

The Importance of
Brand Identity
for Environmental Conservation Brands



**ENDANGERED
WILDLIFE TRUST**

Conservation in action

THE IMPORTANCE OF BRAND IDENTITY FOR ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION BRANDS

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2015

Topic:

To evaluate the effectiveness of how environmental conservation companies position their brands amongst the youth market.

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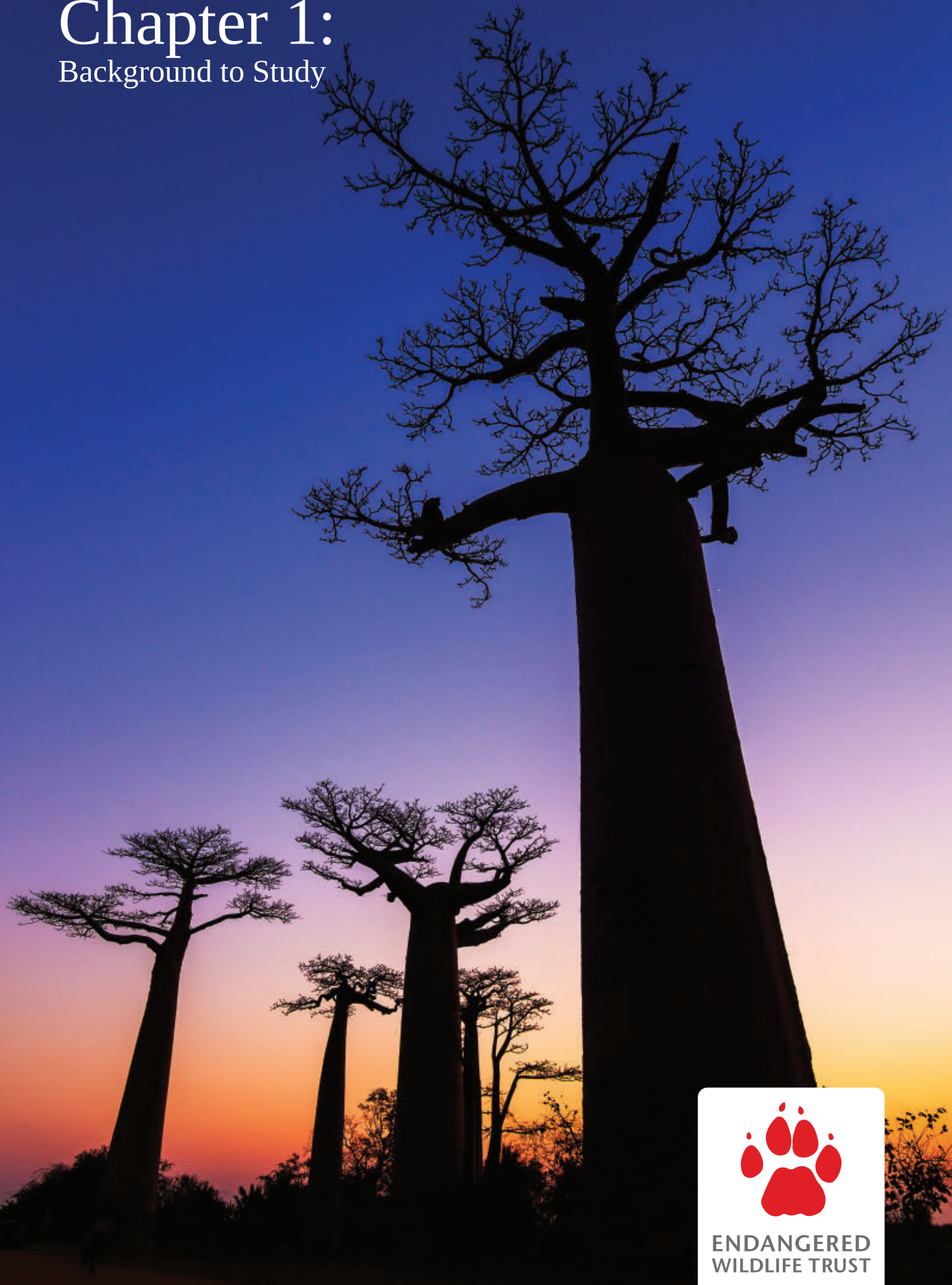
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Chapter 1:

Background to Study



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Chapter 1: Background to study

1.1. Abstract

The purpose of this research paper is to unpack how effectively environmental conservation companies position themselves within youth market. This paper aims to establish if environmental conservation companies appeal to younger children between the ages of 11 and 14. This will be done by looking at a case study of a South African environmental company, the *Endangered Wildlife Trust*, and analysing how they have constructed their brand identity to engage with the youth market. The *Endangered Wildlife Trust*, is a company that;

‘Is dedicated to conserving threatened species and ecosystems in Southern Africa to the benefit of all people’ (Endangered Wildlife Trust. 2015)

This study is motivated by three research questions: (1) To determine how the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* has currently positioned their brand? (2) To establish how the youth market perceives the *Endangered Wildlife Trust*? (3) To evaluate the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* brand within the framework of Aaker’s brand identity model? The purpose of these questions is to establish solid information pertaining to the research problem. The research problem for this study is: To establish if there is a lack of environmental conservation companies brand identity amongst the *Tween* youth market in Johannesburg, between the ages of 11 and 14.

The study has been conducted using *Case Study* qualitative research design. A field collection method will be used where focus groups will be conducted. The data findings will be analysed within Aaker’s Brand Identity Model.

The significance of this research paper is that it could benefit environmental companies in creating strong brand identities. This study will give an indication as to how environmental conservation companies should be positioning their brands within the 11 to 14 year old market.

The results of this study have been aligned with categories set out in Aaker’s brand identity model. The results indicate that, in certain areas of these categories, the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* is lacking when engaging with the *Tween* market. Recommendations have been included in this paper, if the brand at hand were to implement these recommendations; it could lead to a sustainable, life time relationship with the target market.

1.2. Introduction

“A strong brand should have a rich, clear brand identity – a set of associations the brands strategist seeks to create or maintain. A brand identity is aspirational and may imply that the image needs to be changed or augmented” (Aaker, A. 2000).

This paper will focus on three main areas. The first being environmental conservation brands and unpacking how certain companies have created distinctive and worthy identities. This area of focus is important as it gives a clear understanding of how other NGO brands have used certain aspects of Aaker’s brand identity model to mould their identities. This will allow for easier interpretation the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* identity and how it fits into Aaker’s model. The second area of focus is brand identity; the concept of brand identity is central to this study of social identity movements and activism. Aaker’s brand identity model (2000) will be interpreted in light of environmental movements. The third area of focus will be the target audience which is youth market, ranging from the ages of 11 and 14 in Johannesburg. The characteristics of the target audience, who are described as *Tweens*, will be discussed in great detail in chapter two. The target audience will need to be unpacked to a large extent to understand how the identity of a brand, in specific the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* brand, can appeal to them.

The researcher will analyse the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* against Aaker’s brand identity model; the theory of this model will be used to formulate the research.

“The *EWT* is a leading, high-profile player in the arena of conservation. We identify the key factors threatening biodiversity and develop innovative methodologies and best practice guidelines to reduce these and promote harmonious co-existence and sustainable living for both people and wildlife. We achieve our goals through specialist programmes, and our skilled field staff are deployed regionally and throughout southern Africa” (Endangered Wildlife Trust. 2015).

Aaker’s brand identity model has been chosen to form the framework of this paper because it provides tools and theories to guide the process of creating a comprehensive and versatile brand identity. This model can be used to give a brand depth. The model is broken up into three systemic categories; these categories are: *Strategic Brand Analysis*, *Strategic Identity System (which includes Brand Identity)* and *Brand Identity Implementation System*.

1.3. Concept of Brand Identity

In order to analyse the brand identity of a particular brand, in this case, *The Endangered Wildlife Trust*, the concept of brand identity needs to be clearly understood and defined. Brand identity is a concept widely used, however it can be said that there are a number of variations of the definition. The definition, which will be used in this research paper, as stated by David Aaker is:

“A strong brand should have a rich, clear brand identity – a set of associations the brand strategist seeks to create or maintain. In contrast to brand image (the brand’s current associations), a brand identity is aspirational and may imply that the image needs to be changed or augmented. In a fundamental sense, the brand identity represents what the organisation wants the brand to stand for.”

In the article written by Gordon Cook, Kira Erwin, Patrick Carmody and Dr Carla Enslin, titled *How healthy is your brand?*(2010); they articulate the importance of having a distinctive brand identity. They communicate that the identity underscores the concept of brand. According to Thomas Oosthuizen; a strong brand consists of a complex set of benefits to consumers, functional and/or emotional. Much of which, is intangible and exists within people (2013).

1.4. Delimitation/demarcation of the field of study

The focus of this study is how effectively environmental conservation companies, specifically the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* brand, positions its brand identity. What will not be researched is the business model of the company but rather an analysis of how the brand has aligned their identity to Aaker’s brand identity model.

As previously mentioned, Aaker’s Brand Identity Planning model has been broken up into three systematic categories. Although each of these categories is vitally important; the purpose of this study will only be focusing on one of the three categories. The category which great importance will be placed on is the *Strategic Identity System* – where brand identity is unpacked. The categories of *Strategic Brand Analysis* and *Brand Identity Implementation System* will not be analysed. This study will purely focus on the brand identity portion of Aaker’s model.

The topic for this research paper been developed through the researcher’s consistent passion for the environment and conserving it. The researcher would like to use this research paper as

a starting block for her own environmental conservation brand. The researcher believes that the branding of a conservation company can greatly contribute to the success of it. This research paper will attempt to understand if there is a perceived disconnect between environmental conservation companies and strong brand identities and how the branding of environmental companies should be done to attract the most attention.

This paper will be broken up into a number of systemic chapters. The chapter to follow will be the literature review. Chapter three unpacks the research methodology to a large extent. Chapter four will be the data analysis and research findings. Chapter five of this research paper will be the conclusions drawn from the research conducted.

The next chapter, the literature review, has been categorised into specific themes relating to the topic of evaluating the effectiveness of how environmental conservation companies position their brands amongst the youth market. These themes are the *importance of brand identity for non-profit organisations*, *environmental conservation brands with distinctive brand identity elements* Aaker's Brand Identity model, the Endangered Wildlife Trust's brand identity unpacked using Aaker's brand identity model and the targeted audience which is characterised as *Tweens*.

Chapter 2:

Literature Review



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Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1. Literature review

2.1.1. Importance of Brand Identity for Non-profit Organisations

In 2010, the world had more than 2 million non-profit organisations (Stride & Lee, 2010). A non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) is any non-profit, voluntary citizens' group which is organized on a local, national or international level. Task-oriented and driven by people with a common interest, NGOs perform a variety of service and humanitarian functions, bring citizen concerns to Governments, advocate and monitor policies and encourage political participation through provision of information (NGO Global Network, 2015). It can be said that the branding of a conservation company can greatly contribute to the success of it. As NGOs depend on other sources of funding, it can be said that it is vitally important for them to create a strong sense of brand identity which people can recognise and connect with. Given there are so many of these organisations operating today; they need offer something which differentiates them from competition. A way in which environmental conservation companies can respond to the increase in competition is to adapt to commercial branding techniques. Like any brand, NGOs need to position themselves effectively in the mind of the consumer to ensure there is a strong connection between them and the brand. Facing continuing pressure to assure revenues - the contention behind much of the literature is that as the non-profit environment becomes increasingly over-crowded, branding is needed to build trust and help facilitate donor choice (Hankinson, 2000).

“To be effective, a brand identity needs to resonate with customers, differentiate the brand from competitors, and represent what the organisation can and will do over time. When realised, the brand identity should help establish a relationship between the brand and the customer by generating a value proposition potentially involving functional, emotional or self-expressive benefits or providing credibility for endorser's brands” (Aaker, A. 2000).

When consumers interact with brands, they are exposed to visual simulations such as a logo, colours, shapes, typefaces, characteristics, styles and other visual elements (McQuarrie & Phillips, 2008; Schroeder, 2004). These visual elements may come to be associated with the brand and serve to identify it.

Like all brands, it is vitally important to ensure one has a strong brand identity which is, not only consistent but also creates something which resonates in the mind of the consumer. In today's society, brands have become a vital part of most people's lives. Often, people will

recognise a particular product, design or logo. What we need to do, is ensure the elements which people recognise are consistent and add value. A brand identity is what makes a company unique and stand out. Within the construct of a well-defined brand identity; environmental conservation companies should try to achieve a breakthrough non-profit brand (BNB). This concept was drawn up by Jocelyne S. Daw & Carol Cone (2011), where they state that

“A BNB articulates what an organisation stands for: the compelling, focused idea that sets it apart and is meaningful to its supporters. An organisation that cultivates a BNB puts its constituents at the heart of the identity. It makes the brand personally and emotionally relevant and creates a sense of community around unifying values, commitments, and concerns” (Jocelyne S. Daw & Carol Cone. 2011).

As a non-profit organisation or company who is involved with environmental conservation, it is essential to create a brand with a set of unique associations which make them stand out. There are thousands of credible causes, giving more of a reason for conservation organisations, to create a strong brand identity.

In the article written by N Laidler-Kylander, J. A Quech and B. L Simonin (2004), titled *Building and Valuing Global Brands in the Non-profit Sector*, the authors speak about how the world of non-profit leaders and managers has changed drastically over the past decades. It can be said that this is because of the drastic increase of non-profit brands. K Brunham (2002) identified “building your organisation’s brand” as one of the most vital skills for the future non-profit leaders. K Brunham also communicated that brands are vital internal instruments for stimulating non-profit organisations. The most important advantage a non-profit organisation has is its brand, defined as a name, symbol, personality or promise that immediately tells the community and the world who you are (Birkin, 2003; Bosc, 2002). According to Aaker (1995), the keys to successful brand building are to understand how to develop a brand identity, to know what the brand stands for, and to express that identity effectively. Not only will a sound brand identity attract greater attention, it will also build a trusted relationship between the brand and its supporters; which is critically important for a non-profit organisation.

Helen Stride and Stephen Lee (2010) speak about branding in the not for profit context in the article titled, *No Logo? No Way. Branding in the Non-Profit Sector*. They highlight international NGO brands such as WWF International, Oxfam, and Habitat for Humanity; who are now valued in terms of the trust that the brand has the capacity to generate and in

their own commercial worth. Non-profit brands are increasingly recognised as being the strongest brands in the world (H. Stride and S. Lee, 2010)

Whilst one can recognise that a high level of awareness is important for non-profit organisations to attract financial and human resources, it has been argued that the way in which non-profit organisations currently raise their profiles may not always be effective at fully explaining the purpose of the organisation and what the non-profit organisation actually does (Hankins. 2000). Effective brand management in the non-profit context is far more complex than simply satisfying donor needs. To be fully effective, non-profit brands need to address a number of additional organisational objectives. The most widely cited include lobbying (Hankins. 2000), education and the communication of the cause itself (Tapp, A. 1996) and image and reputation management (Polonsky, M.J. and Macdonald, E.K. 2000).

In order to educate and communicate the cause, the non-profit organisation needs to have a clear and concise brand identity which encapsulates exactly what the brand stands for and the purpose of the brand. The purpose of the brand should be consistently communicated throughout all channels to ensure a coherent and constant brand message.

2.1.2. Environmental Conservation Brands with Distinctive Brand Identity Elements

Tusk Conservation Awards is a non-profit organisation devoted to funding conservation, community development and environmental education programs across Africa. The awards “highlight inspirational conservation work in Africa, ranging from the protection of endangered species and threatened habitat to the promotion of environmental education and the development of community driven conservation” (Tusk Conservation Awards, 2014).

This is a brand which recently relooked their brand identity strategy, developing applications which create an emotional connection with the brand by incorporating cultural influences into their design. “To create an emotional connection with Tusk’s roots, we looked into the cultural influences across the continent. Taking inspiration from tribal art, we designed a unique graphic pattern that encompasses the four letterforms of T-U-S-K in black, white and orange geometric shapes. The pattern echoes traditional African designs and informs the confident style of the brand that is ownable and celebratory in character” (Brand New, 2014).

Within Aaker’s brand identity model, under the *Strategic Identity System* category, he includes the *Value Proposition*. The value proposition is created by the brand identity. In

addition to functional benefits, the value proposition can include emotional and self-expressive benefits (Aaker, A. 2000). What the Tusk Conservation Awards has done well, is highlight the emotional benefits through their brand identity. They have incorporated elements in their identity which are truly African, creating a well-structured relationship between the brand and consumers. An *emotional benefit* relates to the ability of the brand to make the buyer or user of a brand feel something during the purchase process or use experience (Aaker, A. 2000).

Another company which has taken this approach and created a brand that portrays an emotional benefit, is the wine brand *Mount Vernon*. They have created a bottle of wine called *Rhino Tears*; the profits of selling this wine go directly to Rhino conservation in South Africa. They have developed an interesting business model and brand architecture where they have constructed a brand extension dedicated to Rhino conservation; which is not their expertise.

The Rainforest Trust, previously known as the *World Land Trust-US*, realised that their brand name and logo was not being received very well. They undertook the task of relooking the brand identity completely. They conducted research to unpack how people interpreted the words ‘trust’, ‘foundation’ and ‘conservancy’; to make sure that what they believed in was aligned with the organisation (Molly Soat . 2014).

The rebranding campaign for this environmental conservation company was received very well. The donations almost doubled from 2012 to 2013, the organisations donor-base grew by 57% in 2013 and the number of people who ‘liked’ their Facebook page increased from 1 260 in early October 2013 to more than 15 000 in July 2014 (Molly Soat . 2014).

In the study done by Avelie Stuart, Emma F Thomas, Ngaire Donaghue and Adam Russell; they unpack how the *Sea Shepherd Conservation Society (SSCS)* have constructed their brand identity in an unconventional way which has led to much publicity and political attention. SSCS is an activist organisation which focuses on direct-action marine wildlife conservation. They attempt to prevent whaling vessels from operating in the Antarctic whale sanctuary.

The researchers unpack how their disruptive brand identity has created a psychological link between the conservation brand and individuals. The researcher explored in-depth interviews with the members of the SSC; providing comprehensive insight into what the brand stands for. “For the *Sea Shepherd Conservation Society*, their direct actions have aligned with a ‘pirate’ identity shows them to be distinctively passionate and effective at immediately

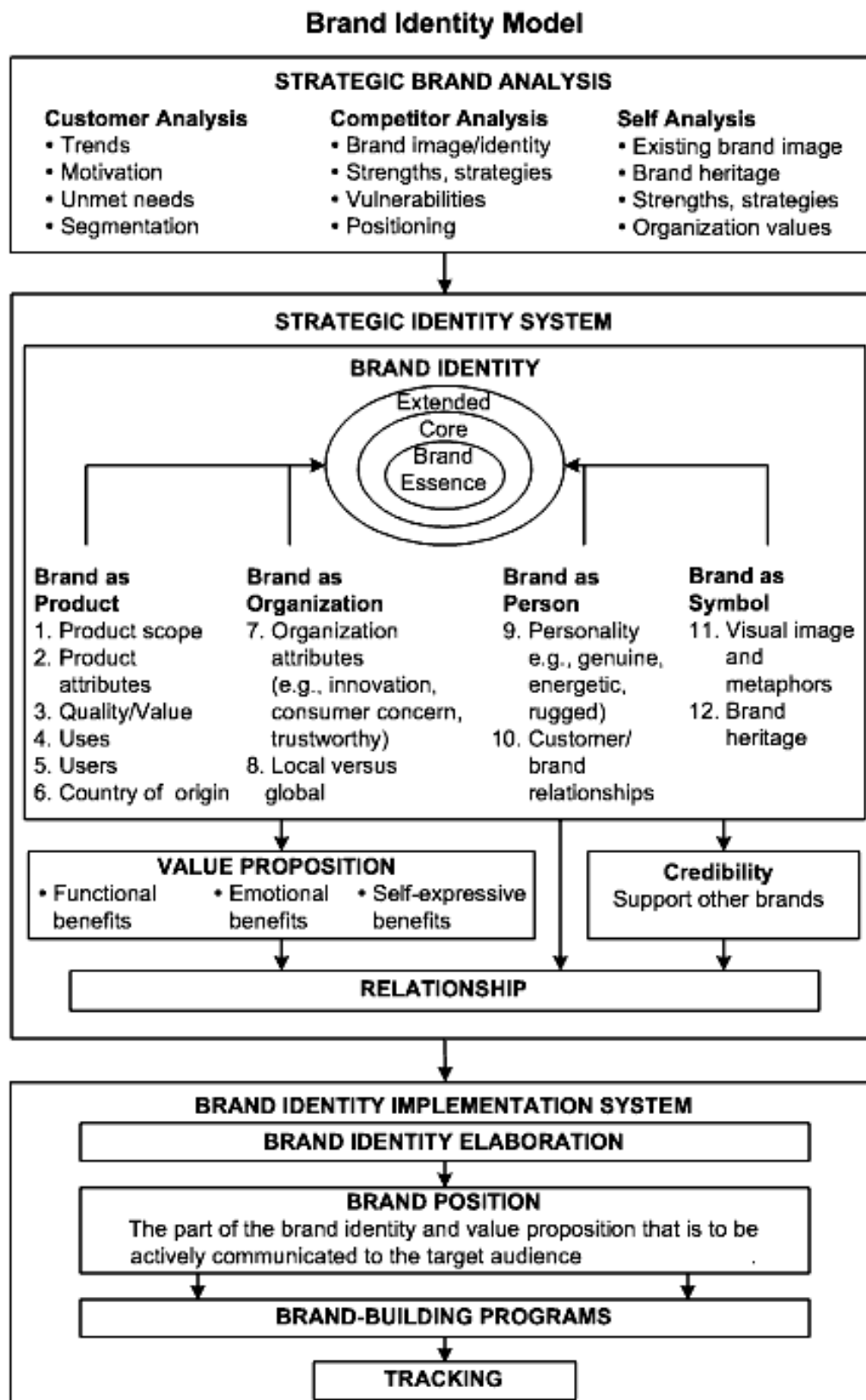
preventing whaling (and there is less need to extend effort on diplomacy efforts)” (Ana Isabel Polo Pena, Dolores Maria Frias Jamilena & Miguel Angel Rodriguez Molina. 2013).

The purpose of observing the above brands and their identities is because these brands have been able to distinguish themselves through their brand identities. They have incorporated certain aspects of Aaker’s brand identity model which have allowed them to create differentiation with their NGO brand. As previously mentioned in this chapter, creating a solid and strong brand identity is vitally important for non-profit organisations in order to create a robust relationship with its customers or supporters.

Through understanding how the above NGO brands have used certain aspects of Aaker’s brand identity model to mould their identities; it will be easier to interpret the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* identity and how it fits into Aaker’s model. The next section of this chapter will be looking at the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* and interpreting its brand identity in great detail, according to Aaker’s model.

2.2. Aaker's Brand Identity Planning Model structure

The below diagram illustrates David Aaker's brand identity planning model:



(Source: Aaker, A. & Joachimsthaler, E. 2000).

This model was formulated to assist with the application of a brand identity. It provides a tool to understand, develop and use the brand identity construct. If a sound brand identity has been developed, it should help establish a relationship between the brand and the customer by generating a value proposition potentially involving functional, emotional, or self-expressive benefits (Aaker, D. 2000). Below the key elements of Aaker's brand identity model will be discussed.

2.2.1. Strategic Brand Analysis

This section of Aaker's brand identity model looks at three areas of analysis, these are: *Customer Analysis*, *Competitor Analysis*, and *Self Analysis*.

2.2.2. Strategic Identity System (Brand Identity)

The *Strategic Identity System* fragment of the brand identity model looks at the characteristics of the brand, being the Brand Essence, core and extended brand identities.

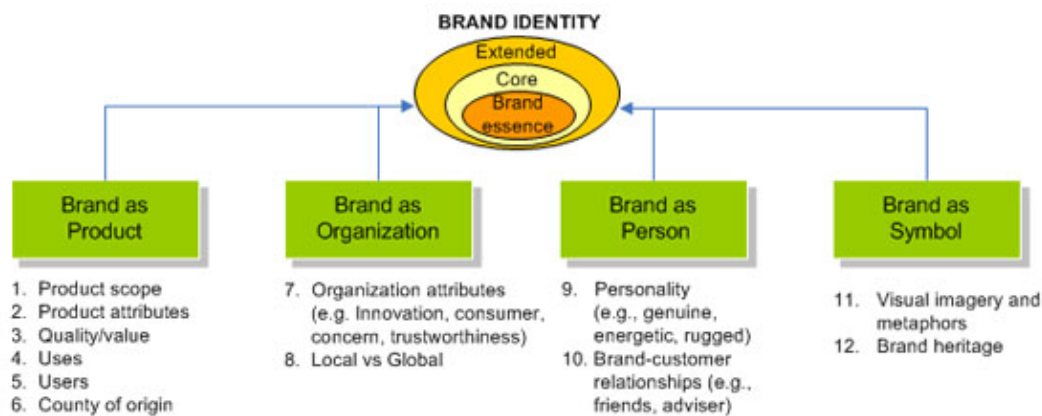
These characteristics are then looked at in light of four perspectives on the concept of a brand. These are: *Brand as Product*, *Brand as Organisation*, *Brand as Person* and *Brand as Symbol*. Holistically, these characteristics contribute to the value proposition and credibility of the brand which, in effect, contributes to the relationship between the brand and customer.

It is this portion of Aaker's brand identity model which will be looked at extensively. The *Endangered Wildlife Trust* brand will be unpacked according to these characteristics and perspectives; these will be discussed in chapter two of this paper.

2.2.3. Brand Identity Implementation System

Within Aaker's brand identity model the implementation stage looks at how effectively the brand identity has been positioned in the mind of the consumer. From there, the brand can identify which brand building programs would be best to implement.

2.3. Endangered Wildlife Trust Brand Identity – Aaker’s Brand Identity Model



2.3.1. Brand Essence:

Our environment, our responsibility.

2.3.2. Core Identity:

Who we are.

2.3.3. Extended Identity:

- Trust
- Nurture
- Protect

2.3.4. Brand as Product

2.3.4.1. Product Scope

The *Endangered Wildlife Trust* does not have a traditional product offering; what they offer is more like a promise to protect. They are an organisation which relies on donations for funding. The *Endangered Wildlife Trust's* vision is:

“A healthy planet and an equitable world that values and sustains diversity of all life.”

And their mission is:

“The Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT) is dedicated to conserving threatened species and ecosystems in southern Africa to the benefit of all people.”

Their conservation strategy is aligned with the organisation's core objectives and goals with its Mission and Vision and with the broader framework of external issues and pressures. The strategy remains dynamic, with revisions undertaken on an annual basis (Endangered Wildlife Trust. 2015).

The six Strategic Imperatives of the *Endangered Wildlife Trust's* Conservation Strategy are:

1. "Identify human-induced threats and the affected species in order to halt or reverse species decline.
2. Ensure that the viability of threatened habitats and ecosystems is maintained.
3. Develop innovative, economically viable alternatives to address harmful impacts to the benefit of people and biodiversity.
4. Increase awareness and mainstream environmental considerations into the daily lives of people and decision makers.
5. Explore and develop opportunities for mentorship and capacity building within the conservation sector.
6. Provide a leadership role in ensuring efficient and adequate implementation, compliance and enforcement of conservation legislation."

The *Endangered Wildlife Trust* fills the key of conservation through applied research field-work and direct engagement with stakeholders. With specialist Programmes and a large team of skilled field staff deployed throughout southern Africa, the *Endangered Wildlife Trust's* work supports the conservation of threatened species and ecosystems. These programmes include:

- African Crane Conservation Programme
- Birds of Prey Programme
- Carnivore Conservation Programme
- Conservation Science Unit
- Drylands Conservation Programme
- Skills Development Unit
- Source to Sea Programme
- Threatened Amphibian Programme
- Threatened Grassland Species Programme
- Urban Conservation Programme
- Wildlife in Trade Programme
- Wildlife & Energy Programme

- Wildlife and Roads

The *Endangered Wildlife Trust* communicates the principles of sustainable living through awareness programmes to the broadest possible constituency for the benefit of the region. They initiate research and conservation action programmes, implementing projects which mitigate threats facing species diversity and supporting sustainable natural resource management (Endangered Wildlife Trust. 2015).

2.3.4.2. Product Attributes

As the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* does not have a product offering; their attributes are more aligned with the service they provide in conserving the environment. These attributes include:

- Education
- Protection
- Conservation

The organisation achieves its Mission through:

- “Initiating and implementing conservation research and action programmes;
- Preventing species extinctions and maintaining biodiversity and ecosystem functioning;
- Supporting sustainable natural resources and management;
- Communicating the principles of sustainable living and empowering people by capacity building, and awareness programmes to the broadest possible constituency; and
- Taking a strong leadership and advocacy role in promoting environmental and social justice.” – EWT

2.3.4.3. Quality/Value

The *Endangered Wildlife Trust* is concerned about conserving the environment and species living in it. It can therefore be said that they add a great deal of value to the lives of people as well as the environment. They care for the environment and serve to protect it for future generations.

2.3.4.4. Uses

The *Endangered Wildlife Trust* is a non-profit organisation who is devoted to protecting the environment. The purpose or use of this brand is to ensure protection of endangered species, educate people about the environment and how to conserve it and conservation.

2.3.4.5. Users

There are a number of corporates, individuals and associates who have partnered with the *Endangered Wildlife Trust*. These organisations have recognised the value the *EWT* adds to the environment and society. They provide the organisation with continued support of funding. The *Endangered Wildlife Trust* recognises the value in collaboration and forming coalitions with partners to complement their skills, enhance their strengths and support their weaknesses (Endangered Wildlife Trust. 2015).

2.3.4.6. Country of Origin

The *Endangered Wildlife Trust* is a non-governmental, not-for-profit conservation organisation, founded in 1973 in South Africa.

“It is a fully accredited non-governmental member of the World Conservation Union (IUCN). The Trust was founded on 31 October 1973 and is registered as a Non-Profit Organisation under the registration number 015-502 NPO, in terms of the Non-Profit Act, No 71 of 1997 and Public Benefit Organisation, PBO Registration No 930 001 777 in terms of section 10(1)(cN) of the Income Tax Act, No 58 of 1962, as amended. The conservation activities of the EWT are recognised as Public Benefit Activities and donations made to the EWT to an amount of 5% of taxable income are tax deductible under Section 18A of the Income Tax Act, 1962. Accounting procedures follow Generally Accepted Accounting Practices (GAAP). External auditors, Deloitte, audit the Endangered Wildlife Trust annually and audited financial statements are made available to all interested parties.” – EWT

2.3.5. Brand as Organisation

2.3.5.1. Organisation Attributes

The *Endangered Wildlife Trust* is concerned about the environment and conserving it. Given the nature of their business and the fact that their funding comes from individuals, partners and corporates; they need to conduct their business in a trustworthy manner.

2.3.5.2. Local vs Global

The *Endangered Wildlife Trust* focuses on southern Africa's environment and biodiversity. Although they operate locally, they are involved with a number of programmes outside of South Africa, in East Africa including:

- Democratic Republic of Congo
- Kenya
- Lesotho
- Malawi
- Mozambique
- Namibia
- Rwanda
- South Africa
- Swaziland
- Tanzania
- Uganda
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe

The *Endangered Wildlife Trust* is also a member of the World Conservation Union (IUCN).

2.3.6. Brand as Person

2.3.6.1. Personality

The *Endangered Wildlife Trust*'s personality characteristics include nurturing, humble, honest, reliable, genuine and protector.

2.3.6.2. Brand-customer Relationship

It can be said that the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* is a motherly figure due to the nurturing nature of the brand.

2.3.7. Brand as Symbol

2.3.7.1. Visual Imagery and Metaphors



The *Endangered Wildlife Trust* brand has created an iconic symbol which has become well-known and distinctive. Their symbol is simple yet effective as it clearly identifies their purpose of protection.

Their symbol is present in their logo; it is a cheetah's footprint in a bright red colour. The colour red is bold and is associated with energy, strength, power, passion and love. This is a colour with high visibility and indicates courage.

2.3.7.2. Brand Heritage

As this brand has been in existence for a number of years, they have created a certain sense of trust amongst the people who support them. Many people have been supporting this brand since the inception of it.

2.4. Ethical Issues

When undertaking an environmental conservation company or NGO, there are certain regulations, stated by the South African government, that need to be taken into consideration. The Department of Social Development developed codes in keeping with the requirements of the Non-profit Organisations Act of 1997. These codes are particularly focused on governance, administration, fundraising and the sponsor community (Department of Social Development. 2001).

The code set up by the Department of Social Development will need to be taken into consideration when formulating and conducting the research at hand.

2.5. The Target Audience – Tweens

The youth market can be characterised as a fairly large market; for the purpose of this study, the youth market will be categorised as 'Tweens' which is a concept discussed by Tatjana von Bormann (2004). The concept of Tweens describes the youth market as being between the ages of 8 and 14; which is grades two to eight. Due to the large maturity gap between 8 and 14 year olds, the researcher feels the market should be narrowed down even further.

Tweens of the ages between 11 and 14 will be approached in order to understand their perceptions of the *Endangered Wildlife Trust*.

“If we view the environment as the place where we live, the food we eat, water we drink and the air we breathe, then it goes without saying that youth, as growing, active members of the population need a healthy environment more than any other group. Young people cannot be isolated from their environment because nothing can survive on this planet unless it is in cooperation with its habitat” (Muli, A. 1996).

According to the above quote, it is evident that there is a great importance of entrenching a culture of conservation consciousness into the youth of our society. If the youth can appreciate and understand the environment, they can take greater precautions for the sustainable growth of it.

In the article titled *Brands should Target Tweens to Win Loyal Consumers for Life* written by Jenni Smallshaw (2001), the author unpacks the Tween market to a large extent. She describes the Tween years as being a glimpse into the adult the child will become.

“It is an emergent stage: these children have a good understanding of the outside world, but their imagination and creativity has not yet been hampered by the knocks and cynicism of adult life” (Smallshaw, J. 2001).

The author goes on to say that the key factor which binds this group together is its positive outlook and idealism. They are often creative thinkers with questioning minds and a thirst for discovery (Smallshaw, J. 2001). In order to relate with this market, one has to be in constant communication with them to ensure you’re up to speed with the latest occurrence in their lives. One needs to be familiar with what they are currently into and the media they use to access it. The interesting factor about this market is that the adult brands one learns in their Tween years are of great importance and impact on their adult lives (Smallshaw, J. 2001).

“The dreams and aspirations of your Tween years of discovery are the ones that you’ll return to, the ones that chart your future course in life. Anyone or anything that can help people to explore and realise those Tween aspirations is very welcome” (Smallshaw, J. 2001).

In the article *Targeting Tweens* written by Jean Dougall (2003), the author speaks about the concept of bonding. This concept of bonding refers to when people choose a brand above all others because they feel that brand is distinctively better than others at delivering key rational and emotional benefits. When children are very young, they do not show bonding with brands, however as children reach the Tween phase, bonding with brands increases rapidly.

As mentioned by Jenni Smallshaw (2001), the brands Tweens learn to love will be entrenched in their minds for many years to come. If brands are able to create a bond between Tweens, they should be able to achieve a sustainable relationship with them.

In a research study done by Bill Carter (2011), he identifies that over 80 percent of Tweens trust in companies that are socially and environmentally responsible. Nearly 75 percent are more likely to pay attention to a company's message if it is deeply committed to a cause and nearly 70 percent base their shopping decisions on a company's social and environmental commitments.

If we can get Tweens to have an emotional connection to a brand such as the *Endangered Wildlife Trust*; then the brand will be able to form a solid and sustainable relationship with this market.

The following chapter will be discussing the methodology used to conduct the research topic at hand. The methodology chapter will unpack the research design used, the data collection methods adopted and the data analysis methods used. This chapter will also unpack the sample group and the reasons behind selecting particular participants.

Chapter 3:

Research Methodology



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Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1. Research Design

The aim of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of how environmental conservation companies, in particular the *Endangered Wildlife Trust*, position themselves amongst the youth market. This will be done by answering the following research questions: (1) To determine how the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* has currently positioned their brand? (2) To establish how the youth market perceives the *Endangered Wildlife Trust*? (3) To evaluate the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* brand within the framework of Aaker's brand identity model? It is because of the above aim and research questions that this study will form the outline of qualitative research.

Qualitative research is characterised by its aims, which relate to understanding some aspect of social life, and its methods which (in general) generate words, rather than numbers, as data for analysis (M. Patton & M. Cochran. 2002). Qualitative researchers prefer induction, informed by constructionism and interpretivism, even though qualitative researchers do not always subscribe to all these positions (Bryman, A & Bell, E. 2014). The research design provides the framework for which the data is collected and analysed. The research design provides a structure that guides the use of a research method and the analysis of the subsequent data.

“It is a framework developed to generate evidence that is suited to both a certain set of criteria – reliability, replication, validity, trustworthiness and authenticity – and the researchers research question” (Bryman, A & Bell, E. 2014).

For the purpose of this study, the research design will take form of a *case study design*. This type of research design involves the detailed and intense analysis of one or more cases which the researcher aims to study in-depth (Bryman, A & Bell, E. 2014). Case research is concerned with the complexity and particular nature of the case (Stake. 1995). There are three categories a case study can be placed into, these are: *a single organisation, a single location and a single event*. This study will be categorised as *a single organisation* case study. This is because the research will be focusing on one organisation, being the *Endangered Wildlife Trust*.

When using the qualitative research design of a case study the researcher usually seeks to highlight the unique features of the case. What distinguishes a case study from other designs

is the focus on understanding a bounded situation or system. (Bryman, A & Bell, E. 2014). As this study will be focusing on the brand identity of the *Endangered Wildlife Trust*, Aaker's brand identity model will form part of the research methodology.

There are two parts to this study, the first part is the actual brand identity of the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* and the second part is the target audience of *Tweens*. This study will be broken up into separate themes, each relating to the categories set out in Aaker's brand identity model. This ensures the study is entirely focused around Aaker's brand identity model. A field study, as a focus group, will give some insight into the research questions relating to the target audience. The focus groups will also confirm the perceptions and feels the target market has with the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* brand.

3.2. Field Study – Focus Group

“Focus group research is a qualitative method which is concerned with studying how participants express their views and perspectives on an issue as members of a group. The moderator or facilitator is expected to guide a fairly unstructured discussion without being too intrusive” (Bryman, A & Bell, E. 2014).

A *focus group* is a qualitative field study method which will be adopted to understand the target audience's current perceptions. Structured, visual questions will be formulated in order to collect information about ideas and perceptions, drawing insight from the observations. Although the questions will be structured, the facilitator will guide the discussions without being invasive, or influencing the discussion.

Through the use of a field focus group, the researcher will aim to answer the following research questions: (1) To determine how the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* has currently positioned their brand? (2) To establish how the youth market perceives the *Endangered Wildlife Trust*? (3) To evaluate the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* brand within the framework of Aaker's brand identity model?

As Aaker's brand identity model is being used as a framework for this study, the focus group will need to be structured in such a way which relates back to Aaker's brand identity model.

3.2.1. Advantages of Focus Groups

If done correctly, there is great value in conducting focus groups. This technique allows the researcher to cultivate an understanding for the reasons behind why people feel the way they do. In a group, the participants can probe each other's reasons for holding particular views,

challenging one another and possibly be forced to rethink their own views (Bryman, A & Bell, E. 2014). This is particularly valuable considering one of the characteristics of the target audience: the *Tween* market consists of creative thinkers with questioning minds and a thirst for discovery (Smallshaw, J. 2001).

Through focus groups, the researcher can study how the participants collectively make sense of a phenomenon and construct meanings around it. This is consistent with the key perspective of symbolic interactionism that understands social phenomenon occurs in interaction discussions with others (Bryman, A & Bell, E. 2014).

3.2.2. Disadvantages of Focus Groups

There are some limitations in terms of conducting a focus group, the first biggest challenge is that focus groups are incredibly difficult to organise. Although focus groups can be incredibly beneficial, analysing the data can be difficult as a large amount of data can be produced very quickly.

The manner in which the focus group is moderated is incredibly important. Group dynamics within the focus group may be problematic. There may be a participant who is out spoken and more expressive, and there may be another which is quiet. This could create some difficulty as the one participant may overpower the other, influencing their views and perceptions. The moderator needs to be aware that participants may be more prone to expressing culturally and religiously expected views.

3.3. Sampling

Through facilitating a focus group, the researcher will gain insight into understanding the perceptions of the target audience. The sample group has been systematically chosen. As the target audience is the youth market, characterised as ‘Tweens’, secondary research has been undertaken to identify which schools in Johannesburg have somehow been involved with the *Endangered Wildlife Trust*. Crawford Primary Lonehill has been involved with a number of events to raise funds for the *Endangered Wildlife Trust*. The focus group will consist of five to eight young students (Bryman, A & Bell, E. 2014); observations made will give an understanding of their perceptions on environmental consciousness and the *Endangered Wildlife Trust*.

As this particular study makes use of qualitative research, non-probability sampling will be utilised. Non-probability sampling covers a wide range of types of sampling strategies, these

are: Accidental, convenience, purposive, quota, snowball and volunteer. For the purpose of this study, convenience sampling will be utilised. A convenience sample is one which is available to the researcher by virtue of its accessibility. Although the sampling group has been systemically selected, the sampling group can be described as convenience due to particular relationships between the researcher and the school.

As the sample group consists of young *Tweens*, the focus groups cannot extend over a long period of time due to their concentration maturity. The researcher has limited access to the number of students, as consent will need to be granted by a parent or guardian of the student. This, however, will not impact on the quality of the study because of the way in which the focus group will be structured. The focus group will ensure that the students are interactively engaged with the conversations.

3.3.1. Advantages and Disadvantages of Convenience Sampling

The advantages of this form of non-probability *convenience* sampling are that it is easy to access, with few rules governing how the study should be carried out and the cost involved is relatively low. Convenience sampling may guide the researcher at gathering useful data and information which may not have been possible, had probability sampling techniques been used, which require more formal access to lists of populations.

The disadvantages of convenience sampling are that the data may be vulnerable to bias and there is risk that the sample may not represent the population as a whole.

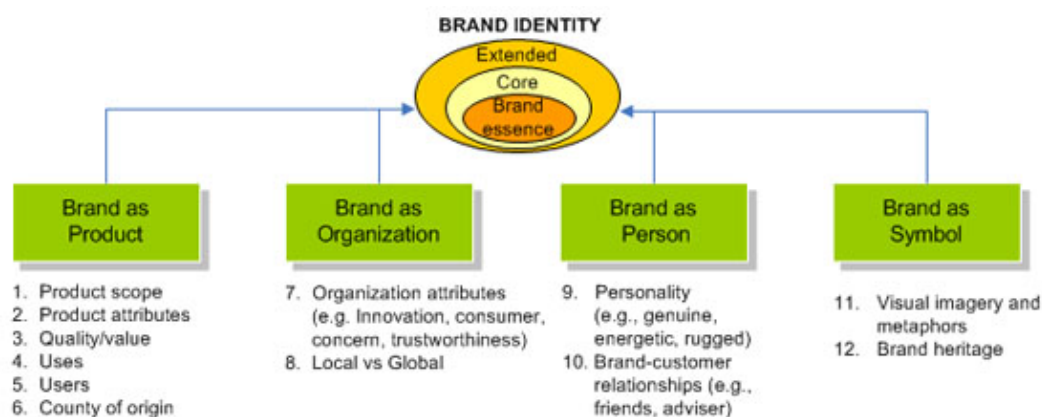
3.4. Data Collection Methods

3.4.1. Field Study – Focus Group

The focus group will consist of young students between the ages of 11 and 14. The groups will be made up of five to eight students (Bryman, A & Bell, E. 2014). The focus group cannot extend over a long period of time, due to the age of the children and their concentration maturity. During school hours, these students attend periods for each class session. These periods are 35 minutes long, it is for these reasons that the focus group session will be no longer than 35 minutes long. The focus group conducted will consist of a number of open-ended questions, where the students will be encouraged to engage with each other and the content.

As the purpose of this study is to unpack how effectively the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* brand has positioned their brand's identity amongst the youth market, the structure of the focus group will place most emphasis on the visual or identity of the brand. In order to understand the perceptions of this market, the students will be asked to mainly identify what specific aspects of the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* makes them feel. One important aim of the focus group is to understand if the target audience has any emotional connection with the brand. An interesting point regarding this target audience is that they are at a stage in their lives where they begin to bond with particular brands. If we could understand how they would bond with a brand such as the *Endangered Wildlife Trust*, we could identify how to structure messaging and visuals towards this market, ensuring a sustainable relationship.

The data received from the focus group will be analysed according to Aaker's brand identity model. As previously mentioned on page 16 of this paper, Aaker's brand identity model has been broken up into three strategic levels, these are: the *strategic brand analysis*, the *strategic identity system* – which includes the brand identity, and the *brand identity implementation system*. The brand identity of the *strategic identity system* has been broken up into four categories, these categories are: brand as a product, brand as an organisation, brand as a person and brand as a symbol (which can be seen below).



The researcher will use the categories *Brand as a product*, *brand as a person* and *brand as a symbol* as underlying themes for the focus groups. The focus groups will be separated into three sessions; each session will be centred on these three categories. The category which will not be looked at is *Brand as an organisation*; the reason for this is because it is not relevant to this particular study and the target market.

The categories of *Brand as a Product* and *Brand as a Symbol* will aim to answer the following research question: (1) To determine how the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* has currently positioned their brand?

The category of *Brand as a Person* will address the research question of: (2) To establish how the youth market perceives the *Endangered Wildlife Trust*?

The final research question is: (3) To evaluate the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* brand within the framework of Aaker's brand identity model? This research question will be answered throughout all the focus groups as they have been structured in a way which aligns to Aaker's brand identity model, using it as a framework. Therefore, the researcher will place Aaker's model at the heart of the research paper, allowing the researcher to pull trends according to Aaker's brand identity model.

3.4.2. Brand as a Product

As the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* has a number of products or services they offer, for the purpose of the qualitative study, only one programme will be analysed within the focus group, in the framework of Aaker's brand identity model. The programme the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* offers, which will be analysed within the focus group is their *Urban Conservation Programme*. The reason for selecting this particular programme is because it is something which the sample group may be able to correlate with. Within the *Endangered Wildlife Trust*'s urban programme, they have an eco-school's project where they educate the youth about the importance of conservation.

“The Eco-Schools Programme (ESP) is an extensive and practical, internationally recognised, environmental education programme that focuses on improving environmental management within schools, as well as promoting environmental learning for both learners and teachers. Through this programme, the EWT and supporting partners provide a platform that enables teachers, learners, community members and/or partner organisations to undertake projects towards improving various aspects of environmental management at their school. Some of these projects range from saving electricity and/or water to developing food gardens. The EWT provides any materials needed for the chosen projects and assists in an advisory capacity in all aspects. During the implementation of the Eco-Schools Programme, teachers draw on the practical components of a chosen theme to strengthen environmental learning at the school by developing materials to include in the curriculum. Each year they strive to improve on their efforts, and aim towards achieving established goals which will eventually

qualify them for an internationally recognised symbol of excellence, the Eco-Schools flag” (Endangered Wildlife Trust. 2015).

This eco-school project will be unpacked and analysed according to Aaker’s brand identity model. This project has a direct relationship with the target market as the project engages with the youth of South Africa. The target market will be asked particular questions regarding the *Eco-School* programme which the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* partners with, in order to establish their perceptions of this programme.

3.4.3. Brand as a Person

The purpose of the focus group held for the category of *Brand as Person*, is to understand how this particular target market views the *Endangered Wildlife Trust*. Here, the group of students will be asked certain questions which will allow the researcher to understand what personality the target market believes the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* has.

3.4.4. Brand as a Symbol

Through open-ended questions, the researcher can gain insight into how the target audience perceives the brand as a symbol and whether or not they believe the *Endangered Wildlife Trust*’s symbol is appealing to them and conveys the concept of ‘conservation’.

3.5. Data Analysis Methods

The data analysis methods will include documenting and reporting findings through the open-ended questions asked in the focus groups. The reason for asking open-ended questions is to invite the respondent to answer in the way they wish to. As open-ended questions do not have structured or specific answers, they can elicit underlying ideas, feeling, sentiments and suggestions that may have not been considered (du Plooy, GM. 2002).

For the purpose of this study, the researcher will ask *follow-up questions*, where questions will be asked in response to answers. du Plooy cites that there are three strategies for follow up questions: Probing, mirror and climate questions. For the purpose of this study, the researcher will ask *probing questions*. Probing questions aim to elicit more information about the participants attitudes, emotions or behaviour, by asking *When?*, *Where?*, *What?*, *How?* *Or Why?* This will be done through word association, semantics and personality traits associated with the brand.

In order to unpack the category of *Brand as a Person*, the words which make up the name of the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* will be broken up and asked to the market. The audience will be asked to write down words they associate with the word ‘Endangered’ – They will also be asked what this word means and what it means to them. They will then be asked what the words ‘Wildlife’ and ‘Trust’ mean and what they associate with these words. The group will also be asked to draw images which connect to the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* logo / symbol. This will also give some insight into their emotions or feeling towards the brand.

In order to unpack the category of *Brand as a Symbol*, the group will be asked open-ended questions pertaining to the symbolism of environmental conservation companies. As this market is visual, rather than asking questions, students will be given a number of logo’s / symbols and asked to identify which belongs to the *Endangered Wildlife Trust*.

The following logos will be presented to them:

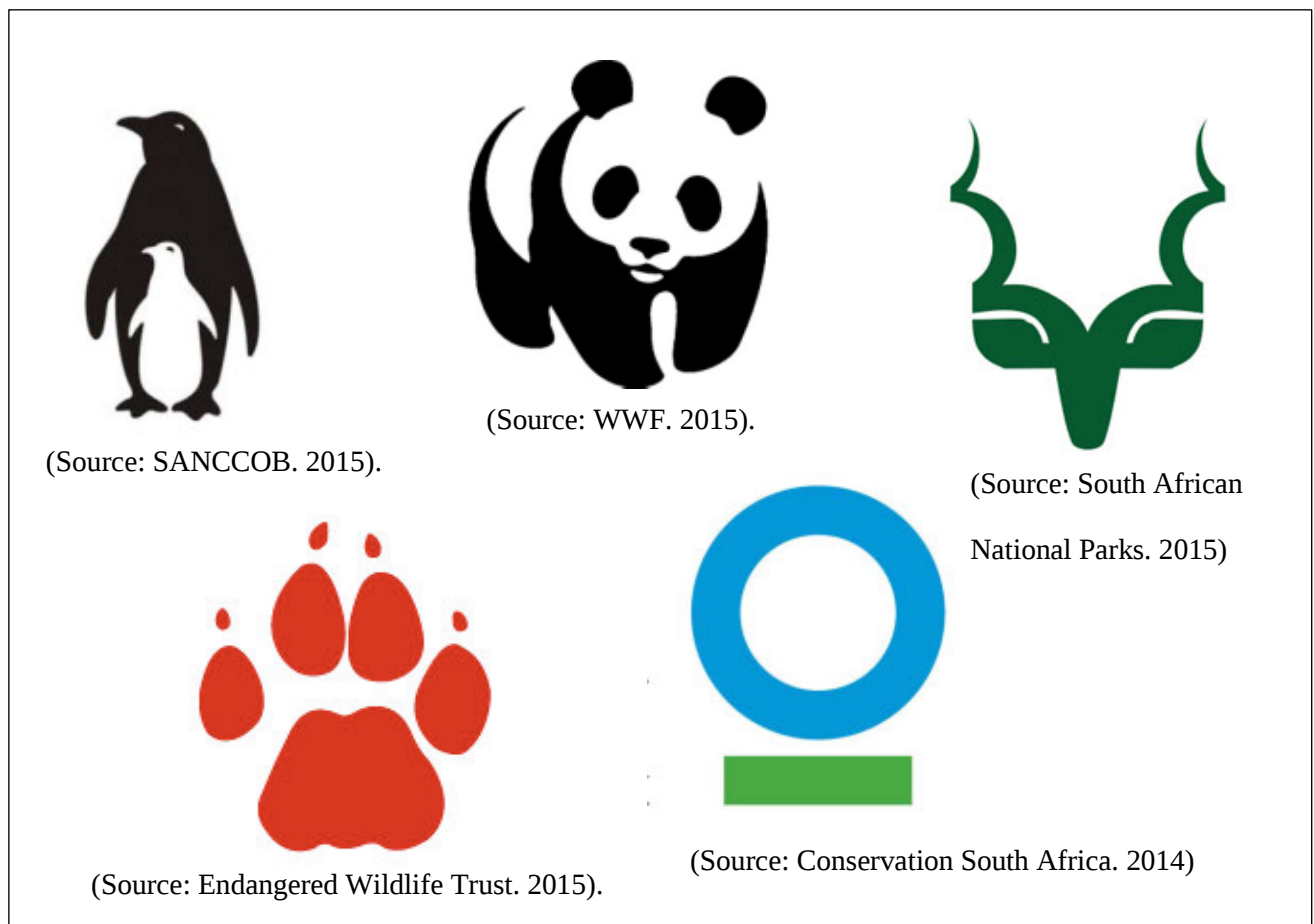


Figure 1

This will give an indication of how many of the students are actually familiar with the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* symbol.

The market will then be shown the actual logo of the *Endangered Wildlife Trust*; they will then be asked to write down words which come to mind when looking at this logo:



Figure 2

(Source: Endangered Wildlife Trust. 2015).

Asking students to write down words they associate with the brand will give some insight into what they feel towards this particular symbol and whether or not it appeals to them.

In order to unpack the category of *Brand as a Product*, the focus group will be asked a number of open-ended questions, which will allow the researcher to gain insight into their perceptions around the eco-school project the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* is involved in.

The students will be shown the following Eco-School symbol:



Figure 3

(Source: Weiskott, M. 2005).

The group of students will be asked if they are familiar with this particular symbol. They will also be asked to write down words they associate with this symbol. The students will be asked to communicate words they associate with the word 'eco' and what this word means to them.

Although the facilitated focus group has not yet been conducted, professionals from within the institution have been approached and in depth guidance has been given in terms of how one should approach and question this market. The market consists of individuals who are visual and often creative thinkers which is why the symbolic and visual route will be taken.

3.6. Trustworthiness

In a quantitative research study, the researcher needs to ensure validity and reliability (Bryman, A & Bell, E. 2014). As this study forms the outline of qualitative research methods, rather than quantitative research methods, the researcher will need to ensure trustworthiness. According to Lisa Given and Kristie Saumure (2008), trustworthiness has become an important concept as it allows researchers to describe the virtues of qualitative terms outside of the parameters that are typically applied in quantitative research. These include the concepts within quantitative research are generalizability, internal validity, reliability, and objectivity are reconsidered in qualitative terms. The terms used in qualitative research include transferability, credibility, dependability, and confirmability. In essence, trustworthiness can be thought of as the ways in which qualitative researchers ensure that transferability, credibility, dependability, and confirmability are evident in their research. Moving away from the quantitatively oriented terms allows qualitative researchers the freedom to describe their research in ways that highlight the overall rigor of qualitative research without trying to force it into the quantitative model (Given, L & Saumure, K. 2008).

Initially, a questionnaire was formulated in preparation of approaching the target audience. The questionnaire was shown to a qualified staff member of the school, *Crawford Primary Lonehill*, and the feedback given was that children of this age relate better to images and visuals rather than written questions. Given the age and characteristics of the target audience, a traditional written questionnaire will not provide validated information pertaining to the research question. As per the feedback received, the questionnaire has been amended to appeal better to the market. Rather than creating questionnaires for the target audience to

answer, the data collection method will be a focus group. The focus group will consist of the target audience and observations will be made with how they interact with the material at hand.

The above contributes to the overall *Transferability* of the study. *Transferability* is the ability of the findings to be applied to a similar situation and delivering similar results. This would allow for generalisation within an approach that does not lead itself to generalised findings. It is the degree to which the results and analysis can be applied beyond a specific research project (Bezuidenhout , R; Davis, C & Du Plooy-Cilliers, F. 2014).

Furthermore, Bezuidenhout , R; Davis, C & Du Plooy-Cilliers, F (2014) state that *Credibility* refers to the accuracy with which the researcher interpreted the data provided by the participants. Credibility is increased when the researcher devotes long periods of time with the applicants in order to gain insight into their lives and understand them better (Bezuidenhout , R; Davis, C & Du Plooy-Cilliers, F. 2014).

A factor which contributes to the credibility of this particular study is that the researcher will dedicate time by undertaking three separate focus groups, each connecting to the research questions set out for this study. These three focus groups will give the researcher a greater understanding and insight into the perceptions of the target market.

Dependability refers to the quality of the process of integration that takes place between the data collection methods, data analysis and theory generated from the data (Bezuidenhout , R; Davis, C & Du Plooy-Cilliers, F. 2014).

To ensure dependability, the researcher has taken into consideration the framework of Aaker's brand identity model as well as the research questions, thus contributing to the dependability of the study. The qualitative field data collection method of focus groups will be used to unpack the perceptions of the target market; each of these focus groups will align to the research questions set out by the researcher. The integration of the focus groups with the research questions allows for sound dependability.

According to Bezuidenhout , R; Davis, C & Du Plooy-Cilliers, F (2014), *confirmability* refers to how well the data collected support the findings and interpretation of the researcher. It indicates how well the findings flow from the data. This will be supported by the data findings and analysis in chapter 4, page 41. It requires the researcher to have described the

research process fully in order to assist others scrutinising the research design. Others who look at the data must come to similar conclusions as the researcher did.

The researcher will build the golden thread by referring to the research questions in chapter 2, the literature review and in the research methodology in chapter 3 (3.4.1.).

3.7. Ethical Concerns Pertaining to the Research Methodology

As the focus groups will be consisting of minor participants, the researcher will need to receive permission from the parents or guardians of the students.

The structure of the focus groups will need to be considered carefully due to the age of the participants. Under no circumstances may the group discuss age inappropriate topics which could lead to the discomfort of some participants.

Chapter four highlights the findings from the research conducted.

Chapter 4:

Research Findings



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Chapter 4: Research Findings

4.1. Introduction to the Focus Group Findings

The objective of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of environmental conservation companies, in particular the *Endangered Wildlife Trust*, position themselves amongst the youth market. This will be done by answering the following research questions: (1) To determine how the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* has currently positioned their brand? (2) To establish how the youth market perceives the *Endangered Wildlife Trust*? (3) To evaluate the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* brand within the framework of Aaker's brand identity model?

The focus discussions were strategically broken up into three themes, each of which, aligning to categories within Aaker's brand identity model. These themes being: *Brand as a Product*, *Brand as a Person* and *Brand as a Symbol*. This was done to ensure that the focus remained true to the aim of the study, unpacking how efficiently the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* brand positions their brand identity amongst the *Tween's* youth market.

Each category of Aaker's brand identity model relates to a research question set out to ensure the objectives of this paper are successfully answered. This chapter will focus on the findings of the three focus groups that were conducted during the month of June. The study will present the findings according to the categories of Aaker's brand identity model.

4.2. Category 1: Brand as a Product

The aim of the focus group held for the category of *Brand as a Product* was to answer the following research question: (1) To determine how the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* has currently positioned their brand? The focus group was asked questions relating to the *Eco-School* programme which the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* brand supports.

Question 1: Which brand is the first one that comes to mind when thinking about environmental conservation?

Individually, four of the six students stated the *Endangered Wildlife Trust*. One of the students said: *Save the Rhino*. The last student could not provide an answer.

Question 2: Are you familiar with the below symbol? (As seen on page 36, figure 3)

None of the students within the focus group knew the symbol.

Question 3: What words do you associate with this symbol? (As seen on page 36, figure 3)

The students had the following responses: *South Africa, freedom, reading, sprout, flag, learning, birds, South African birds and arbour day.*

Question 4: What feelings do you associate with this symbol? (As seen on page 36, figure 3)

The students answered with the following statements: *Unity, independence, togetherness, overwhelmed, free, spreading the word, leader, empowered, safety, heritage and proud.*

Question 5: What does the symbol represent to you? (As seen on page 36, figure 3)

The following replies were given: *Someone from South Africa is freeing birds, somebody is spreading knowledge from books, someone is growing with help from a learning project, and South Africa is coming together.*

Question 6: What does the colour green represent in this symbol? (As seen on page 36, figure 3)

The group gave the following responses for the green fragment of the symbol: *The green looks like a person, it looks like someone spreading knowledge because the green is part of him and he is spreading it out, the green looks like a tree, and the green without the other colours looks like a tree, with other colours looks like a person with a book.*

Question 7: What do you believe the other colours represent? (As seen on page 36, figure 3)

The following answers were provided: *Blue and red look like a book, yellow is creating a necklace that the person has been given, the black represents a head which is why the green looks like a person, and the colours look like a South African flag.*

Question 8: Where do you believe this particular symbol belongs? (As seen on page 36, figure 3)

The students responded with the following answers: *In a school, in a church, in a South African bird sanctuary, in a children's hospital, in a charity, in a place where people look after the environment, in a hospice, in the SPCA and in a nature conservation.*

Question 9: What words do you associate with this particular symbol?



Figure 4

(Source: Endangered Wildlife Trust. 2015).

The following responses were given: *Disposal, friends, togetherness, team work, recycling, family and eco-friendly.*

4.3. Category 2: Brand as a Person

The aim of the focus group held for the category of *Brand as a Product* was to answer the following research question: (2) To establish how the youth market perceives the *Endangered Wildlife Trust*?

In order to understand how the target market perceives the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* as a person, the group of students were asked particular questions pertaining to the *Endangered Wildlife Trust*.

Question 1: What words do you associate with *Conservation*?

The students provided the following responses were provided: *Protect, action, poaching, litter, fires, rhino adoption, recreation, saving, shelter, rely and support.*

The words which make up the name of the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* were then broken up and the group was asked to communicate what they associated with these words.

Question 2: What words do you associate with *Endangered*?

The students provided the following feedback: *Losing, extinct, game rangers, fires, threatened, rhino's, vanishing, dying, in danger, scarce, vulnerable and fading.*

Question 3: What words do you associate with *Wildlife*?

The group gave the following responses: *Animals, wild, the bush, holidays, camping, the big five, game rangers, game reserve, predators, camouflage, impala, 4X4 trails, rhinos, snakes, watering hole, carcass, trees, dams, khaki and South Africa.*

Question 4: What words do you associate with *Trust*?

The students gave the following feedback: *Safe, friends, secure, hand shake, protected, defend, saving, believe, hands, help, words, contract, secret, confidence and betrayal.*

Question 5: If the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* were a person, what would they look like?

The group of students answered with the following responses: *Caring face, he or a she (not sure which), tall, welcoming eyes, always wearing red and superhero.*

Question 6: What would this person wear?

The following answered were given: *Red jump suit, jeans and white shirt, and always wearing red.*

Question 7: How would this person act?

The students responded with: *They would act sincere and honest, confident, a leader, take action and influencer.*

4.4. Category 3: Brand as a Symbol

The aim of the focus group held for the category of *Brand as a Symbol* was to answer the following research question: (2) To establish how the youth market perceives the *Endangered Wildlife Trust*? The intention of this particular focus group was to unpack the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* brand's current symbol and determine how this symbol appeals to the target market and what would make it appeal to them more.

This focus group was started by showing the students a number of symbols, conservation brands use in their logo, as well as the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* symbol, as seen in figure 1 on page 35.

Question 1: Please identify which symbol belongs to *Endangered Wildlife Trust*.

Out of the six students asked, four were able to identify that it belonged to the *Endangered Wildlife Trust*. The two students, who could not identify the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* symbol, selected the WWF (World Wide Fund) and the Sanparks symbols.

The student, who identified the WWF symbol as the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* symbol, was asked the following question;

Question 1.1: What do you associate with this symbol?

The response was: *Endangered animal, world, China, sad eyes, traditional and seems like a hunting sign.*

The student, who identified the Sanparks symbol as the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* symbol, was asked the following question;

Question 1.2: What do you associate with this symbol?

The student answered this question with the following: *Wildlife symbol, national parks symbol, always see it when going to a reserve, springbok, national symbol for country and endangered.*

Question 2: What words do you associate with the below logo? (As seen on page 36, figure 2)

The feedback received was the following: *Lion, red, animal, spoor, the big cats, predator, poaching and tracking.*

Question 3: Does the logo appeal to you?

The students responded with: *Sort of, I like the colour, yes, could be nicer and no.*

Question 4: What would make this logo more appealing?

The following responses were received: *paw have a tracking symbol with it, dots towards the logo to make it look like it's tracking the paw, must look like the face of a lion, must be the side profile of a lion, but then it would look like the Thunder Cats logo.*

Question 5: With conservation in mind, which colours do you find the most appealing?

Out of the six students questioned, three selected the colour red, two out of the six chose green and one selected blue.

Question 5.1: Why do you find these colours the most appealing?

The students who selected the colour red answered with: *It's bold, it shouts action, and it's a brave colour.*

The two students who chose the colour green gave the following reasons: *It relates to nature, wildlife and trees.*

The student who selected the colour blue gave the following reason: *Blue is a colour which relates to boys and being the protector whereas pink is more nurturing.*

The next chapter of the research paper will analyse the data against Aaker's brand identity model and provide recommendations accordingly.

Chapter 5:

Data Analysis and Recommendations



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Chapter 5: Data Analysis and Recommendations

5.1. Data Analysis

The aim of this chapter is to analyse the findings within the framework of Aaker's brand identity model, to ensure confirmability of the study.

The analysis of the findings will be systemically broken up into three categories within Aaker's brand identity model. These categories are *Brand as a Product*, *Brand as a Person* and *Brand as a Symbol*. This allows the researcher to place the identity model at the centre of the study. The following conclusions have been drawn from the research conducted. These recommendations have been reached through constructive reasoning and practical data analysis.

5.1.1. Category 1: Brand as a Product

Research question: (1) To determine how the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* has currently positioned their brand? The purpose of this category of *Brand as a Product* was to establish if the target market is familiar with an offering from the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* which has a direction correlation with them.

According to Aaker (1996), a core element of a brand's identity is often its product thrust, which contributes to the kinds of associations that are feasible and desirable. Attributes which are directly linked to the purchase or use of a product can provide functional and beneficial benefits for customers. A product related attribute can create a value proposition by offering something extra like features or services, or by offering something better. Aaker argues, however, that the goal of linking a brand with a product class is not to gain recall of a product class when a brand is mentioned. It's more important, he posits, for customers to remember the brand when there's a need relevant to the product class.

It was essential to select a product offering of the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* which has a direct relationship with this specific target market. The *Eco-School* programme is a programme which the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* endorses, although the programme does not belong to the *Endangered Wildlife Trust*, they are building positive associations between their brand and the offering.

It was found that none of the participants were familiar with the programme or the symbol of the programme, as seen in figure 3 on page 36. Although students were unfamiliar with the

programme and its symbol, the students were able to dissect and interpret the symbol fairly well. The group as a whole were able to unpack the meaning behind the symbol and explain what they believed this symbol belonged to. From looking at the symbol, they were able to identify that this symbol had something to do with environmental conservation and learning, conceptualising the symbol effectively. Even though the students could not identify where the symbol actually belongs, they were on the right track in terms of where they believe it should belong.

Being a non-profit organisation, the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* does not necessarily have tangible product offerings, which means that it is not always possible to compare the brand with traditional brand identity criteria. However the students were asked what brand comes to mind when thinking about the environmental conservation industry, four out of the six said the *Endangered Wildlife Trust*. According to Aaker, it is more important for customers to remember the brand than to remember the product category. It can therefore be said that the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* has successfully achieved the correct characteristics for *Brand as a Product*.

5.1.2. Category 2: Brand as a Person

Research question: (2) To establish how the youth market perceives the *Endangered Wildlife Trust*? The purpose of this particular focus group was to establish how the target market of *Twins* perceives the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* brand as a person.

According to Aaker, like a person, a brand can be perceived as having a unique personality. Aaker communicates three ways in which a brand can create a stronger brand identity; these are firstly, to create a self-expressive benefit that becomes a vehicle for customers to express their own personalities. Secondly, form the basis of a relationship between customers and the brand (in the same way human personalities affect relationships between people). Lastly, to help communicate a product attribute and thus, contribute to a functional benefit.

It was found that when engaging the target market with the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* brand, the overall consensus was that they view the brand as being a positive one. The words and feelings they portrayed towards the brand are those which mainly emphasise optimism and constructivism. The group of students positively identified the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* brand as a caring person. As a person, they viewed this brand as sincere and honest. They did not specify what gender the brand would be, however they stated that the person would be tall with welcoming eyes.

The students associated negative emotions towards the word 'Endangered'; however they associated positive emotions towards the words 'Wildlife' and 'Trust'.

The findings from this particular study do not support Aaker's characteristics of an effective *Brand as a Person*. It can therefore be said that the students could not identify with the brand; they were unable to categorise the brand as a male or female figure and the personality type of the brand, was one they could not relate to.

5.1.3. Category 3: Brand as a Symbol

Research question: (2) To establish how the youth market perceives the *Endangered Wildlife Trust*? The intention of this focus group was to establish if the current symbol the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* brand uses, appeals to the *Tween's* target market.

Through the focus group conducted, it was found that four out of the six students were able to successfully identify the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* symbol. This above average percentage could be because of the charity work the school does with the brand.

Even though the group liked the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* symbol, they could not identify that it was a Cheetahs paw print, the group identified the symbol as being a lion paw print. Overall, the majority of the group appreciated the colour red as it symbolises 'taking action' and 'being bold'.

The overall view from the group was that they would like to symbol to incorporate some sort of tracking characteristic, they believed this would make the symbol appeal to them more.

The majority of the students chose the colour red to be used as a symbol which appeals to them, their reasons for selecting this colour was because it is a colour which 'shouts action' and is 'bold'. The reason the students selected the colour green was because they believed this colour relates to nature – 'wildlife' 'trees'. The student, who chose the colour blue, selected this colour as this colour relates to boys and being the protector whereas pink is more nurturing.

According to Aaker, a strong symbol can provide cohesion and structure to an identity and make it much easier to gain recognition and recall. Its presence can be a key ingredient of brand development and its absence can be a substantial handicap. Elevating symbols to the status of being part of the identity reflects their potential power. Aaker highlights three types of symbols: visual imagery, metaphors and the brand heritage.

The findings from this particular study support some of the characteristics of an effective *Brand as a symbol*. The *Endangered Wildlife Trust* has been able to gain recognition and recall through their brand symbol as the majority of students were able to identify it. This brand has a strong brand heritage which aligns with one of Aaker's characteristics of *Brand as a Symbol*.

5.2. Recommendations

The recommendations have been separated according to the categories within Aaker's brand identity model. The framework of Aaker's model has been used to structure the recommendations accordingly.

5.2.1. Category 1: Brand as a Product

The programme which the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* endorses is the *Eco-School* programme. As the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* does not have ownership of this particular programme, they cannot insist on schools registering for it, however they could promote the programme more effectively in order for a wide spread of schools to have an understanding of what they are about. If the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* promoted the programme better, there could be more buy in from schools around Johannesburg, especially given the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* is a known brand.

The *Endangered Wildlife Trust* does not have their own programme which is dedicated to educational programmes for schools. If they created an educational programme, they could use it to leverage off the *Eco-School* programme.

5.2.2. Category 2: Brand as a Person

Although the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* has a strong personality, their personality does not entirely relate well with the *Tween* market. As previously stated in this paper on page 25, there is a great importance of entrenching a culture of conservation consciousness into the youth of our society. In order to communicate with the youth market, they may need to adopt their personality type to encourage engagement with the market. The *Endangered Wildlife Trust* could create a sub-brand within their brand, which purely appeals to the youth market.

If the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* were to extend their brand, they would need to stay true to their brand as they have a strong heritage.

It can be argued that the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* can look at additional brand strategy to position the programme effectively in the minds of the *Tweens* market.

5.2.3. Category 3: Brand as a Symbol

Should the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* create a sub-brand appealing to the *Tweens* market, they could incorporate the suggestions from the focus group in terms of the symbol used. It is always important for the brand to stay true to their identity; however they could manipulate it slightly in order for it to appeal to the *Tween*'s target market. Should they create a sub-brand for this particular target market, they could place their own educational programme underneath this sub-brand.

5.3. Conclusion

In closing, the success of this study is dependent on whether or not the research questions were effectively answered. Through categorising the study according to the framework of Aaker's brand identity model, the researcher was able to successfully answer the research questions pertaining to this study. The research gave insight into the perceptions of the target market regarding the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* brand and also gave an understanding of how this brand is currently positioned in the *Tween* market.

Although the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* has a well-known brand with a strong heritage, their brand does not translate well with the *Tween* market. As previously mention on page 25 of this paper, it is evident that there is a great importance of entrenching a culture of conservation consciousness into the youth of our society. If the youth can appreciate and understand the environment, they can take greater precautions for the sustainable growth of it. If the *Endangered Wildlife Trust* could adapt their branding to ensure it relates with this market, it could create a lifelong robust relationship with this market.

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Appendices:

To whom it may concern

I, Sarah Killian, am a student studying at the Vega Brand Leadership School Johannesburg towards the qualification Honours in Brand Leadership (HBL). As a major part of this course, students are required to produce a Research Report consisting of primary and secondary research.

The purpose of the study is to unpack how effectively environmental conservation brands position themselves in the youth market.

This letter serves as consent for the researcher to organise and facilitate focus group sessions. These research projects undergo considerable scrutiny by individual supervisors and as such, are also approved on an ethical standards level. In saying this, all personal information and responses will be kept with the utmost confidentiality.

Kindest Regards

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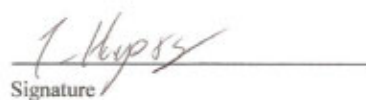
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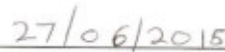


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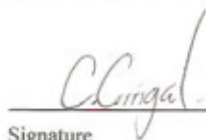
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