brand can influence consumers' perceptions of a brand and reinforce brand associations (Chu *et al.*, 2021; Ottaway, 2020; Velasco and Spence, 2018).

2.3.3 BRAND RECOGNITION

Through brand identity, an organisation can become consistent with its messaging making them more recognisable in terms of its colours, graphic design, and typeface (Kapferer, 2008). The more distinctive a brand, the more recognisable it becomes (Matúšová, 2021). Through recognition, consumers have an increased ability to recall brands (Blackwell *et al.*, 2006). This is an important aspect to consider as it highlights that a brand's identity can have an impact on a consumer's recollection and memory simply based on visual characteristics.

2.3.4 NEUROMARKETING

Neuromarketing is a term used to refer to the use of neuroscience to better understand consumer behaviour and consumer emotions to better understand how consumers respond to certain stimuli when it comes to marketing decisions (Georges *et al.*, 2014; Jukić, 2019). Research has found that around 95% of consumer decision-making is made subconsciously and that the subconscious is vital in the consumer decision-making process (Brierley, 2017;

I.A. & M., 2013; Murphy, 2005; Neto, Filipe, and Ramalheiro 2011; Poldervaart, 2009; Zaltman, 2003; and Zurawicki, 2010 cited in Isa *et al.*, 2019).

2.3.5 BRAND IDENTITY AND BRAND IMAGE

According to Ekhlassi *et al.* (2018), a brand's identity refers to the tools used by a brand to differentiate itself from competitors and is considered the reality of a company whereas brand image refers to how consumers perceive a brand's attributes. Jukić (2019) agrees, stating that brand identity represents the corporation whereas brand image represents the recipient. Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) add that a brand's image includes a brand's current association and brand identity represents what a brand stands for. According to Zhang (2015), a brand's image is a driver of brand equity. Zhang (2015) goes on to add that brand image refers to a person's perceptions and feelings regarding a brand that can in turn affect their consumer behaviour.

It is important to differentiate between brand identity and brand image within this study as the information above ultimately concludes that a consumer's perception of a brand's identity and brand design elements ultimately results in a brand's image (Ekhlassi *et al.*, 2018). As this research topic is centred around consumer behaviour it is important to consider how consumers perceive a brand's identity and brand design elements as they can impact the brand's image (Ekhlassi *et al.*, 2018). Furthermore, it can be understood that the perception a consumer has regarding a brand can impact how they behave (Roberts-Lombard *et al.*, 2022). Within this study, brand image can link the three key components, brand design, brand identity and consumer behaviour.

2.3.6 PERCEPTION

Perception is a factor that influences consumer behaviour (Roberts-Lombard *et al.*, 2022). Roberts-Lombard *et al.* (2022:5) define perception as “the recognition of external stimuli and the responses to these stimuli by means of the person's actions”. Roberts-Lombard *et al.* (2022:116) further add that “perception is the process by which people select, organise and interpret stimuli to form a meaningful picture of the world”. A consumer's perception of a brand may be long-term; therefore, a brand needs to have a positive perception that differentiates it from competitors (Roberts-Lombard *et al.*, 2022). Jukić (2019) adds that an individual's perception of a brand can impact a brand's image. An example of a factor that can impact an individual's perception of a brand is the complexity of its product packaging (Favier *et al.*, 2019). Furthermore, Batra *et al.*, (1993 cited in Lieven *et al.*, 2015) highlight

that brand design elements can have an impact on a consumer's perception of a brand's personality.

2.3.7 BRAND ASSOCIATION

Blackwell *et al.* (2006) state that brand associations are aspects that come to mind when thinking of a brand. They go on to state that an example of a successful brand association would be the golden arches that are associated with McDonald's (Blackwell *et al.*, 2006). Types of brand associations include colours, logos, slogans, symbols, and celebrities (Blackwell *et al.*, 2006; Matúšová, 2021). Brand identity can be utilised by organisations to create unique brand associations (Lee *et al.*, 2019). Jukić (2019) adds that when a brand has a positive brand image it results in consumers having strong associations regarding the brand.

2.3.8 SALIENCY

Blackwell *et al.* (2006) state that salient values refer to features that are important to consumers when they are evaluating an alternative. They go on to add that some of the most important attributes of saliency are colour, patterns, size, and shape (Blackwell *et al.*, 2006). The evaluation of pre-existing alternatives is a stage within the consumer decision-making process model where the individual will compare alternative products and brands to one another to determine which would be best for them (Blackwell *et al.*, 2006). According to Blackwell *et al.* (2006), recognition can be more important than recall when creating a consideration set. This highlights that visual elements of a brand's identity or brand design can have an impact on consumer decision-making (Blackwell *et al.*, 2006).

3 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 RESEARCH PARADIGM

The research that is proposed to be conducted would fall under the positivist paradigm. Under the positivist paradigm, it is believed that only "objective, observable and verifiable facts should be considered" when it comes to understanding certain phenomena (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2020:24). Therefore positivism is evidence-based (Park *et al.*, 2020). Furthermore, positivism explores causal relationships that can result in predictions, this study aims to uncover whether or not there is a relationship between brand design and consumer behaviour, therefore this paradigm is appropriate (Park *et al.*, 2020).

From an epistemology standpoint, positivists believe that knowledge is objective and excludes the values of researchers and participants - this also reduces bias within the study (Park *et al.*, 2020). Overall, the researcher aims to discover causal relationships between brand design elements and consumer behaviour to make predictions regarding the natural and social world (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2020). This is relevant to this study as data will be collected in the form of an online survey that will be completed by participants on their own and within their own time, this will therefore reduce bias within the study. Furthermore, the sample of the population will be a minimum of 50 random people across South Africa allowing for the researcher to make predictions regarding the population as a whole (Budi and Moran, 2021).

In terms of positivism from an ontology perspective, it can be noted that only a “single tangible reality exists” (Park *et al.*, 2020: 691). It is believed that this single objective reality is observable and measurable allowing for predictions to be made (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2020). Overall, positivists believe that “cause has the same effect on all people” (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2020: 25). This is relevant to this study as it aims to make a prediction with regards to the population as a whole by determining whether brand design elements such as logo shape, logo colour and typeface, have an impact on consumer behaviour specifically with regards to consumer decision-making.

When it comes to axiology, positivist research is objective and the researcher and participants should not interact when it comes to data collection (Park *et al.*, 2020). Furthermore, positivists believe that research should not be “tainted” by personal bias (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2020). This is relevant within this study as the survey will be distributed online across various social groups and social media platforms via a shareable link, therefore the researcher and participants will have no direct contact and will not interact when it comes to the data collection ultimately reducing bias within the study.

This research study aims to identify the relationship between brand design and consumer behaviour therefore the positivism paradigm is the most suitable paradigm for this topic as it explores the relationship between two factors with the aim of creating predictions for the future (Park *et al.*, 2020). Furthermore, it highlights how knowledge is objective, observable and measurable allowing for predictions to be made to better understand the relationship between the two variables (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2020).

The research being conducted would fall under exploratory research as it is the study of an unknown area (Davis, 2020). An exploratory research study proposes to develop a hypothesis, confirm assumptions and uncover more knowledge about unknown situations (Davis, 2020).

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN/APPROACH

A quantitative cross-sectional research design will be utilised within this study as it “creates an overall picture of a phenomenon at one point in time” (du Plooy-Cilliers and Cronje, 2020:149). Through this research design researchers can efficiently collect data from many participants within a relatively short period (Thomas, 2022). This is the most appropriate research design method as it looks at one specific period which is ideal for this study (du Plooy-Cilliers and Cronje, 2020:149). Secondly, the design allows for the researcher to access a large population, in a short period (Thomas, 2022). This is ideal for this study as it focuses on a broad population, furthermore, the study needs to be completed in a specific and short time (Thomas, 2022). Lastly, this research design is cost-effective and is therefore especially valuable when working with limited resources and a short time frame (Thomas, 2022).

3.3 POPULATION

A population can be understood as the entire group from which a researcher aims to draw a conclusion (Bhandari, 2023).

A target population can be understood as a group of factors that a researcher aims to learn more about, a target population is a subset of the entire population (Akman, 2023). The target population for this research study included all people who consume products (purchase products from brands) both online and in-person in brick-and-mortar stores.

The accessible population on the other hand can be understood as the population that a researcher is able to study, a subset of the target population (Hubbard, 2021). The accessible population for this study included consumers between the age of 18-65, living in South Africa. This particular age range was chosen for this study as it was a representation of the adult population and therefore likely encompassed the majority of consumers who constantly engage with brands (Conduent, 2023). By reducing the geographical location of the study to just South Africa rather than globally, the population became both more accessible and provided local insights. The unit of analysis for this research study was all

people who consume products (purchase products from brands) both online and in-person in brick-and-mortar stores.

3.4 SAMPLING

Within research, a sample refers to a specific group from which data is collected, this group is smaller than the size of the total population (Bhandari, 2023).

Non-probability sampling was utilised within this study and refers to when participants within a sample are selected based on convenience, this means that not every member of the population had an equal chance of being selected (McCombes, 2023). Since the sample population is based on convenience, there may be a higher risk of sampling bias, yet the aim of this sampling method remains to be as representative as possible (McCombes, 2023). Due to non-probability sampling having potential bias, it is not often used within quantitative research as it may not be able to confidently generalize the larger population, however, it is used in quantitative research in times when probability sampling may not be feasible (Statistics Solutions, 2023).

The sampling method that was utilised is convenience sampling, this type of sampling refers to the sample including individuals who are most accessible to the researcher (McCombes, 2023). The ideal sample size for this research study was a minimum of 50 people, The reason for this sample size was because a sample size that was too small, or less than 50 people, would likely not reflect the population as a whole, yet a sample of around 40 or more participants had a relatively small margin of error as well as a high confidence level (Budiu and Moran, 2021). Overall, 205 random, anonymous individuals participated. These participants were sourced through social media platforms including Facebook Groups, and WhatsApp Community Groups as well as on the researcher's personal Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn pages, this process has been discussed in detail below.

3.5 DATA-COLLECTION METHOD

Due to the increase in accessibility with regards to online platforms and technology today, online surveys have become an increasingly popular method of data collection particularly due to its efficiency, ease of administration and cost-effectiveness (Mahmutovic, 2021). An online survey is defined as a questionnaire that the accessible population can complete over the Internet (Rouse, 2013). In this study, an online survey via Google Forms was used allowing the researcher to collect data from a wider audience, beyond the accessible

population, while maintaining the ability to monitor and manage responses in real-time (Mahmutovic, 2021; Wolber, 2018). The choice of social media platforms and community groups to distribute the survey allowed for a more diverse range of participants to be reached, and therefore provided a more representative sample for the study (Mahmutovic, 2021). The survey was distributed across various social media platforms and pages including the researcher's personal Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram pages, and community groups, for example, the Randpark Ridge Community Group and the I Love Fourways group on Facebook. Additionally, the survey was shared on WhatsApp with the researchers' friends and family as well as local community groups such as the Devon Valley Community Group and Kraaibosch Social Group, for example. Additionally, this data-collection method allowed for the collection of data within a relatively short period, therefore increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of the study (Mahmutovic, 2021).

Furthermore, the use of an online survey also reduced the potential for interviewer bias as well as social desirability bias, which may occur in face-to-face interviews (Cleave, 2022). The online survey participants could respond to the survey in their own time and in their own environment, which potentially increased the likelihood of honest and accurate responses (Mahmutovic, 2021). The ease of completion may have therefore also encouraged greater participation rates, which was particularly important when it came to achieving a sufficient sample size for this study (Mahmutovic, 2021). The online survey could easily and efficiently be completed by participants on their mobile devices within as little as 5-10 minutes. Additionally, as the survey was a shareable link, it could then be shared further by the participants themselves, diversifying the sample even further. Overall, 205 random, anonymous individuals participated by responding to the online survey questions. The questions that were asked within the online survey can be found in Appendix A.

3.6 DATA-ANALYSIS METHOD

The data collected via the online survey was analysed through inferential statistics as it aims to uncover the relationship between two variables and makes predictions about the population (Jansen and Warren, 2020).

The use of inferential statistics provided a thorough analysis of all the data collected and offered meaningful insights into the research topic. The data collected through Google Forms has been securely stored and analysed systematically and objectively to ensure the accuracy and validity of the results (Wolber, 2018). The data collected from Google Forms

was exported and analysed through Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation to uncover correlations between the various variables (Jansen and Warren, 2020). Overall, this data analysis technique allowed for a comprehensive investigation into the relationship between brand design elements and consumer behaviour.

3.7 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

Validity and reliability are both key measures within quantitative research studies when it comes to determining the trustworthiness of a study (Koonin, 2020). The concepts of validity and reliability are closely related, yet an instrument cannot be reliable without being valid, yet if it is valid, it is likely also reliable, therefore, researchers must test both reliability and validity (Sürücü and Maslakci, 2020). Validity can therefore be understood as whether a measuring instrument can measure what it intended to measure (Koonin, 2020). This is done through meaningful and appropriate interpretations of the data that has been collected (Sürücü and Maslakci, 2020). Reliability on the other hand can be understood as the stability of a measuring instrument and how consistent it is over time (Sürücü and Maslakci, 2020).

Internal consistency, a type of reliability, was utilised within this study (Middleton, 2023). This refers to the consistency of the measurement tool itself by measuring if the same results are obtained when studying different parts of the responses, for example, randomly dividing the responses and assessing whether there is a strong correlation between the data obtained or not (Middleton, 2023).

Additionally, content validity, a type of validity, was used within this study (Middleton, 2023). This form of validity refers to all aspects of a concept which is being measured. (Middleton, 2023). Within this research study's online survey, as seen in Appendix A, the questions cover each brand design element specifically including logo colour, logo shape and typeface.

Validity within this study was ensured through the appropriate sampling method being selected to obtain generalisable results, from a minimum of 50 participants, from the clearly defined population, this was done to reduce bias within the study while additionally reflecting the population as a whole (Middleton, 2023). Additionally, questions that were asked were based on previous literature.

Reliability within this study was ensured by standardising the conditions for the research ensuring that every participant received the same set of questions, which were presented in

the same order, as well as with the same selections of answers for the participant to choose from (Middleton, 2023).

Furthermore, the reliability and validity of this study were supported by the approval of the research questions within the online survey by the researcher's supervisor. Additionally, a pilot test was conducted on the survey prior to sending it out to participants.

3.8 ANTICIPATED CONTRIBUTION

Overall, this research study aims to explore the relationship between brand design elements and consumer behaviour, therefore it aims to uncover knowledge regarding the significance of brand design elements such as logo shape, logo colour, and typeface, and how they potentially impact consumer behaviour. The anticipated contribution of this study is to contribute to already existing literature on branding and consumer behaviour, providing potentially valuable insights for academics and marketers alike. The aim is that this study as a result may be beneficial to businesses, graphic designers, and marketers when it comes to the development of effective brand strategies, helping businesses to differentiate themselves within the market and gain a competitive advantage.

3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Various ethical considerations that have been considered within this study which include voluntary participation, meaning that all participants who take part in the study do so at their own will (Bhandari, 2022). Informed consent means that all participants consent to participate in the study and are aware of the aim of the study (Bhandari, 2022). Anonymity means that all participants will be able to participate in the study without sharing any of their personal information, as well as confidentiality, meaning that all the participant's specific answers will be kept confidential, and generalisations will be made regarding all participants as a whole across the study (Bhandari, 2022).

3.10 LIMITATIONS

There are various limitations to the study. The first is the large population size (see Research Limitations Examples: 5 Common Limitations in Dissertations & Theses (Qual + Quant), 2022.). The population of South Africa is very large consisting of 60.6 million people (Stats SA, 2023). As the online survey is shareable via an online link it can be shared across the entire country, yet the feasibility of reaching the entire population, let alone 1% of the

population is therefore limited. Secondly, there is limited access to information (see Research Limitations Examples: 5 Common Limitations in Dissertations & Theses (Qual + Quant), 2022.). As mentioned previously there have been limited studies conducted on the relationship between brand design elements and consumer behaviour within the past 5 years, additionally, various articles were challenging to access due to database restrictions, paywalls, and the inability to access specific articles as they are only available to specific individuals such as student libraries and databases at alternative universities and those who are subscribed to specific journals. Another limitation is the limited budget and/or no budget to conduct the research (see Research Limitations Examples: 5 Common Limitations in Dissertations & Theses (Qual + Quant), 2022.). As this is a university assignment, there is no budget for the research study. When conducting research on previous literature with regards to this topic various studies discussed neuromarketing and how the brain itself reacts to certain stimuli resulting in consumers behaving in a certain manner, therefore, if the study had a budget this may have been an insightful aspect to delve deeper into. Lastly, one of the limitations is time constraints (see Research Limitations Examples: 5 Common Limitations in Dissertations & Theses (Qual + Quant), 2022.). As this is a university assignment, various aspects are required to be completed within a short timeframe with the entirety of the study to be completed within around 16 months.

4 FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1.1 DEMOGRAPHICS

This research aimed to uncover new, updated and relevant insights concerning the relationship between brand design elements and consumer behaviour to uncover the potential impact that visual branding may have on consumer decision-making.

The study aimed to specifically assess whether or not the visual appearance of a brand, specifically in the context of logo colour, logo shape and typeface, can influence how consumers respond to stimuli and how it potentially influences consumer perceptions and associations relating to a brand and as a result how consumers behave towards a brand, for example, consumer decision-making.

In total, 205 random, anonymous participants completed a 15-question online survey on Google Forms, shared via a hyperlink, exploring the relationship between brand design elements and consumer behaviour.

Table 1 below presents an overview of the participants that took part in the online survey.

Table 1: Demographic profile of the 205 participants

		Percentage
Age	18 - 24 years	14.5%
	25 - 34 years	17.1%
	35 - 44 years	28.3%
	45 - 54 years	19.0%
	55 - 64 years	16.1%
	65+	4.9%
Gender	Male	12.2%
	Female	87.8%
How often the participant purchase from a store based solely on the look of its logo?	Once a week	4.4%
	Once a month	8.3%
	Once a year	2.0%
	I do not visit stores based solely on the look of its logo	85.4%

As seen in table 1 above, it can be seen that of the 205 participants that took part in the online survey, the large majority of participants were female (87.8%). The age groups of the participants between 18 - 64 were fairly evenly distributed, yet the largest age group was between 35 - 44 years old (28.3%). The large majority of participants stated that they did not visit stores solely based on the look of their logos (85.4%).

4.1.2 CRONBACH ALPHA COEFFICIENT

According to the UCLA Statistics Consulting Group (2021), Cronbach's alpha can be understood as "a measure of internal consistency" and is utilised to measure reliability (UCLA Statistics Consulting Group, 2021). In the case of this specific research study, there was only one ordinal question, and as a result, this would result in a low Cronbach alpha

(Tavakol and Dennick, 2011). Therefore, the reliability and validity of this study are supported by the approval of the research questions within the online survey by the researcher's supervisor. Additionally, a pilot test was conducted on the survey before sending it out to participants.

4.1.3 SPEARMAN'S RANK-ORDER CORRELATION

Based on Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation a variety of correlations were identified.

It can be seen that there was a correlation between which shape appealed to participants most and the font/typeface that appealed to participants most with a correlation coefficient of .328, this correlation is statistically significant with a $p \leq 0.000$.

There was a correlation between the brand logo (ice-cream brands) that appealed to participants most and the font/typeface that appealed to consumers most with a correlation coefficient of .201, this correlation is statistically significant with a $p \leq 0.004$. Furthermore, there was a correlation between the brand logo (ice-cream brands) that appealed to participants and the shape that appealed to participants most with a correlation coefficient of .189, this correlation is statistically significant with a $p \leq 0.007$.

In terms of the aspects of the brand logos (pet brands), there was a correlation between the aspect of the brand logo (pet brands) that appealed to the participants most and the colour pallet that appealed to the participants the most with a correlation coefficient of .168, this correlation is statistically significant with a $p \leq 0.016$. Additionally, there was a correlation between the aspect of the brand logo (pet brands) that appealed to the participants and the font/typeface that appealed most to the participants with a correlation coefficient of .250, this correlation is statistically significant with a $p \leq 0.000$.

There was a correlation between the brand logo (food retailers) that appealed to the participants most and the colour pallet that appealed to participants most with a correlation coefficient of .183, this correlation is statistically significant with a $p \leq 0.009$.

There is a correlation between how often the participants visit a store based solely on the look of its logo and if they purchase from brands based solely on the look of their logo with a correlation coefficient of .361, this correlation is statistically significant with a $p \leq 0.000$.

It can be seen that there was a correlation between the age group of the participants and if they purchased from brands based solely on the look of their logo with a correlation coefficient of .147, This correlation is statistically significant with a $p \leq 0.036$. There was a correlation between the age group of the participants and the brand logo (ice cream brands) that appealed to the participants most with a correlation coefficient of .262, this correlation is statistically significant with a $p \leq 0.000$. Additionally, there is a correlation between the age group of the participant and the brand logo (pet brands) that appeals to the participants most with a correlation coefficient of .153, this correlation is statistically significant with a $p \leq 0.026$. Furthermore, there was a correlation between the age group of participants and the brand logo (food retailers) that appealed to the participants most, with a correlation coefficient of .279, this correlation is statistically significant with a $p \leq 0.000$. Lastly, there was a correlation between the age group of participants and how often they visited a store based solely on the look of its logo with a correlation coefficient of .264, this correlation is statistically significant with a $p \leq 0.000$.

Finally, there was a correlation between the gender of the participants and the font/typeface that appealed to them most with a correlation coefficient of .218, this correlation is statistically significant with a $p \leq 0.002$

Overall, the strongest correlation was found was between how often the participants visit a store based solely on the look of its logo and if they purchase from brands based solely on the look of their logo with a correlation coefficient of .361, that was statistically significant with a $p \leq 0.000$. The weakest correlation found was between the age group of the participants and if they purchased from brands based solely on the look of their logo with a correlation coefficient of .147, This correlation is statistically significant with a $p \leq 0.036$.

4.2 INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

The data gathered was found to skew towards females, this may be since females spend more time on social media in comparison to males (Ceci, 2023). Therefore, this may have ultimately had an impact on the findings as the majority of the hyperlinks sharing the online survey were done via social media platforms, however, the distribution of participation across age groups was fairly consistent.

According to the findings, participants stated that they did not purchase from stores based solely on the look of their logo. However, it is important to look deeper into the findings.

Within the data gathered the correlations identified relationships between participant's preferences in terms of the shape, colour and font/typeface of the logos that they preferred. This is an important aspect to consider when understanding the subconscious relationship that consumers may have towards brand logos when making a decision.

When looking at the findings above, the correlation between which font/typeface (correlation coefficient of .201) and shape (correlation coefficient of .189) appealed most to participants with the brand logo (ice-cream brands) that appealed to them most, it can be seen that 53.2% of participants selected the script font/typeface and 27.8% of participants selected circle and abstract shapes respectively. Therefore, it is consistent with their preference towards the Milky Lane logo (62.4%). This is insightful when answering the research question and subsequent sub-questions - is there a relationship between brand design elements and consumer behaviour? Is there a relationship between logo font/typeface and consumer behaviour? And is there a relationship between logo shape and consumer behaviour?

Similarly, this can be seen when looking at the correlation between the brand logo (pet brands) that appealed to consumers most and the font/typeface that appealed to consumers most (correlation coefficient of .250). As mentioned above 53.2% of participants stated that the script font/typeface appealed to them most and as a result, the majority of participants had a preference towards the Absolute Pets logo (88.8%). This is additionally in line with the participant's preference towards round and abstract shapes (27.8% respectively). As mentioned previously this is insightful when answering the research question and subsequent sub-questions - is there a relationship between brand design elements and consumer behaviour? Is there a relationship between logo font/typeface and consumer behaviour? And is there a relationship between logo shape and consumer behaviour?

Overall, significant brand identifiers such as a brand's name, colours, and logo design can have an impact on consumers (Matúšová, 2021; Henderson *et al.* 2003). Salient values according to Blackwell *et al.* (2006) are features that are important to consumers when evaluating alternatives, some of the most important attributes include colour and shape. When making fast decisions visual saliency tends to influence consumer choice (Milutinovic *et al.*, 2021).

Blackwell *et al.* (2006) highlight that visual elements of a brand identity or brand design can have an impact on consumer decision-making.

Furthermore, Bridger (2017) and Singh (2006) state that colours can affect individuals emotionally and are overall more persuasive than shapes, with the most universally liked colour being blue, this is in line with the data collected. Research goes on to show that colour can subconsciously have an effect on consumers' emotions and how they perceive the brand and behave (Bridger, 2017; Kadavy, 2011). Research has additionally found that around 95% of consumer decision-making is made subconsciously and that the subconscious is vital in the consumer decision-making process (Brierley, 2017; I.A. & M., 2013; Murphy, 2005; Neto, Filipe, and Ramalheiro 2011; Poldervaart, 2009; Zaltman, 2003; and Zurawicki, 2010 cited in Isa *et al.*, 2019).

Based on the insights above it can also be noted that research has shown that typefaces that are rounded are associated with sweet tastes whereas those that are angular are associated with other tastes (Ottaway, 2020). This is insightful based on the brand logo that appealed to participants when comparing ice cream brands. Furthermore, a script typeface is associated with femininity in comparison to display typefaces that are associated with masculinity (Ottaway, 2020). This is additionally a vital insight as the majority of participants who took part in the online survey were female with script typeface being the preferred typeface (53.2%).

Overall, based on the above, it can be seen that based on participant's preference in terms of shape, colour and logo, in some instances, correlates with the brand logo they prefer which as a result has an impact on their decision to choose one brand over the other. As a result, this is an answer to the research question - is there a relationship between brand design elements and consumer behaviour?

4.3 RESEARCH QUESTION, PROBLEM, HYPOTHESIS

The research problem stated that although the topics of both brand design elements and consumer behaviour have been studied extensively within the marketing industry and are two broad aspects of interest, primary research showed that there had been limited research conducted to uncover the relationship between consumer behaviour and brand design elements, specifically with regards to logo shape, logo colour and typeface, within the past 5 years (Burtler and Scalia, 2022). This finding was supported by a statement made by

Machado (2015:1) who stated in their research that “little systematic research has been undertaken to examine the effect of logo design on affective response toward the brand”.

Therefore, the research question asked, is there a relationship between brand design elements and consumer behaviour? This question was then broken down into three sub-questions. Is there a relationship between logo colour and consumer behaviour? Is there a relationship between typeface and consumer behaviour? And is there a relationship between logo shape and consumer behaviour?

Based on the above, the below hypotheses were proposed:

H₀: There is no relationship between brand design elements and consumer behaviour.

H_{1a}: There is a relationship between colour and consumer behaviour.

H_{1b}: There is a relationship between typeface and consumer behaviour.

H_{1c}: There is a relationship between shape and consumer behaviour.

The findings of the data uncovered that although the majority of participants stated that they do not purchase from brands based solely on the look of their logo (85.4%) a closer look into the data gathered found that there were various statistically significant correlations between the colour palettes, shapes and fonts/typefaces that appealed to consumers most and the brand logo that appealed to them most when it came to their decision making, selecting one brand over another.

Therefore, after careful interpretation of the data collected above, alongside primary data, the null hypothesis has been rejected, and as a result, the alternative hypotheses, H_{1a}, H_{1b}, and H_{1c} should be accepted. Therefore, it can be concluded that the answer to the research question, including the sub-questions, is yes, there is a relationship between brand design elements and consumer behaviour when it comes to consumer decision making specifically regarding selecting one brand over another. This relationship is supported by the statistically significant relationships identified when interpreting the research findings.

5 CONCLUSION

In conclusion as mentioned above the data presented indicated that although the majority of participants stated that they do not purchase from brands based solely on the look of their logo (85.4%) a closer look into the data gathered found that there were various statistically significant correlations between the colour palettes, shapes and font/typefaces that appealed

to consumers most and the brand logo that appealed to them most. Alongside primary research, the assumption can be made that although participants stated that they do not purchase from brands solely based on the look of their logos, consumers may subconsciously be attracted towards specific logos in comparison to others based on the logo shape, colour and font/typeface, resulting in them selecting one brand over another based on their logo, impacting their consumer decision-making. Therefore, the alternative hypotheses have been accepted.

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APPENDIX A: ONLINE SURVEY (INCLUDING INFORMED CONSENT DISCLAIMER)

Informed Consent

The following survey is being conducted in line with the academic requirements of The IIE Vega School as part of the BCom Honours in Strategic Management Degree. My name is Rhianne Wood and the aim of my research is to explore the relationship between brand design elements and consumer behaviour. Your participation in this survey is voluntary and open to participants who are over the age of 18 years old and living in South Africa. You may withdraw your participation at any time and there will be no penalties for withdrawal or non-completion of the survey. The procedure involves completing an online survey, which will take approximately 10 minutes to complete.

No personal information is required from you for the completion of this survey and all information will be kept anonymous. The findings of this research will be presented in the final Research Project submission to Vega, however, all collected data will be stored under a password-protected file on the researcher's computer for 5 years.

The analysed results of this data will be shared for scholarly purposes only and shared with the academic coordinators of The IIE Vega School's RESE8419/w/p Module. This research has been reviewed and approved by The Independent Institute Of Education's ethical procedures regarding research involving human participants and Ethical Clearance has been granted. Should you have any concerns or questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at ST10109950@vgconnect.edu.za.

ELECTRONIC CONSENT: Please select your choice below.

Clicking on the "**agree**" button below indicates that:

- you have read and understood the purpose of this research study
- you voluntarily agree to participate in this research study
- you are over the age of 18 years

If you **do not wish** to participate in this research, please **decline** participation by clicking the "disagree" button.

- ☐ ☐ Agree
- ☐ ☐ Disagree

1. Which colour pallet appeals to you most?



- ☐ ☐ Option 1
- ☐ ☐ Option 2
- ☐ ☐ Option 3
- ☐ ☐ Option 4
- ☐ ☐ Option 5

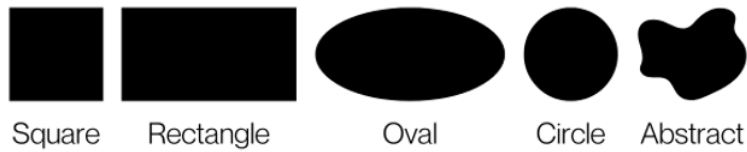
2. Which font/typeface appeals to you most?

Option 1: **EXAMPLE**

Option 2: *Example*

- ☐ ☐ Option 1
- ☐ ☐ Option 2

3. Which shape appeals to you most?



- ☐ ☐ Square
- ☐ ☐ Rectangle
- ☐ ☐ Oval
- ☐ ☐ Circle
- ☐ ☐ Abstract

4. Do you purchase from brands based solely on the look of their logos?

- ☐ ☐ Yes
- ☐ ☐ No

5. Based solely on the brands logo, which of these two brands appeals to you most?



- ☐ ☐ Paul's Homemade Ice-cream
- ☐ ☐ Milky Lane and Co.

6. Which aspect of the brand you chose appeals to you most?

- ☐ ☐ Logo Shape
- ☐ ☐ Logo Colour
- ☐ ☐ Logo Font/Typeface

7. Based solely on the brands logo, which of these two brands appeals to you most?



- ☐ ☐ Absolute Pets
- ☐ ☐ VitalVet

8. Which aspect of the brand you chose appeals to you most?

- ☐ ☐ Logo Shape
- ☐ ☐ Logo Colour
- ☐ ☐ Logo Font/Typeface

9. Based solely on the brands logo, which of these two brands appeals to you most?



☐

- ☐ Nando's
- ☐ Barcelos

10. Which aspect of the brand you chose appeals to you most?

- ☐ ☐ Logo Shape
- ☐ ☐ Logo Colour
- ☐ ☐ Logo Font/Typeface

11. Based solely on the brands logo, which of these two brands appeals to you most?

Option 1

Option 2



- ☐ ☐ Checkers
- ☐ ☐ Woolworths

12. Which aspect of the brand you chose appeals to you most?

- ☐ ☐ Logo Shape
- ☐ ☐ Logo Colour
- ☐ ☐ Logo Font/Typeface

13. How often do you visit a store based solely on the look of its logo?

- ☐ ☐ Once a week
- ☐ ☐ Once a month
- ☐ ☐ Once a year
- ☐ ☐ I don't visit stored based solely on the look of its logo.

14. What age group are you in?

- ☐ Under 18
- ☐ 18-25
- ☐ 25-35
- ☐ 35-45
- ☐ 45-55
- ☐ 55-65
- ☐ 66+

15. What is your gender?

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Prefer not to say.

ANNEXURE A: ETHICAL CLEARANCE DOCUMENT (VEGA ETHICS CHECKLIST)

Vega Ethics checklist: RESE8419/p/w

Student Details												
Title	Prof	☐	Dr	☐	Ms	☒	Mrs	☐	Mr	☐	Mx	☐
First name(s)	Rhianne Megan											
Last name(s)	Wood											
Title of study	Exploring the Relationship between Brand Design Elements and Consumer Behaviour											
Qualification	BCom Honours in Strategic Brand Management											

Supervisor Details												
Title	Prof	☐	Dr	☐	Ms	☐	Mrs	☐	Mr	☐	Mx	☐
First and last names	Amalia van Schalkwyk											

Co-supervisor Details (if applicable)												
Title	Prof	☐	Dr	☐	Ms	☐	Mrs	☐	Mr	☐	Mx	☐
First and last names	N/A											

Explaining your research process						
Philosophical paradigm	Positivism	☒	Interpretivism	☐	Constructivism	☐
	Realism	☐	Objectivism	☐	Pragmatism	☐
	Functionalist	☐	Subjectivism	☐	Humanist	☐
	Other:					
Research design:	Interview	☐	Questionnaire (self administered)	☐	Focus group	☐
	Ethnography/ Observation	☐	Artefact analysis/website/ social media analysis	☐	Action Research	☐
	Case Study	☐	Design Research (Practice based)	☐		☐
	Other (if so, state)	☒	Online Survey			
Brief explanation of the population and number of participants/items	Any person within South Africa between the ages of 18-65 years old who purchase products from brands. A minimum of 50 participants					
Target group sampling methods/artefact	Purposive	☐	Random	☒	Snowball	☐
	Convenient	☐	Stratified	☐	Census	...

(No under 18's or vulnerable groups allowed)	<i>Explain selection process</i>	Simple Random Sampling - All participants have an equal opportunity of participating within the study. An online link will be shared across a variety of platforms in which a participant can determine whether or not they would like to participate.
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Ethics		
Documentation submitted with proposal	Gatekeeper's letter (institutional consent)	☐
	Completed Annexure E if you conduct research on IIE sites/students/staff	☐
	Instrument(s) (interview schedule or questionnaire)	☒
	Participant or respondent consent form	☒
	Audio-visual consent form (if applicable)	☐

Campus ethics committee recommendation	
Proposal has been reviewed by the supervisor and necessary ethics considerations have been included. ☐ Accepted as is and provide letter ☐ Accepted with provisions: Nature of provision: e.g. Instrument is not sufficient / included and need to be signed off by the supervisor ☐ Major issues: Student should not continue with fieldwork. Actions to be taken: Click or tap here to enter text.	
Supervisor signature	
	Click or tap to enter a date.
Co-supervisor/Campus ethics panel member signature	
	Click or tap to enter a date.

ANNEXURE C: UPDATED CONCEPT DOCUMENT

Project details			
Your Name:	Rhianne Wood	Student Number:	
Supervisor:	Amalia van Schalkwyk	Date:	16 November 2023
		Version:	7

Proposed Title	
Title	Exploring The Relationship Between Brand Design Elements and Consumer Behaviour.

Research details	
Problem statement	When conducting research on this topic it was found that there have been limited studies conducted specifically regarding the effects of brand design/visual brand identity factors such as colour, logo typeface etc. on consumer behaviour over the past 5 years. This statement is supported by Machado (2015), who stated in their research that there has been "little systematic research has been undertaken to examine the effect of logo design on affective response toward the brand". Therefore, the information that currently exists regarding this topic may be outdated which could potentially be misleading to businesses, graphic designers, and marketers who rely on these factors as they are continuously being improved upon. Within the marketing industry keeping up to date with the latest knowledge and trends is vital for a business's success (Johnston, 2023). Therefore, this study aims to uncover new, updated, and relevant insights into the topic and whether there is a relationship between the two variables, brand design elements and consumer behaviour. This may be beneficial to businesses, graphic designers and marketing teams to provide them with a clearer understanding of how these concepts (brand design elements and consumer behaviour) are potentially linked and a better understanding of how to implement a brand strategy based on these elements that can provide the most significant benefit to the brand.

Purpose statement	The purpose of this study is to uncover whether or not there is a relationship between brand design elements and consumer behaviour and determine whether or not the visual appearance of a brand, specifically in the context of logo colour, logo shape and typeface, can influence how consumers respond to stimuli and how it potentially influences consumers perceptions and associations with regards to a brand and as a result how consumers behave towards a brand, for example, consumer-decision making.
Research question/s	Main Research Question: - Is there a relationship between brand design elements and consumer behaviour? Sub-questions - Is there a relationship between logo colour and consumer behaviour? - Is there a relationship between logo typeface and consumer behaviour? - Is there a relationship between logo shape and consumer behaviour?
Hypotheses/ Objectives	H₀: There is no relationship between brand design elements and consumer behaviour. H_a: There is a relationship between brand design elements and consumer behaviour.
Research rationale	Over the past 5 years, only a few studies conducted regarding the effects of brand design on consumer behaviour. Through updated research businesses' and marketing teams may be provided with updated insights into the relationship between brand design and consumer behaviour and provide them with a clearer understanding of how these concepts are potentially linked and gain a better understanding regarding how to implement a brand strategy that can provide the greatest benefit to the brand.

LITERATURE OVERVIEW	
KEY THEORIES	Kapferer's Brand-Identity Prism model

SEMINAL AUTHORS/ SOURCES	1. Aaker, D.A. and Joachimsthaler, E. (2000) Brand leadership 2. Blackwell, R.D., Miniard, P.W. and Engel, J.F. (2006) Consumer Behaviour 3. Kapferer, J. 2008. The New Strategic Brand Management: Creating and sustaining brand equity long term							
LITERATUR E REVIEW THEMES	Theme 1 Brand and brand design	Theme 2 Brand as a symbol	Theme 3 Brand recognition	Theme 4 Neuro-marketing	Theme 5 Brand identity and brand image	Theme 6 Perception	Theme 7 Brand association	Theme 8 Saliency

SOURCES	1. Bridger, D. (2017) Neuro Design: Neuromarketing Insights to Boost Engagement and Profitability. 2. Chu, X.Y. <i>et al.</i> (2021) How companies use typeface design to engage consumers in charitable activities. 3. Ekhlassi, A., Moghadam, M.N. and Adibi, A.M. (2018) Building Brand Identity in the Age of Social Media: Emerging Research and Opportunities. 4. Favier, M., Celhay, F. and Pantin-Sohier, G. (2019) Is less more or a bore? Package design simplicity and brand perception: an application to Champagne. 5. Fournier, S. 1998. Consumers and Their Brands: Developing Relationship Theory in Consumer Research. 6. Henderson, P. and Cote, J. 1998. Guidelines for Selecting or Modifying Logos. 7. Henderson, P., Cote, J., Leong, S. and Schmitt, B. 2003. Building strong brands in Asia: Selecting the visual components of image to maximize brand strength. 8. Ianenko, M., Stepanov, M. and Mironova, L. 2020. Brand Identity Development 9. Jimenez, R. and Tulabut, R. 2022. Brand Identity Prism: An Analysis of Customer Purchase Intention In Local Brand Product In Selected Stores In Malolos, Bulacan 10. Jin, C., Yoon, M. and Lee, J. 2019. The influence of brand color identity on brand association and loyalty. 11. Jukić, D. (2019) Opening Pandora's Box: Neuromarketing and Brand Image. 12. Kadavy, D. 2011. Design for hackers: Reverse engineering beauty. 13. Kotler, P., Armstrong, G. and Opresnik, M.O. (2018) Principles of Marketing. 14. Kumar, R. and Kumar, R. Impact of various demographic factors on consumer behaviour-an empirical study of electric products in rural Himachal (India). 15. Lee, H.N., Lee, A.S. and Liang, Y.W. (2019) An Empirical Analysis of Brand as Symbol, Perceived Transaction Value, Perceived Acquisition Value and Customer Loyalty Using Structural Equation Modeling.
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KEY CONCEPTS	Brand design, brand identity, and consumer behaviour.

PROVISIONAL RESEARCH APPROACH

PARADIGM	Paradigm The research that is proposed to be conducted would fall under the positivist paradigm. Under the positivism paradigm it is believed that only “objective, observable and verifiable facts should be considered” when it comes to understanding certain phenomena (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2020). Furthermore, positivism explores causal relationships that can result in predictions, this study aims to uncover the relationship between brand design and consumer behaviour (Park, Konge and Artino, 2020).	Epistemology From an epistemology standpoint, positivists believe that knowledge is objective and excludes the values of researchers and participants (Park, Konge and Artino, 2020).	Ontology In terms of positivism from an ontology perspective, it can be noted that only a “single tangible reality exists” (Park, Konge and Artino, 2020). It is believed that this single objective reality is observable and measurable allowing for predictions to be made (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2020). Overall, positivists believe that “cause has the same effect on all people” (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2020).	Axiology When it comes to axiology, the researcher and participants should not interact when it comes to data collection (Park, Konge and Artino, 2020). Furthermore, positivists believe that research should not be “tainted” by personal bias (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2020).
APPROACH/ DESIGN	The research approach being utilised is quantitative research as it is associated with positivism (Dudovskiy, n.d.). Additionally, a cross-sectional research design is being used as it focuses on collecting data from many different individuals at a single point in time (Thomas, 2022). Through the research that is being conducted, the aim is to uncover current insights into the relationship between brand design and consumer behaviour (Thomas, 2022).			

PROVISIONAL RESEARCH PLAN

POPULATION	The target population that will be used for this study includes all people who consume products (purchase products from brands) both online and in person in brick-and-mortar stores. The accessible population that will be used for this study includes all people within South Africa, regardless of gender, sex, and income, who are between the ages of 18-65 years old and who use/consume products (purchase products from brands) both online and in person in brick-and-mortar stores. This particular age range was chosen for this study as it is a representation of the adult population and therefore likely encompasses the majority of consumers who constantly engage with brands (Conduent, 2023) By reducing the geographical location of the study the population becomes both more accessible and provides local insights.
SAMPLING	Probability sampling is often used in qualitative research; therefore, it would be suitable for this research topic (McCombes, 2022). Simple random sampling will be utilised, this type of sampling allows for every member of the population to have an equal opportunity of being selected. (McCombes, 2022). The ideal sample size is 50 people. A total of 205 people participated.
DATA COLLECTION METHOD(S)	Online surveys created in Google Forms will be sent out to the accessible population via a link, once the data has been collected it will be received and reviewed via Google Forms (Wolber, 2018).
DATA ANALYSIS METHOD(S)	Data collected will be analysed through inferential statistics as it aims to uncover the relationship between two variables and makes predictions about the population (Jansen and Warren, 2020). The data will be collected and analysed via Google Forms (Wolber, 2018).

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND LIMITATIONS	
ETHICS	Ethical consideration within this study includes voluntary participation, informed consent, anonymity, and confidentiality (Bhandari, 2022).
LIMITATIONS	Limitations to the study include that the population size is large, there is limited access to information, a limited budget as well as time constraints (see Research Limitations Examples: 5 Common Limitations in Dissertations & Theses (Qual + Quant), 2022.).

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