



SCHOOL OF BRAND LEADERSHIP

Comparing the experiences of South African musicians during COVID-19 lockdown: A comparative case study.

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I hereby declare that the Research Report submitted for the HBSM412 degree to The Independent Institute of Education is my own work and has not previously been submitted to another University or Higher Education Institution for degree purposes.

Abstract

On 26 March 2020, in response to the rise of COVID-19 cases in South Africa, the government implemented a hard lockdown that saw the closing of all non-essential businesses in order to curb the spread of COVID-19 and to allow hospitals to increase health system readiness. The live music and events industries were one of the first industries to be effected and it will be one of the last industries to bounce back after the lockdown, this has caused various implications to the lives of musicians and the ways they conduct brand building efforts. This comparative case study addresses a lack of research exploring the ways in which musicians were affected by the COVID-19 lockdown through a South African perspective. Semi-structured interviews were conducted on three South African musicians because of its ability to derive the rich and structured data that was needed to answer the research questions. A deductive thematic analysis revealed that the musicians under study were faced with various emotional and financial effects from the lockdown. The ways in which brand building efforts were effected were similar across all musicians and while the experiences and brand building efforts were quite similar, they had their unique differences.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Background

A novel strain of coronavirus called COVID-19 first broke out in China at the end of 2019, the virus has since spread globally and is considered a global pandemic (WHO, 2020). One of the measures that many countries used to slow down the transmission of the virus was to implement lockdown restrictions, at its most strict, South Africa's lockdown was said to be one of the most stringent lockdowns in the world (Wasserman & Moynihan, 2020). Due to COVID-19 lockdown restrictions in South Africa, at the worst, prohibited all non-essential business and all gatherings were banned (Buthelezi, 2020). Musicians now needed to survive by making money in other ways and for most people live performances build up majority of their around 70% income (Messick, 2020). In the modern and digital music industry musicians are using the internet and social media to release their music and engage with their fans using two-way communication, this has become increasingly important for musicians because it has been proven that the greater the bond between the musicians and audience, the higher the commercial success (Rod, et al., 2015). Nfluentia conducted a survey where they confirmed that South Africans were spending "significantly more time on the internet and social media" (Nfluentia, 2020). Livestreaming became an important feature on social media platforms during the lockdown, especially for musicians and a few adaptive event promoters who are now doing completely virtual events that people can attend from their houses (Hissong, et al., 2020). Live music performance is the primary source of income for most musicians and it is widely known that only the very successful musicians can make living from previous work (Messick, 2020)., meaning that during lockdown most musicians had the source of income cut without knowing when it will return but on the other hand there, with more people at home and engaging with social media COVID-19 may provide an opportunity for artists be innovative and/or work on themselves and their music (Seman, 2020).

1.2. Rationale

The research in the study can be used by other musicians as well as other players in the music industry to give them insight into how South Africans have been affected and how they are reacting to COVID-19 lockdown. This study will add to the field of music academia by giving insight into how musicians have been affected by COVID-19 lockdown so, thus music researchers and academics can use this study to

understand how musicians are affected when they cannot perform for live audiences. The Events industry was one of the hardest hit by the lockdown. Cancellation of events means that income has been cut. (Hissong, et al., 2020). For this reason I believe this study could help shed light on musicians' experiences of lockdown and also shed light on how they are growing in lockdown.

1.3. Problem statement

The aim of this study is to compare the ways that South African musicians have been affected by the COVID-19 lockdown as well as how they are conducting brand building and growth efforts, in the face of the COVID-19 government-enforced lockdown.

1.4. Purpose statement

The purpose of this qualitative case study is to compare and contrast that ways in which South African musicians have been affected by the COVID-19 lockdown restrictions as well as comparing and the ways that these musicians are continuing brand-building efforts in order to gain an understanding as to how they promote growth remotely.

1.5. Research questions

Primary Questions:

- 1.5.1. How can the musician's experiences of COVID-19 lockdown be compared and contrasted to each other?
- 1.5.2. How can the brand building efforts of the musicians during COVID-19 lockdown be compared and contrasted to each other?

Sub-question:

- 1.5.3. What tools or methods are the participating South African musicians using in order to continue the growth of their brands during the COVID-19 lockdown?

1.6. Research objectives

- 1.6.1. To compare and contrast the experiences of South African musicians during COVID-19 lockdown.
- 1.6.2. To compare and contrast the brand building efforts of South African musicians during COVID-19 lockdown.
- 1.6.3. To explore the ways in which the brand building efforts of South African musicians have been affected by COVID-19 lockdown.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

The literature review provides a review of previous literature, focusing on key points in the literature and theory to gain an understanding of relevant parts of the existing knowledge surrounding the ways the musicians have been affected by COVID-19 lockdown. The literature review is thematic in nature as it aims to group literature into different themes and perspectives (Du Plooy-Cilliers, et al., 2014).

2.2. Theoretical foundation

2.2.1. Keller's Customer-Based Brand Equity Pyramid (CBBE Pyramid)

Keller states that building a strong brand involves four steps; establishing a strong brand identity, creating an appropriate brand meaning through favourable brand associations, evoking positive brand responses, and creating meaningful brand relationships with customers (Keller, 2001). These steps are broken down into six brand-building blocks that highlight what needs to be pursued and achieved in order to build strong brand equity. The blocks also act as a ladder, whereby previous building blocks will need to be achieved before moving onto the next but to create a significant brand equity a brand will need to reach the pinnacle of the pyramid (Keller, 2001).

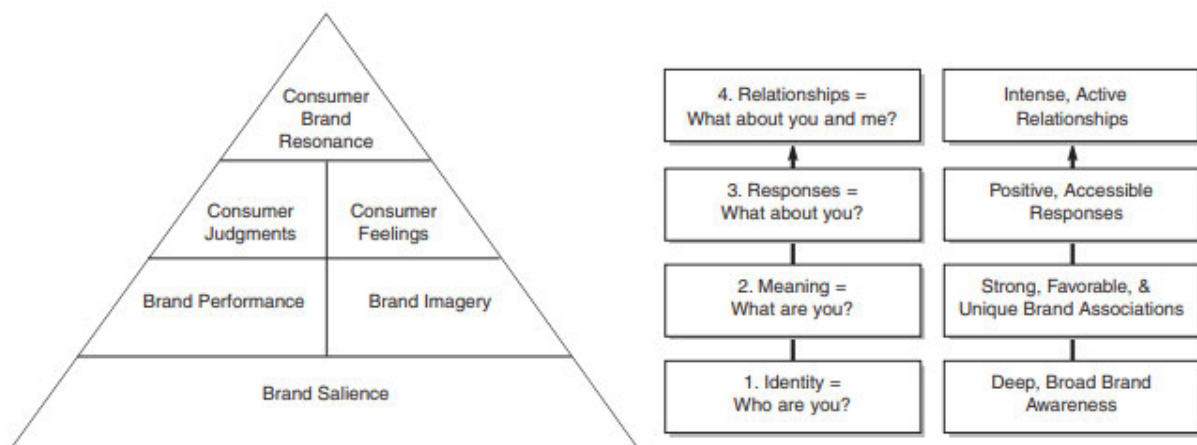


FIGURE 1: KELLER'S CUSTOMER-BASED BRAND PYRAMID, (KELLER, 2001).

The first step is brand identity, it asks the question "who are you?". *Salience* refers to the extent of brand awareness in the mind of customers, the ability of a customer to recall a brand or recognise a brand (Keller, 2001). It is the foundational building block because if achieved, salience will influence the likelihood that the brand will be considered by customers when planning for purchase (Keller, 2001), in this case, purchase refers to any transaction between the musicians and customer, i.e. the

purchase of an album, downloading or streaming a song, and purchase of ticket or merchandise. The second step is brand meaning it asks the question 'what are you?'. The product is the primary influence of how a customer experiences a brand (Keller, 2001). Therefore *performance* relates to the ways that the offering attempts to meet the needs of customers thus brand performance is concerned with how well a brand's offerings compete against competitors (Keller, 2001), for musicians this refers to their talent of quality of music production for example. *Imagery* refers to the extrinsic aspects of the products or services and because people consume with their eyes as well it is an important part of a brand (Keller, 2001), or musicians this can refer to anything from album covers to costume and stage design. The third step is brand response and it asks the question; "what do I feel about you:". *Brand Judgement* is focused on the customers and audiences opinions on the product or service and how they well they perceive them (Keller, 2001). *Feelings* refer to the audience's emotional reactions and responses to the brand (Keller, 2001). Brands, especially musicians, can evoke strong emotions from their audiences during brand consumption (Keller, 2001). The final step and top of the pyramid is brand relationships and it asks the question; "what about you and me?" *Resonance* is the ultimate relationship that a customer can have with a brand (Keller, 2001). It refers the strong bond or loyalty for a brand and when this happens, the consumer feels like they fit in with the brand and the rest of their audience and indicates a connection to the brand identity (Keller, 2001). The CBBE Pyramid will be used as the theoretical foundation of this research because the model highlights building blocks of brand building to gain brand equity (Keller, 2001), this will assist when describing and comparing the ways that musicians conducted brand building efforts during the COVID-19 lockdown.

2.3. Review of past literature

2.3.1. COVID-19 pandemic lockdown in South Africa

On 26 March 2020, in response to the rise of COVID-19 cases in South Africa, the government implemented a pandemic lockdown that saw the closing of all non-essential businesses in order to curb the spread of COVID-19 and to allow hospitals to increase health system readiness (South African Government, 2020). To manage the gradual easing of the lockdown, the government implemented a five-level alert system, with each level's restrictions being guided by risk criteria such as rate of transmission and capacity of health facilities (South African Government, 2020). Level

five (5) was implemented on the 26th of March until the 30th of April 2020 and used dramatic measures to contain the transmission of COVID-19. Every person was confined to their place of residence, all gatherings were prohibited, the sale of alcohol and cigarettes were prohibited, all non-essential business stopped, and restaurants, nightclubs, and food markets were closed (Government Gazette 43148, 2020). Level four (4) was implemented from the 1st to the 31st of May 2020, and used extreme precaution measures to limit the spread, whilst allowing the continuation of some activity. People were confined to their residences and only allowed to leave to buy permitted goods, and/or exercise between 6 AM and 9 AM, a curfew was introduced between 8 PM and 5 AM, all social gatherings except funerals were prohibited; all cultural, entertainment, recreation or exhibition venues were closed including restaurants and nightclubs, and the sale of cigarettes and alcohol was prohibited (Government Gazette 43258, 2020). Level three (3) was implemented from the 1st of June to the 17th of August 2020, which used restrictions on most social activities as a response to a high risk of transmission. People were allowed to leave their homes between 10 PM and 4 AM and were required to wear masks and practice physical distancing in public, all gatherings except funerals, worship and work were prohibited, all entertainment and recreational venues were closed but restaurants were permitted to open for delivery, and cigarettes and alcohol were still prohibited (Government Gazette 43521, 2020). Level two (2) was implemented from the 18th of August 2020 and used physical distancing and restrictions to prevent the resurgence of COVID-19. People are allowed to leave their homes between 10 PM and 4 AM and still required to wear masks and physical distance when in public, alcohol and cigarette sales were permitted, bars and restaurants were permitted to open as well as serve alcohol but nightclubs remained closed, concerts and live performances were permitted but limited to a maximum of 50 attendees as well as strict guidelines were to be adhered and approval from a member of Cabinet to be obtained (Government Gazette 43620, 2020). Level one (1) was implemented on 21 September 2020. In this level, government allowed for the recommencement of most normal activities, granted that precautions and health guidelines were followed at all times, government was also warned that the alert levels would increase if necessary. Nightclubs and venues were allowed to reopen, with a limit of 250 people and a mandate for the owner and operator to enforce and adhere to all health protocols. Curfew was increased to 12 PM and alcohol sales were allowed to continue as usual (South African Government, 2020).

This is where most South African musicians were able to go back to performing live shows for the first time since the start of lockdown and, thus reclaim that portion of their income.

2.3.2. COVID-19 lockdown effect on South African musicians

The entertainment and music industries were negatively impacted in the early days of COVID-19 because a ban on events and public gatherings was one of the first measures put into place to curb the spread of the virus, even before the lockdown (Friedman, 2020). Live music performances will only be permitted during level one and for most musicians, this meant that they had lost their primary source of income, as musicians are said to make around 70% of their revenue from performing at live shows (Seman, 2020). Dr. Michael Seman predicts that COVID-19 lockdown will not impact musicians uniformly as they may be in different stages of their careers, stating that regularly touring musicians will be the most negatively impacted by the lockdown restrictions (Seman, 2020). Musicians were been forced to sought out other forms of income, with many musicians opting for teaching music and/or selling merchandise but with the restrictions both have become more difficult for musicians, some musicians have started GoFundMe pages (Messick, 2020). Only very successful musicians can make a living off their previous music alone and the rest of the musicians will need to be supported by other forms of income or relief (Seman, 2020). Musicians are not covered by the Unemployment Insurance Fund as they have no permanent employer so many musicians had to look to the R150 million relief fund from the Department of Sport, Art and Culture that was allocated to assist artists, technical personnel and athletes during lockdown however of the 5000 applications received, only 232 applications were approved meaning that most musicians were denied (Friedman, 2020). The financial effect are not the only issues for musicians, they have many emotional effects as well, as many artists use live performances as a cathartic release that makes them feel good, mentally and emotionally (Messick, 2020). When asked how they were feeling emotionally during the lockdown, many of the heavy metal musicians that were interviewed by Kyle Messick, stated that they were already had depression and the lockdown perpetuated their depression because they were no longer able to perform or practice with their bandmates but many also changed their approach and went from touring and performing music to songwriting and recording new music to remain productive (Messick, 2020). Musicians turned to

social media platforms during the lockdown to engage with their audiences and collaborate with other musicians. Due to the lockdown restrictions, the general public was also unable to access live music, thus started going to the internet and social media for entertainment, and because there were no live audiences, musicians started using the internet and social media as one of the only ways to disseminate their music during the lockdown (Lee, et al., 2020), creating a potentially crucial opportunity for musicians across the globe. Livestreaming has become a popular way for musicians to engage and perform for their fans during the COVID-19 lockdown (Lee, et al., 2020). With livestreaming tools, musicians can connect and engage with their fans remotely, meaning the musician can be in one place i.e. their houses, while the fans watch and can interact from another place (Lee, et al., 2020). Musicians can not only use live streaming for virtual concerts and performances, they can also use this for Q&A sessions and other interactive ways to engage and create a bond with their audience (Lee, et al., 2020).

2.3.3. Brand building as a musician

Countless people are making music with the hopes to become a professional musician, this has made the competition in the industry extremely competitive and musicians cannot only rely on their music or talent to get noticed by audiences (Carah, 2011). Musicians need to operate as brands if they want to compete, musicians offer a product in the form of their recorded music or merchandise and a service in the form of live music performance, so to adequately market their products and service offerings they need to operate as a brand and need to conduct brand-building efforts (Krieger, 2012). Carah states that strong brand-building efforts by musicians enables them to reinforce their social identity so that a strong connection or relationship can begin to form between them, this gives their consumers a strong sense of affinity with the musicians and the other fans, which creates a strong sense of loyalty between the fans (Carah, 2011). This is strongly tied with Keller's CBBE Pyramid as the aim of the model is to guide actions in order to build strong brands in the minds of consumers, musicians need to build and monitor their salience, meaning and response in order to create the strong relationships/resonance with their audience that is required as a successful musician (Salo, et al., 2011). It is imperative for musicians to reach the top of the pyramid if to be truly successful and in order to reach the pinnacle, they first need to achieve each step in the pyramid (Keller, 2001). There

is little up-to-date academic literature on musicians as brands thus older academic sources had to be used, however the sources used are valid because the music branding landscape has remained relatively constant since the sources were published.

2.3.4. The digital music industry

The development of the internet created a fundamental shift in the technologies and behaviours surrounding music production/distribution and consumption that has transformed the modern music industry (Choi & Burnes, 2017). The internet has changed not only the way people consume music and the way that musicians are putting their music out but also changed the way musicians form connections and relationships with their fans (Choi & Burnes, 2017). One of the major shifts was that music started to be distributed online, first to music purchasing platforms and now to Digital Streaming Platforms (DSP's) such as Apple Music and Spotify. Physical recorded music sales only make up 3.6% (R84 million) of the total revenue generated by the South African music industry while digital music streaming accounts for 22.73% (R528 million) (PwC, 2020), making DSP's essential and lucrative for musicians. The second major shift was spurred by the rise of social media (Choi & Burnes, 2017). Social media has enabled people to form relationships and connect with a multitude of different people from anywhere in the world and has allowed people to share their interests and thoughts with people and build relationships with people of similar interests (Lee, et al., 2020). One of the reasons that social media has been effective for business and musicians has been its ability to spark two-way communications between musicians and audiences (Rahmadini & Halim, 2018), Burnes and Choi explain the power of social media by using the words *bonding and spreading* (Choi & Burnes, 2017). They state that if this two-way communication is done effectively it will help the artist build bonds with their audiences which can lead to strong loyalty among their fans. Information on social media is spread exponentially because of its connecting nature (Choi & Burnes, 2017), musicians with strong fan bases on social media grow faster than others because if they have many fans interacting with them and promoting them through electronic-word-of-mouth (Greener, et al., 2019), all their followers will see the content, thus reaching more people (Choi & Burnes, 2017). As previously mentioned, livestreaming has been popular among musicians because it can allow for two-way communication between an musician and their audience

enabling the formation of bonds and loyalty, and now livestreaming has become increasingly more important during COVID-19 lockdown, where were prohibited from attending events or gatherings (Lee, et al., 2020). In a quantitative study on the relationships between social media and music purchasing, researchers found a positive relationship between the amount of time spent on a musician's social media pages is positively related to perceived two-way interactions with the musician on social media (Rod, et al., 2015). They also found a positive relationship between a sense of closeness a fan feels towards a musician and perceived two-way interactions on social media (Rod, et al., 2015). Furthermore, they found that a fans intent to purchase a musician's music is positively related to the amount of time a fan spends of a musician's social media pages (Rod, et al., 2015), proving the importance of social media in the modern music industry.

The gap in most of the previous literature regarding the ways that musicians were affected by COVID-19 lockdown, are that none of the academic literature related to South African musicians, for example, Messicks study involved touring heavy metal musicians and Choi and Burnes study involved Korean musicians and record labels. Another gap in the previous literature is that the quantitative study done by Rod, et al. that found a positive relationship between social media and music sales was done on New Zealand respondents only.

2.4. Conceptualisation of key terms:

2.4.1. COVID-19

COVID-19 is an infectious disease that is caused by a novel coronavirus. The first outbreak was in Wuhan, China in December 2019 but since then has spread around the world and is now considered a pandemic (WHO, 2020). According to the World Health Organisation, there are currently no medicines that have been shown to prevent or cure the disease thus strict measures have been put in place by many countries to curb the spread (WHO, 2020).

2.4.2. Pandemic lockdown

Merriam-Webster defines a pandemic lockdown as a temporary condition imposed by the government, during the outbreak of a pandemic disease, in which people are required to stay home and refrain from out-of-home activities in order to limit contact and curb the spread (Merriam-Webster, 2020). In South Africa, the lockdown was

implemented on the 26th of March 2020 and as of 12 December 2020, South Africa is still in level 1 of lockdown (Government Gazette 43148, 2020).

2.4.3. South African musician

A South African musician is anyone from South Africa that is skilled in making or playing music and does it as a job (Cambridge Dictionary, 2020). This includes all singers, rappers, instrumentalists, session musicians, producers, composers and backup vocalists and includes musicians that have to subsidise their income with part-time jobs related and unrelated to music.

2.4.4. Brand building

Brand building is a process of generating awareness and recognition in order to promote or communicate a company to its target audience effectively (Bhattacharya, 2018). Brand building efforts are strategies and tactics that attempt to bring the audience closer to the brand and add value to their lives (Bhattacharya, 2018).

2.5. Conclusion of literature review

Previous literature has indicted that musicians are facing both financial and emotional issues during the COVID-19 lockdown, and with concerts and live performances only being permitted in level one of the lockdown, musicians are likely to continue to face the effects of COVID-19 for the foreseeable future. Due to the lack of live performances, musicians are using to social media, specifically livestreaming, to perform and engage with their audiences, and with social media becoming increasingly powerful for musicians, COVID-19 is presenting countless opportunities for not only musicians but for brands at large.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1. Introduction

The research methodology provides an analysis of methodologies that are to be used as a guide to the researcher to answering the research questions and achieving research objectives the research objectives. This chapter will logically describe the proposed research paradigm, approach and plan. It will then make mention of the proposed data collection and analysis methods, including population and sampling.

3.2. Research paradigm

The purpose of this study is to understand the perceptions and experiences of people. People's experiences are subjective as they are perceived differently by different people (Bezuidenhout, et al., 2014). For this reason, the study was done in the interpretivist paradigm. Interpretivism enables the integration in human interest (Dudovskiy, 2016), since human perception is subjective, it cannot be studied using the objective paradigm, positivism, thus interpretivism was created as a reaction to the limitations of the use of the positivist paradigm in the social science (Bezuidenhout, et al., 2014). Interpretivism follows a relativistic ontological view that sees reality as fluid and reality is created by human interaction (Bezuidenhout, et al., 2014), it claims that a single phenomenon can have multiple interpretations and that the research aims to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon rather than attempting to generalise the understanding to the whole population (Pham, 2018). Epistemologically, interpretivism states that common sense is a crucial way to obtain knowledge (Bezuidenhout, et al., 2014). The epistemological and ontological views of interpretivism align with the nature of this study as the research attempts to compare human experiences and perceptions thus a subjective view of reality is required, unique perspectives and common sense was thus, crucial to enriching the study (Bezuidenhout, et al., 2014).

3.3. Research design and plan

Due to the research being in the interpretivist paradigm; a qualitative research approach was used in order to obtain and collect the in-depth and subjective data and insight required to answer the research questions and achieve the research objectives (Maree, et al., 2020). Polkinghorne (1989), states that a qualitative research approach is about deriving your findings or insight through linguistics as opposed to quantitative

numerical data (Maree, et al., 2020). This qualitative research aims to find answers by examining social settings and contexts and it is interested in understanding the ways that people perceive or make sense of that social context or phenomenon (Maree, et al., 2020).

The study is a comparative case study, meaning that it is an empirical inquiry and comparison of a phenomenon in its real-world setting (Maree, et al., 2020). The case is a bounded entity to the study and for the purpose of this study, the case refers to the participating South African musicians that have been affected by COVID-19 lockdown and their experiences. The cases were compared against one another in order to gain an understanding of how the musician's experiences and brand building efforts during COVID-19 lockdown were similar and different to each other in order to understand the ways in which South African musicians continued brand building efforts during the lockdown (Maree, et al., 2020).

The research design follows a deductive line of reasoning. Deductive reasoning in qualitative research aims to collect and analyse data subjectively in context of the research questions. Deductive reasoning is a “top-down” approach that involves pre-empting themes or codes in order to guide the research towards answering the research questions (Rouse, 2019). Deductive reasoning is most commonly used in quantitative research, however, deductive reasoning was used in this qualitative study in order to achieve some degree of comparability among the participants. The researcher used past literature in order to make note of important themes or patterns, these themes were then used in order to develop semi-structured interview questions and were used in order to analyse and compare the data that was collected, as well as assisted in the presentation of the findings.

The pre-empted themes identified through previous literature that were used throughout the collection, analysis and presentation of include:

- 1) Overall effect of lockdown
- 2) Financial effect of lockdown
- 3) Emotional effect of lockdown
- 4) Typical day spent in lockdown
- 5) Brand building before lockdown
- 6) Brand building after lockdown

As previously stated, these themes were pre-empted by the researcher and were used through the research methodology of this study in order to ensure comparability of the cases.

In terms of methodology, this qualitative research approach used semi-structured interviews to ask comparative and exploratory, open-ended questions and will place and emphasis on understanding people's perceptions of the phenomenon and comparing their perceptions and experiences to each other (Maree, et al., 2020). The interviews will be cross-sectional and will only be conducted at one point in time (Bezuidenhout, et al., 2014). The target population for the semi-structured interviews was South African musicians that were affected by the COVID-19 lockdown and that population was sampled using the convenience sampling method. Once the data was collected a deductive thematic analysis was conducted using the aforementioned pre-empted themes in order to derive comparable insight from the findings that was needed in order to answer the research questions and achieve the research objectives.

3.4. Population

3.4.1. Nature of the population

The social artefact under study is people (Bezuidenhout, Davis & Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014), specifically South African musicians that have been affected by COVID-19 lockdown, this included all musicians that have to supplement income by means of a part-time job, both related and unrelated to music. It does not include musicians that were not actively making music or performing in the three months prior to the COVID-19 lockdown, this is because they do not fit the parameters of; a musician that has been affected by COVID-19 lockdown.

3.4.2. Target and accessible population

The target population for the semi-structured interviews were South African musicians that have be affected by the COVID-19 lockdown restrictions. The musicians were required to reside in South Africa during the lockdown. The musicians had to have made or performed music within the three month prior to the COVID-19 lockdown to be considered to have been affected by the lockdown for the purpose of this study. The term musician includes but is not limited to but includes; singers, rappers, instrumentalists, session musicians, producers, composers and backup vocalists. The

accessible population is any South African musician that has been affected the COVID-19 lockdown that fully fits the population parameters, has access to the internet and video calling platforms that agreed and consented to be interviewed as part of the study.

3.4.3. Population parameters

For the purpose of this study the population parameters were as follows:

- Musicians that reside in South Africa during the COVID.
- South African Musicians that have made or performed music within the three months prior to the COVID-19 lockdown.
- South African musicians that have access to the internet and video calling software.

3.5. Sampling

Owing to the fact that the research approach is qualitative, there was no need to generalise the findings and thus non-probability sampling methods were used when seeking participants for the semi-structured interviews (Bezuidenhout, et al., 2014).

3.5.1. Convenience sampling

Convenience sampling is a sampling method where researchers collect data from a population that was sampled from a conveniently available pool of participants. Social media and the researcher's personal network were used in order to sample the interview participants. Due to the COVID-19 restrictions, seeking out participants to interview was hindered thus convenience sampling was needed because the researcher can find any person that is readily available to the researcher, as long as they fit the population parameters (Bezuidenhout, et al., 2014). Convenience sampling was used as a delimitation to COVID-19 and the time constraints, since it is a quick and easy sampling method.

3.5.2. Sample size

A sample of three (3) participants was required in order to adequately understand and compare the ways that the participating musicians were affected by the COVID-19 lockdown and how they conducted brand building efforts during the lockdown. Initially a sample size of six was proposed but due to the limitations and restrictions on human interaction that were put into place to curb the spread of COVID-19, it became

inherently difficult to sample a large number of participants, thus the sample size was decreased to three, the reason for this is that it is an odd number and it is small enough to achieve during current conditions.

3.6. Data collection method

3.6.1. Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews was the tool used to collect the qualitative data needed to answer the research questions of this study. The aim of the research is to understand and compare the experiences of humans, in order to do this, qualitative data needed to be collected. Interviews allow for in-depth data to be collected as it is a more long-form data collection method, which allows for participants to talk in-depth about their experiences, using their own words (McLoed, 2019). Semi-structured interviews are successful at enabling reciprocity between the researcher and the participant, the researcher is able to improvise follow-up questions that are based on the participant's responses which gives space to individual verbal expressions from the participant (Kallio, Pietila, Johnson & Kangasniemi, M, 2016). This is beneficial to the interpretivist paradigm because interpretivism claims that reality is constructed through human interaction (Bezuidenhout, et al., 2014). Kallio et al. states that semi-structured interviews are made of two levels of questions; main topics and probing questions (Kallio, et al., 2016). The main topics were planned by the researcher were guided by the research objectives and questions, and every participant was asked these questions (Kallio, et al., 2016). Probing questions were used to direct the conversation towards to study in order to maintain the flow of conversation during the interview, probing questions allow the participants to elaborate or expand on their points, which could add rich insight to the data collection (Kallio, et al., 2016). The semi-structured interviews were conducted online, using video calling software. Conducting the interviews using video calling software helped limit human contact while still allowing for verbal and non-verbal communication and expression, as well as enabling the researcher to pick up on non-verbal expressions and cues. Avoiding human contact was necessary to the data collection methodology due of the COVID-19 guidelines that recommend the limitation of physical contact.

3.6.2. Application of data collection methods

While creating the interview guide for the semi-structured interviews, the researcher created four main topics to discuss with the research participants, these topics were discussion points that encapsulated the aforementioned pre-empted themes that were noted through previous literature. Due to the comparative nature of this study, pre-empted themes were required in order to ensure the data collected is not too broad and can thus be compared more accurately against each other. Therefore this study follows a deductive line of reasoning. These four topics include; personal story, COVID-19 effect on musicians, COVID-19 effect on brand building as a musician, and concluding and theory linking questions, respectively. Probing questions were used when clarification and deeper insight was needed from the response of the participant. Owing to the fact that the sample size needed to be decreased because of the limitations and restrictions of COVID-19, a sample size of three was needed for the study, therefore three South African musicians that were affected by COVID-19 lockdown were interviewed in the semi-structured interviews.

3.7. Data analysis method

3.7.1. Thematic analysis

For the purpose of this study, a thematic analysis was conducted in order to analyse the qualitative data that was collected from the semi-structured interviews (Bezuidenhout, et al., 2014). Because the qualitative data that was collected was subjective and attempted to understand the subjective experiences of the participants, it was assumed that there is no absolute right or wrong answer with regards to human behaviour (Bezuidenhout, et al., 2014). The interviews were transcribed into text and a deductive thematic analysis was conducted, a deductive line of reasoning in qualitative data analysis attempts to subjectively examine the data in context of the research questions (Bezuidenhout, et al., 2014), Rouse states that deductive data analysis begins with pre-coded intent, once data is collected, the findings were thematically grouped into the pre-empted themes in order to ensure structure and comparability (Rouse, 2019). Once the data was thematically grouped and analysed, the findings were presented and discussed against the research questions in order to achieve the research objectives.

3.7.2. Application of data analysis methods

In order to analyse the qualitative data that was collected from the semi-structured interviews, a deductive thematic analysis was conducted and the data was grouped using the six aforementioned pre-empted themes. Due to the fact that this study is a case study, each case was first presented separately in the findings. Once the findings of each case were presented, a comparison of the cases was conducted using the pre-empted themes in the discussion of the findings in order to answer the primary research questions. Once the cases were compared and contrasted a further comparison and summarisation of the effects that COVID-19 lockdown was conducted in order to further understand the ways in which the musicians brand building efforts were impacted by the lockdown as well as further understand and compare the tools and methods that these musicians used in order to promote the growth of their brands during lockdown. Please note that the presentation and discussion of the findings also followed pre-empted themes, this is to ensure coherency and comparability.

Chapter 4: Findings and Discussion

4.1. Findings

4.1.1. Case A

Case A is a DJ and music producer that performs at venues and nightclubs across Johannesburg as part of a DJ duo. He is currently also a student studying sound and music production. He is not yet able to fully supplement his income through music alone and since he is a student he has less financial stresses as he lives with his parents. In brief case A is a DJ and electronic dance music producer that claims to be a part of the “underground scene of electronic music”, this means that he is not a mainstream music producer, and therefore does not target and/or may not appeal to a mass segment of the music audiences.

When asked how case A spent a typical day in lockdown, he noted that he would wake up and attend online lectures, where he would work on sound and music production techniques, the participant would then proceed to practice performing on his DJ turntable for a few hours, and try and work on producing new music if inspiration struck. *Participant A* stated that producing new music became more difficult due to lack of inspiration in lockdown, so case A, did not produce or release new music during the lockdown period. This shows that majority of case A’s days during the COVID-19 lockdown revolved around learning, practicing and refining his musical skills and knowledge.

The emotional effects of lockdown had a strong impact on case A, claiming that the emotional effects were “one of the biggest holes of the whole lockdown, it wasn’t even financial, it was the mental and emotional aspect”, further elaborating that not going being able out and socialise, and staying within the same-four-walls caused a lack of inspiration to work on new music, the lack of inspiration to make music is what caused emotional stress during lockdown was further perpetuated because the participant claimed to suffer from anxiety.

In terms of the financial implications of the lockdown, case A did not seem phased, stating that “obviously my money stream was low and I obviously had to save a lot more and watch how I spend my money”, he rather expresses his sympathies for other musicians who are not in the same position and him and have been severely impacted

by the shortage of income from performances during the lockdown. Due to the fact that case A is living at home with his parents, he was spared from many financial ramifications of the lockdown and thus, case A suffered from few financial effects, besides constrained spending.

Before the COVID-19 lockdown case A used primarily, social media and word-of-mouth in order to promote himself as a musician, he emphasised strongly on the importance on social media and elaborated that in terms of word-of-mouth, he would expose himself and his music to different groups and communities within the dance music industry in order to grow his following and power within the industry. When asked about how case A promoted and grew his brand prior to the lockdown, he mentioned that he does not only promote his brand to audiences, but also music promoters and venue owners as well. It was noted that when case A would perform at a show, he would attempt to inspire word-of-mouth from the audience as well as other music promoters, so that new music promoters can discover his music with the hopes to increase bookings.

When asked how the lockdown impacted his brand building efforts, case A stated that without nightclubs hiring DJ's and without people going to performances, him and musicians alike had to adapt their strategies immediately, noting that live streaming performances on social media was becoming popular tool for musicians to promote themselves with. Case A stated that he attempted to play a few live stream performances but it was unsuccessful, stating "realistically, how many people watch a live stream?" but also noted that it was just good to be performing music again. Case A stated that he attempted to do "some admin and get our social media pages better and run smoothly" but then stated that at times, he didn't want to be on social media because it was too overwhelming during the COVID-19 lockdown. It can be noted that overall, case A's brand building efforts were halted during the lockdown, stating that; you can't do much as a musician during the lockdown period, besides practicing and working on his craft.

When asked about the overall effects of the lockdown as a musician, *participant A* claimed that it was an overall negative experience, noting the challenges of not being able to perform and influence people with his artistry. case A is still a student and lives with his parents, thus was sheltered by the financial affects the lockdown. On the other

hand, case A suffered strongly from the emotional effects, which impacted his inspiration and ability to produce new music, thus more time was spent on practicing music. The severity of the emotional effects may be related to the fact that participant A had very few financial problems during lockdown, causing him to place more severity and focus mostly on the emotional effects.

4.1.2. Case B

Case B, called himself a full spectrum independent musician, meaning that he produces, writes, sings and performs music. Case B claims that “it is next to impossible” to make a good and substantial living of music, “especially in the South African music industry at the moment”. Therefore, case A works as a part-time waiter, supplementing majority of his income through this. Case A noted that he relies on the income from his part-time job to provide for basic needs such as rent, water and electricity and all income made from his music is reinvested back into his music.

Participant B stated that a typical day during lockdown consisted of spending around 12 hours in studio working and “investing back” into his music. Without having to go to work every day, case B immersed himself in making music during the lockdown. It can be noted that in August 2020 (during level two of lockdown), case B released a 6-track electronic project, indicating that majority of his time spent in studio during level one was spent working on this project.

Case B stated that they were “quite severely impacted” by both the loss of income from performances and loss of income from his part-time job, however he claimed that since more people were at home and listening to a lot of music, his music streaming numbers increased and was able to make up for some of the losses, but claimed lockdown still had a negative overall effect on his financial situation.

In terms of emotional effects, case B claimed to have a more positive experience, stating that it stimulated his thinking and help him start looking for opportunities as a musician. Case B did mention that the downside was that without socialisation to distract you, you can start to get into a hole and “analyse yourself and your mental, which can be debilitating”. Making music became like therapy to case B which balanced out the financial stress

Before the lockdown, case *B* relied heavily on social media and word-of-mouth in order to promote himself as a musician and grow as a brand. Using and placing advertising on Facebook and Instagram were the most important social media platforms for this musician and in terms of word-of-mouth, participant would promote his music to patrons at the restaurant he worked at and hoping they tell their friends. After lockdown, case *B* was “forced” to change his marketing tactics from face-to-face to online and social media. Case *B* noted that he also used Instagram live streaming, connecting with his audience and doing “freestyle sessions”, where his audience would recommend topics for him to rap about, mentioning that he thinks he was able to create a personal memories with his audience. As mentioned previously *participant B* claimed that his streaming numbers went increased during lockdown, accrediting people not being at work or studying, thus listening to more music.

Case *B* mentioned that noteworthy challenges he faced during the lockdown were; not being able to promote his music to people using word-of-mouth, having to deal with the financial stresses, coupled with the added family pressures of being stuck at home and also not being able to socialise with people, which would usually help him cope.

Despite these challenges, case *B* claimed to have an overall positive experience as a musician during the lockdown stating that being able to focus music, and diarizing his emotions became like a “therapy session” for the musician, which balanced out the stresses from lack of financial stability and socialisation.

4.1.3. Case C

Case *C* is guitarist in a South African band that performs at bars and venues across Johannesburg. His band do not release original music so they make all of their income from performances. He is a full-time musician who still lives at home with his parents and therefor has fewer financial pressures.

When asked about the effect of lockdown on case *C* as a musician, he quite to claim that it has been an overall positive experience because he was able to work on becoming better at guitar and training his voice. But did note that the downsides were that they were not able to perform for people and that we was unable to practice with his band mates during this time.

In terms of emotional effects, case C mentioned that it was a “boost” because he had time to “think and prepare”. They claimed that meditation and being able to play music made him gain a positive mind-set.

Case C spent a typical day in lockdown meditating and playing music

In terms of the financial effects of lockdown, case C lives with his parents and has few financial stresses, so when asked about the financial effects, he seemed somewhat unfazed, claiming “downside is obviously there's, there's been zero income, zero gigs”

Before COVID-19, case C and his band would use social media and word-of-mouth were the two most used ways to promote themselves, noting for social media they would use Instagram and Facebook. And for word-of-mouth they stated that they would get a lot of valuable connections and fans when they performed at shows.

Due to the lack of shows during lockdown, case C claimed to have “a lot of time to do live sessions through social media” which was “one hell of a plus”. During lockdown, case C claimed that social media became a more powerful tool for them because it was their only means to promote themselves, also mentioning that more people were using social media at this time, but also claimed that it was not as effective as being able to play live, in terms of promotion.

4.2. Discussion

4.2.1. Comparison

4.2.1.1. Similarities

All three of the participating musicians are not yet considered mainstream, this means that he is not a mainstream music producer, and therefore does not target and/or may not appeal to a mass segment of the music audiences. This can have many implications to a musician; such as size of audience and the reach that their music has, which can affect revenue, and the ticket, music and merchandise sales of a musician. However, it can be noted that according to an article on UKEssays, fans of underground music are more likely to show loyalty towards an underground musician and their music, which can increase the strength of the fan base or audience (UKEssays, 2018), meaning that underground musicians may be able to achieve a higher “share of wallet” with their smaller fan base. Owing to the fact that all the participating musicians are considered to be underground musicians, they do not have

the fan base or distribution and reach needed to make a living off music alone, thus all musicians stated that they do not make enough income from music to support themselves financially without another form of income supplementation.

When asked how a typical day was spent during the lockdown, all musicians stated most of their time spent during lockdown was centred around music; stating that they used the extra time that they had in lockdown to work on new music as well as practicing and brushing up on their technical skills and knowledge. *Case B and C*, both took time out of their days in order to meditate, with both of them doing it in order to remain positive and to better their thought processes.

All three of the participating musicians lost all income from performing when the lockdown began, meaning that they were unable to perform and unable to make money from performing, which makes up majority of a musicians income. This indicates that all three musicians were financially affected in this way. However, *case A and C* stated that they felt very few financial effects, besides constricted disposable income. This is because both musicians live with their parents and do not need to pay for their basic needs and were thus unfazed by the financial effects of the lockdown, however both of them expressed their gratitude for this and their sympathy to other musicians who weren't in such a favourable position.

In terms of the emotional effects of the lockdown, all three musicians stated that they used music as therapy or as a coping mechanism during the lockdown, as well as all three musicians mentioned the emotional challenge of not being able to perform in front of people and "influence people with [their] artistry". *Case B and C* both claimed to have been emotionally benefited by the lockdown as they had more time to work on their music and practice, which as stated previously, acts as a coping mechanism for these musicians. It can also be noted that *case A and B*, both claimed that lockdown caused a lack of creativity and inspiration due to not being able to go out to socialise with people and experience new things.

When before lockdown began, all three of musicians promoted themselves and their brand, primarily through social media and word-of-mouth from playing at performances and their music releases, but when lockdown started in South Africa they all three had to adapt their marketing tactics to be completely digital and online. All of the musicians

adopted the use of live streaming through social media as the only means to perform for people. This is in line with Lee, Baker and Haywood's article, which forecasted that without any means to perform live, musicians would need to adopt the use of live streaming in order to perform. However, *case A and C* both claimed that live streaming was not as powerful or effective as performing live but both showed appreciation to be performing again.

When asked about their overall experiences of lockdown as a musician, *case B and C*, both claimed to have had a positive overall experience during the pandemic due to the amount of time they had to practice and make music. Despite the financial and emotional effects of the lockdown, *case B and C* still claimed that the pandemic lockdown was a positive experience. This is supported when *case B* claimed that lockdown had "a more positive effect on [him] because [he] had more time to make music, which obviously was a way for [him] to outlet and almost diarise [his] emotions." Further elaborating that this "balanced out the stress that [he] got from the lack of financial stability at the time". It can also be noted that the two musicians who had claimed to have a positive experience both meditated during the lockdown.

4.2.1.2. Differences

Case B was the only participating musician who was actually affected financially by the lockdown. He was also the only musician that did not live with their parents and thus stated that they were severely impacted by the financial effects of the lockdown. *Case B* was also the only musician who worked in order to supplement their income and this was also cut during the lockdown, meaning that the money that he used on basic needs was cut. *Case B* also stated that while he lost the opportunity to make an income from live shows, it was made up for by the increase in streaming which he claimed was due to more people staying at home.

As stated previously, only one of the participating musicians claimed to have a negative emotional outlook on their experience in lockdown. *Case A* stated that he suffered from an anxiety disorder and thus claimed that the lockdowns emotional effects were much more severe than the financial effects. *Case A* claimed that lack of inspiration during lockdown, put him in a tough state of mind.

Every participating musician adopted the use of livestreaming, however each of them used it differently. As previously stated, live streaming is becoming increasingly important for musicians due to its ability to facilitate two-way communication and reciprocity, which is important for achieving the pinnacle of Keller's CBBE Pyramid, resonance. There are many different uses for livestreaming and the social media platforms are adding more features to enhance live streaming every day. Case A and C both used live streaming to perform for their audience, with case C, using the chat feature to take requests of songs to play for the audience. Case A just used live streaming to perform and never engaged in any two-way communication. Case B would use livestreaming to connect with his audience and to practice his writing, he would freestyle on live stream and use the chat feature to take in words that can be used to freestyle with.

When asked about the musicians overall outlook on their experience of lockdown, only one of them claimed to have a negative overall experience. Case A was the only musician that has a negative overall experience during COVID-19 lockdown. Despite the emotional and financial effects of lockdown on the musicians, two claimed to have had a positive experience. These musicians used lockdown to practice and work on their music in order to get through adversity caused by the lockdown. It can be noted that these musicians also worked on themselves and their mental wellbeing during the lockdown through meditation – which could have been a reason for their positive outlook

4.2.2. Effect on brand building

As previously stated, all of the participating musicians needed to adapt their brand building and promotional efforts in order to grow their brands in the face of the pandemic lockdown in South Africa. Before the lockdown, all of the musicians noted that they used social media and word of mouth as their primary brand building tools and all of them adapted by continuing to use social media and as well as adopting the use of e-word of mouth.

Previous literature indicated that the importance and power of social media increased significantly for musicians during lockdown, as a result of the limitations of physical interaction and restrictions on performing. Previous literature also indicated the

increased power and usage of live streaming on social media for musicians during the lockdown. This was reflected in the results of the study as all of the participating musicians used social media and livestreaming as a crucial promotional and brand building tools during the lockdown.

Social media was used in a number of ways by the musicians as a means to promote their music and their brands as a whole during the lockdown. This includes; promoting new and old music through social media posts and stories, keeping fans up to date their lives, testing unreleased music with their fan bases through posting snippets of unreleased music, engaging and promoting music to fans through direct messaging and more. Live streaming was also used by all the participating musicians, as a means to not only perform but also to engage and interact with fans through two-way communication. For example, case *B* would freestyle on Instagram Live and would allow the audience to select words that he should include in his freestyle and case *C* would perform for his audience through Facebook and Instagram Live and would allow the audience to request songs to perform

According to Colicev, et al., social media has strong implications on the Customer-Based Brand Equity Pyramid (CBBE Pyramid) of a brand (Colicev, et al., 2018). Of the six brand building blocks in the CBBE Pyramid, social media has the strongest influence on the *salience*, *imagery* and *resonance* of a brand, however the whole CBBE Pyramid can be used as an important short-term and long-term performance metric to measure the success of social media efforts (Colicev, et al., 2018). The South African music industry is extremely competitive, therefore having a distinctive and strong brand equity in the mind of consumers is crucial in order to compete successfully in the industry. Brand resonance is the final brand building block in the CBBE Pyramid, it is the ultimate relationship that an audience can have with a brand and can refer to a strong bond or loyalty between a brand and its consumers. Social media has one of the strongest influences on the resonance of a brand due to its ability to facilitate two-way communication between not only the brand and its consumers but also between other consumers of the brand. This allows the creation of a strong sense of community for the audience that is revolved around the brand as well as a strong connection to a brands identity. Live streaming has shown to be successful at creating brand resonance due to its ability to facilitate immediate two-way communication.

When asked about how their engagement with their audience as affected by the lockdown, *case A and C* stated that their engagement was negatively impacted. Stating that performing live at a venue is where they achieve their most engagement. Therefore, while they attempted to engage with their audience and initiate the two-way communication needed to achieve brand resonance, their attempts were not as strong as when they were able to perform live to an audience. However, contrary to the other participants, *case B* noted increased engagement from his audience during the lockdown. *Case B* stated that during the lockdown, his direct fan base became more engaged due to the fact that they were restricted to their homes and had more time to listen to music. *Case B* also noted that his streaming numbers increased significantly during the lockdown. *Case B*, made note of an important effect that the lockdown had on the brand building efforts of a musician; money to reinvest into marketing and brand building. *Case B* noted that without the supplementary income from his part-time job, he was unable to reinvest back into his music and promotion. This meant that *case B's* brand building efforts were hindered by reduced expenditure on brand building efforts as a result of constrained income during lockdown.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

5.1. Conclusion as to how the research questions were answered

The research questions of this study were qualitative and thus the results cannot be generalised, however this was not the intent of the study. As previously stated, the purpose of this study is to compare and contrast the way in which South African musicians have been affected by the COVID-19 lockdown as well as compare the brand building efforts of these musicians. Therefore this study only aimed to compare the experiences and brand building efforts of the participating musicians.

The primary research questions were answered in the first part of the discussion, here is where the participating musician's experiences and brand building efforts were compared. This study found that the musician's experiences varied, with two musicians claiming to have had a positive overall experience and one musician claiming it was negative. The brand building efforts of the musicians were relatively similar, with all participating musicians stating that they used social media and word of mouth before the lockdown and adapted to using social media and e-word of mouth after the lockdown.

The secondary research question was answered in the second part of the discussion, here is where the brand building efforts were further compared and summarised in order to describe the tools or methods that the participating musicians are using to continue the growth of their brands during the lockdown. This study found that social media and the various features on social media, such as livestreaming, were the primary tools used by the participating musicians to promote the growth of their brands during the lockdown. What can be noted is that, while they used the same tools to promote growth, they all used the tools differently.

5.2. Trustworthiness and rigour

Trustworthiness refers to the validity and reliability of qualitative research. Trustworthiness can be divided into four main aspects; credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Bezuidenhout, et al., 2014). In order to increase the credibility and academic rigour of the study, many hours were invested into the data collection and data analysis, reading over and analysing it multiple times over in order to better understand the subjects and phenomenon under study (Bezuidenhout, et al., 2014). Transferability refers to the study's ability to reap similar results if done with

similar methodology by a different researcher, this allows the research to gain an aspect of generalisation in an approach that does not aim to generalise the findings (Bezuidenhout, et al., 2014), in order to ensure transferability, the research design and methodology has been scrupulously described and the research context has been defined thoroughly. Dependability is determined by the quality of the process of integration of the data collection methods, data analysis method, and the insight or findings from the data. Each chapter of the study is dependent on one another in order to make up a coherent study and answer the research questions, thus each chapter has been made to link coherently and logically in order to increase dependability. (Bezuidenhout, et al., 2014). Confirmability refers to how well the researcher's interpretations are supported by the findings. The research process has been fully stipulated and adequately described so that others can follow the research design and come to similar conclusions. (Bezuidenhout, et al., 2014).

5.3. Ethical Considerations

Integrity is the foundation of ethics, it is the professional and/or moral code of conduct that guides the attitudes and behaviours of people. Without ethical conduct, this research cannot be seen as valid and the study would be compromised (Bezuidenhout, et al., 2014).

5.3.1. Rights of participants

Each research participant asked to consent to be a participant in a research study, was granted certain rights that were taken into consideration and upheld by the research (Creighton University, 2020). The rights that the participants were protected by in this study included but were not limited to (Creighton University, 2020):

- The right to have enough time to decide if they want to participate in the study and to not be pressured in to participating.
- The right to be told about any risks involved in participating in the study.
- The right to be told who will have access to the information that is collected about the participants.
- The right to anonymity and confidentiality.
- The right to refuse to be in the study and the right to stop participating at any point of the interview.

5.3.2. Ethical considerations concerning the research participants:

The researcher obtained informed consent from each research participant, this entailed, formally informing that subjects will take part in a research study, participants were fully informed as to what the study is about and how their data will be used, and after being fully informed, the participants were asked to give their consent (Bezuidenhout, et al., 2014). Their consent was recorded in writing and consent forms were signed by all participants before being allowed to participate (Bezuidenhout, et al., 2014). The researcher avoided any type of emotional harm that could have been inflicted the participants. For this study, the avoidance of emotional harm was prioritised because the experiences that are under study may have been emotionally painful for the participants. The use of individual semi-structured interviews, as opposed to focus groups, limited the emotional harm of researching sensitive issues because it limited embarrassment in front of other people, also the researcher was clear and direct when addressing potentially sensitive points. (Bezuidenhout, et al., 2014). In order to ensure the participant's confidentiality and anonymity, only the researcher had access to the raw data and the names and identities of the participants were not recorded so that there could be no correlation to the participant's identity in the study (Bezuidenhout, et al., 2014). The researcher prioritised displaying respect and consideration in order to promote the wellbeing of participants and to avoid causing harm, this was also ensure the participants autonomy in the interviews. To insure that the researcher is displaying respect and consideration at all times, standardised procedures and protocols were followed, participants were informed about how their data was to be used and stored and no data was collected unfairly or secretly (Maree, et al., 2020).

5.3.3. Ethical considerations concerning the researcher:

In order to maintain ethical standards and ensure the validity of the study and the researcher, no information or data was deliberately falsified and the distortion of the results was avoided by making sure that all the findings fit the context of the study (Bezuidenhout, et al., 2014). Bias was avoided and all information was used for its intended and stipulated purposes (Bezuidenhout, et al., 2014).

5.4. Limitations and delimitations

There were various limitations to this study as a result of COVID-19 and the restrictions that came with the pandemic. Health guidelines recommended that people limit human contact in order to curb the spread of COVID-19 (Buthelezi, 2020), this resulted in the closure of universities and many public spaces that were important for finding suitable participants for the semi-structured interviews. Due to the limitation of human contact, it was not possible to meet face-to-face at a location with interview participants, face-to-face communication is important for qualitative research because the researcher is able to observe nuances in tone or non-verbal expression (Maree, et al., 2020). Furthermore, there were time limitations, as this study is for institutional academic purposes and the fixed due dates were the time constraints for which the study was bound by.

As a delimitation to the limitations caused by COVID-19 and the subsequent restrictions and guidelines, the semi-structured interviews were conducted online, using video calling software. This limited human contact while still allowing for verbal and non-verbal communication and expression. By seeking out and sampling research participants online and through social media, physical contact was also limited. In order to delimit the time constraints, time management techniques such as planning, scheduling and organising were used to keep up with the due dates.

5.5. Anticipated Contribution

The most important contribution of this study will be that it will give the reader a deeper understanding of how these South African musicians have been affected by the COVID-19 lockdown. There is currently no qualitative academic literature that explores the effect of COVID-19 on South African musicians so this study will add to the field of South African music academia. This can then be used by other musicians and players in the music industry in order to broaden their knowledge and understanding of how the participating musicians were affected by lockdown and the ways that they conducted brand building efforts in the face of a pandemic lockdown. Academics and government can use this study because it will give qualitative insight into how players in the cultural industry have been affected by COVID-19.

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Annexures

Annexure A: Research Report Table

This was submitted separately, please see second submission under Safe Assign.

Annexure B: Ethical Clearance



11 September 2020



Student name: Edoardo Calvani

Campus: Vega Bordeaux



Re: Approval of BA in Strategic Brand Communication Proposal and Ethics Clearance



HONOURS/PGDIP ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER



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

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

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

We wish you all the best with your research!

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Directors: RJ Douglas (UK), JDR Oesch, MD Aitken, FJ Coughlan
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Annexure C: Consent forms

Consent form for participants	
I, [REDACTED], agree to participate in the research conducted by Edoardo Calvani about comparing the experiences of South African musicians during the COVID-19 lockdown.	
This research has been explained to me and I understand what participation in this research will involve. I understand that:	
• I agree to be interviewed for this research.	
• My confidentiality will be ensured. My name and personal details will be kept private.	
• My participation in this research is voluntary and I have the right to withdraw from the research at any time. There will be no repercussions should I choose to withdraw from the research.	
• I may choose not to answer any of the questions that are asked during the research interview.	
• I may be quoted directly when the research is published, but my identity will be protected.	
[REDACTED]	Date 19/10/20

CONSENT FORM FOR AUDIO OR VIDEO RECORDING

Consent form for participants	
I, [REDACTED], agree to allow Edoardo Calvani to audio record my interviews as part of the research about comparing the experiences of South African musicians during the COVID-19 lockdown.	
This research has been explained to me and I understand what participation in this research will involve. I understand that:	
• My confidentiality will be ensured. My name and personal details will be kept private.	
• The recordings will be stored in a password-protected file on the researcher's computer.	
• Only the researcher, the researcher's supervisor and possibly a transcriber (who will sign a confidentiality agreement) will have access to these recordings.	
[REDACTED]	Date 19/10/20

Consent form for participants

I, [REDACTED], agree to participate in the research conducted by Edoardo Calvani about comparing the experiences of South African musicians during the COVID-19 lockdown.

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

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

Signature

Date

19/10/20

CONSENT FORM FOR AUDIO OR VIDEO RECORDING

Consent form for participants

I, [REDACTED], agree to allow Edoardo Calvani to audio record my interviews as part of the research about comparing the experiences of South African musicians during the COVID-19 lockdown.

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

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

Signature

Date
19/10/2

Consent form for participants

I, _____, agree to participate in the research conducted by Edoardo Calvani about comparing the experiences of South African musicians during the COVID-19 lockdown.

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

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My confidentiality will be ensured. My name and personal details will be kept private.

My participation in this research is voluntary and I have the right to withdraw from the research at any time. There will be no repercussions should I choose to withdraw from the research.

I may choose not to answer any of the questions that are asked during the research interview.

I may be quoted directly when the research is published, but my identity will be protected.

		10/10/20
Signature		Date

CONSENT FORM FOR AUDIO OR VIDEO RECORDING**Consent form for participants**

I, _____, agree to allow Edoardo Calvani to audio record my interviews as part of the research about comparing the experiences of South African musicians during the COVID-19 lockdown.

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		10/10/20
Signature		Date