



TO EXPLORE MILLENIALS PERCEPTIONS OF LOCAL VERSUS GLOBAL BRANDS

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STUDENT NAME: MATTHEW MASON



SUPERVISOR: DR. TISH TAYLOR
MODULE NAME: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
MODULE CODE: RESE8419
WORDCOUNT: 10867

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

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative research study was to explore the perceptions of South African millennials on local versus global brands. This study focused on fashion brands in order to ascertain the millennials perceptions of global versus local brands. The research problem was that there was no information available in a qualitative context, on millennials perceptions of local and global brands. This research addressed the problem by conducting qualitative research on this topic. The data that was needed for the study was collected using semi-structured interviews, to gain a deeper understanding of South African millennials perceptions, in order to determine brand equity. The overall findings of this research indicated that millennials have higher perceptions of global fashion brands as opposed to local fashion brands in all aspects of Aaker's brand equity model. The contribution that this study aimed to make was to contribute to a better understanding of what South African millennials perceptions are towards fashion brands that are local or global. This aimed to give a better understanding into the millennials market in South Africa and help local and global brand companies understand this generation better, so that they can maximise their revenue and future sales.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

1.1 CONTEXTUALISATION

The majority of people have stated that they perceive local and global brands differently (Tikkakoski, 2018). This study aims to understand South African millennials perceptions of global and local brands. South African millennials are the chosen group for this research because there is very little research available on them within a business context. It would be beneficial to understand South African millennials better, as millennials are seen as one of the fastest growing purchasing power generations (Roth, 2019).

The brand, in many cases, is the deciding factor when a consumer purchases a product or service. The brand's country of origin may influence the decision making process and can be a huge factor when consumers purchase a brand (Tikkakoski, 2018). By understanding millennials perceptions of local versus global brands, this will provide valuable insights for brand marketers.

Brand equity is perceived as the whole set of consumers perceptions about a brand, leading to a consumer's knowledge about the brand (Šalkovska, Batraga & Mežpapa, 2015). It is important for consumers to remember the brand, believe in the value of the brand and maintain positive associations with the brand (Šalkovska et al., 2015). This study will therefore explore brand equity as a set of consumers perceptions for local versus global brands. This study will make use of fashion brands in order to ascertain the millennials perceptions of global versus local brands.

People's perceptions are moulded by the world that we live in and the COVID-19 pandemic has changed that world dramatically. Brands need to be more aware of what their consumers perceptions are and their consumers feelings towards brands, in order to remain competitive (Keane, 2020). Due to this pandemic, perceptions towards global and local brands may have changed, resulting in the need for a study to be done in order to understand those potential changes.

This chapter will provide a background of the research problems, purposes, goals, objectives and the rationale of this study. It will give some insight into the impact of brand equity and why this study needs to be conducted.

1.2 RATIONALE

A review of previous literature shows that various studies on brand equity and consumers perceptions towards brands have been conducted (Tikkakoski, 2018). Previous research also shows the importance of understanding consumer perceptions (Stec, 2019). For years, consumers have relied on the impression of country-of-origin (COO) as the guide for making purchase decisions, especially when flooded with an enormous amount of choices from both global and local brands (Chiu and Ho, 2015). In South Africa, there has been an influx of global brands, which has placed pressure on the local retail landscape (Coetzee, 2018). According to Carufel (2016) nearly 75% of global respondents, on average, say a brand's country of origin is as important as or more important than nine other purchasing drivers, including selection/ choice, price, function and quality. As a result, consumers are faced with the decision between buying global or local brands, it is therefore important to understand how millennial consumers perceive global versus local brands. Millennial consumers perceptions about a brand assist in managing brand equity which is considered a strategic role of gaining competitive advantage and influencing consumer decision making (Chiu and Ho, 2015).

Conducting this study would allow for a better understanding of local and global brands and South African millennials perceptions towards them. By conducting this research, it will contribute to the body of knowledge on brand equity, millennials, local versus global brands and consumer perceptions. The information collected from this can help many companies understand their market better in order to increase their brand equity and sales.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

According to Coetzee (2018), the entry of global brands have been creating competition for the local market in South Africa. Local brands need to work harder and be smarter if they want to compete against global brands (PriceWaterHouseCoopers, 2016). Previous research suggests that consumers' decision-making regards brand evaluation, brand attitude and brand purchase intention are influenced by the type of brand (local vs global) (Lopez-Lomeli, Llonch-Andreu & Rialp-Criado, 2019). Brands play a critical role in establishing an organisation's visibility and position in international markets and brand managers face very complex competitive scenarios (Lopez-Lomeli et al., 2019). In a crowded retail environment, brand origin can be an important differentiator between brands (Carufel, 2016). In order to manage brand equity, managers must develop an understanding of the formative brand equity perceptions. This study aims to explore the perceptions of

South African millennials towards local versus global brands. The study will make use of fashion brands in order to ascertain their perceptions of global versus local brands. Many brands today, that are local or global, may be perceived differently by consumers and also the reputation that comes with the brand (Van Niekerk, 2019). Previous studies focused on understanding consumer preferences of local versus global brands and are predominantly quantitative in nature and do not consider the perceptions of millennial consumers specifically. It is therefore important to understand millennial consumers perceptions of local versus global brands from a qualitative perspective. By understanding these perceptions, brands could be managed better and influence consumer decision-making, thereby increasing sales worldwide among millennial consumers.

1.4 RESEARCH GOAL

The purpose of this qualitative research study is to explore the perceptions South African millennials have on local versus global brands. The data that was needed for the study was collected by means of semi structured interviews, allowing for a deeper understanding of South African millennials perceptions.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTION

What are the perceptions of South African millennials in terms of local versus global fashion brands?

1.6 OBJECTIVES

- Explore millennials perceptions of brand awareness of local versus global fashion brands
- Explore millennials perceptions of brand associations of local versus global fashion brands
- Explore millennials perceptions of perceived quality of local versus global fashion brands
- Explore millennials perceptions of brand loyalty of local versus global fashion brands
- Explore millennials perceptions of local versus global brands

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This study aims to understand South African millennials perceptions of global and local brands. This study will make use of fashion brands in order to ascertain millennials perceptions of global versus local brands. Various research exists on how local brands and global brands are perceived by consumers from around the world, and many quantitative studies have identified local versus global brands from a South African perspective. However, there is no qualitative research that addresses the perceptions of millennials towards local versus global brands, from a South African perspective. Perception is the subjective process of acquiring, interpreting, and organizing sensory information.

The COVID-19 global pandemic has changed the world we live in, resulting in the perceptions of consumers being changed. Brands therefore need to understand how their customers are feeling in order to remain competitive (Keane, 2020). If brands do not have a deeper understanding of consumers perceptions towards local and global brands in a South African context, they will not develop effective brand strategies or maximise potential economic returns. This literature review will introduce the relevant concepts and definitions that are related to this study and will provide a review of the current research related to the topic. This literature review will investigate the dimensions related to consumer perceptions of local versus global brands by means of brand equity. The information for this study will be gathered while using the interpretivist paradigm.

2.2 THEORITICAL FOUNDATION

2.2.1 DAVID AAKER'S BRAND EQUITY MODEL

Brand equity

Brand equity in simple words, can be described as value that is added to a brand in order to make it more favourable to the consumer (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2009). Previous research on brand equity, using Aaker's model of brand equity to understand the value of a brand, are aligned with the aim of this study. Therefore, Aaker's 1991 brand equity model is the most effective model that can be used to explore and understand consumer perceptions in terms of brand equity of local versus global brands. Various models of brand equity can be found in branding theory, however each model approaches brand equity

differently. Despite the differing views, it is evident that brand equity has several distinct but related dimensions treated as a single concept (Baalbaki & Guzmán, 2016). This study uses Aaker's (1991) dimensions of brand equity as the basis for consumer perceptions of local versus global brands. Aaker's model of brand equity (1991) consists of four dimensions, namely; brand awareness, perceived quality, brand associations and brand loyalty (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2009).

Brand Awareness

Brand awareness refers to the recognition of a product by its brand name and can be understood by exploring digital awareness metrics, conducting interviews and brand behaviour (Hales, 2020). When brand awareness is achieved, marketing and advertising campaigns have meaning to the customer (ThriveHive, 2017). Exploring brand awareness is achieved by understanding the specific attributes consumers like about a brand as well as what the brand may lack. Understanding the positive or negative associations consumers have toward the brand will influence brand awareness. Consumer commitment to a brand can influence the brand awareness to others. Determining which brands consumers consider when purchasing a product, assists in understanding brand (Aaker, 1991). This research will explore millennials perceptions of local and global fashion brands in terms of brand awareness. The research explores the positive or negative connotations associated with the different types of brands. This will help to explore the brand equity of the different types of brands for the study (Aaker, 1991).

Perceived Quality

Perceived quality is a perception by consumers, of how they perceive the overall quality of a type of product or brand (Vantamy, 2006). The perceived quality consumers have towards a brand can be explored using different types of criteria (Aaker, 1991). These criteria refer to the quality offered by the brand, the level of differentiation between products, price, availability in channels and the number of brand extensions (Vantamy, 2006). The quality offered by a brand is usually the reason it is bought (Vantamy, 2006). The second criteria is the differentiation of the brand compared with other brands that are in the same market. The price of the product is another indicator of the perceived quality of the brand, as price is used as an indicator of quality. The availability of the brand through different distribution channels will affect the perception of the consumer. The lower the availability may lead to a higher perceived quality with luxurious brands (Vantamy, 2006). Finally, brand extensions are new products that rely on the name and reputation of the brand, which the consumer will know

and identify as part of the brand. Brand extensions convey a certain level of quality (Aaker, 1991). This research will explore the perceptions consumers have, regarding the perceived quality of local and global fashion brands. This will assist in the understanding of brand equity and of consumers perceptions of local versus global brands.

Brand Associations

Brand association is described as anything that is situated in someone's mind about a brand (Kasper & Strepp, 2005). The associations a brand triggers to a consumer, can be explored using a variety of indicators (Aaker, 1991). One of the indicators are the extent to which a brand name is able to retrieve associations from the consumer brain. This can be through information on social media about the brand. Another indicator would be the extent to which association contributes to brand differentiation in relation to the competition. This can be abstract associations or associations with benefits. The role that brand association plays in the consumers buying process is also an indicator. This means the greater extent that brand association plays in the buying behaviour, the greater the brand equity. The fourth indicator is the extent to which brand associations create a positive attitude or feeling for that consumer. With the greater the attitude and feeling the brand associates with customer the greater the brand equity. The final indicator is the number of brand extensions that are in the market, meaning that the higher the number of brand extensions, the greater the opportunity to make more brand associations (Aaker, 1991). In order to determine the brand equity of local and global brands, consumer perceptions of brand associations must be examined. These perceptions will be interpreted in terms of whether they are positive or negative in nature (Aaker, 1991).

Brand Loyalty

Brand loyalty is the extent to how loyal a consumer is to a brand, it can be shown through a number of factors. It is the tendency for the consumer to carry on buying the same brand of products rather than the competing brands (Nilsson, 2015). Aaker (1991) mentioned that brand loyalty as a part of brand equity, differences occur as to how they view the role of brand loyalty. There are many elements that have an impact on a consumer's perception towards brand loyalty and these are trustworthiness, honesty, likeability, comfortability and the dependability of the brand (Baalbaki & Guzmán, 2016). It should be understood that brand loyalty can be split into two elements. These two elements are behavioural and attitudinal loyalty. Behavioural loyalty is the customers actual behaviour towards purchasing a specific brand. Attitudinal loyalty on the other hand is the consumers intention to be loyal

to a brand (Nilsson, 2015). This research plans to gather research from consumers, to understand millennials perceptions of brand loyalty towards the local and fashion brands. This will also help to determine the brand equity of the global and local brands for the study (Aaker, 1991).

2.3 CONCEPTUALISATION

Brand Equity

Brand equity refers to the value added to the same product under a particular brand (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2009). For the purpose of this study, brand equity refers to the value that is added to a brand, in order to make it more favourable to the consumer. Brand equity can therefore be described as the value that is added to a brand, in order to make it more appealing to the consumer (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2009).

Local versus global brands

A local brand is described as brand that is manufactured and produced within a country or in a narrow geographical area, although these brands may be owned by a local or global business (Schuiling and Kapferer, 2004). Global brands are defined as brands that are found in many countries around the world, with the same name for the same product with the same or similar strategy in mind (Schuiling and Kapferer, 2004).

For this study, local brands are the brands that are manufactured and produced within South African borders. Global brands for this study, are brands that are manufactured and produced outside of South Africa, but are able to be purchased within South Africa.

Brand

Although there is no single definition for brand that is used by everyone. For the purpose of understanding what a brand is for this study, they are those products produced and manufactured by business that use their brand to distinguish one product from another. A brand needs to be understood for this study because it is important to understand what perceptions millennials are towards them (McLaughlin, 2011).

Perceptions

A perception is how someone identifies and interprets sensory information in order to understand the presented information. It is important for perceptions to be understood

because this helps with achieving the aim of the study. It is also important for this study as it allows for understanding the perceptions of millennials (Cherry, 2020).

Millennial's

For the purpose of this study millennials are referred to as range of people that are between the age range of 24 and 39 in 2020. In an article published in the Financial Times (2019) it is stated that millennials have become the world's most powerful consumers. By understanding millennials, this will help understand the research topic better (Financial Times, 2019).

2.4 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This literature review will present previous research on local versus global brands as well as the findings and methods of these studies. The literature review will provide an overview of what research has been conducted in order to present gaps in the research, which were used to develop the research aim and objectives for this study. Despite similar research being available, there is currently no available literature relating to a qualitative study on millennials perceptions of local versus global brands in South Africa. This research attempts to gain a better understanding of this phenomenon, thereby adding to the body of knowledge and providing the basis for future research to be conducted.

Previous literature has proved that local and global brands can be perceived differently, depending on the region in which the study was conducted (Tikkakoski, 2018). The reason for this is that a local brand from a third world country is different from that of a first world country (Tikkakoski, 2018). An exploratory study was conducted by Bajaj (2007), to determine how consumers perceived local and global brands within the Indian retail industry. In a similar study by Schuiling and Kapferer (2004) it was found that local brands benefited from a strong brand equity, trust perception and enjoy a strong brand image. According to Bajaj (2007), consumers in developing economies perceive local brands to be of a lesser quality than global brands and have a brand equity not as good as global brands. Although the study was conducted in a developing third world country and made use of semi-structured interviews, the sample consisted of consumers in India expressing their perceptions.

In a study conducted by Masood and Tawab (2012), various factors affecting consumer's preferences of global brands over local brands were identified. The study was conducted in

Karachi, Pakistan and made use of 200 participants for the quantitative research. The findings indicated that price may alter consumer's perceptions of the quality of a product, however, there were other factors that influenced consumer's preferences. These preferences included the country of origin of the brand, social status and consumer ethnocentrism (Masood & Tawab, 2012). The study indicated that 75% of participants agreed that status symbols represented by the brand affect consumer's purchasing decisions. It was also shown in the study that the participants perceived global brands to be more expensive than local brands. This quantitative study provides useful insight, however, it was conducted in Pakistan and is therefore culturally different to South Africa.

In a study conducted in Finland by Tikkakoski (2018), perceptions of international and local premium private labels were compared. International premium private brands being the same as global brands and local premium labels being the same as local brands. Tikkakoski (2018) made use of semi-structured interviews to gather the data and made use of Keller's consumer-based brand equity model. The study found that global premium private labels were perceived as better than traditional local private labels. The findings indicated that international premium private labels were considered "an adventurous choice" chosen for a special or an occasional social situation (Tikkakoski, 2018). Local premium private label brands were seen as a safe or reliable choice and would be used as an everyday product. The study also found that local premium private labels brands were seen as "not adventurous" and "not possessing luxurious characteristics". In addition, this study found out that consumers perceive international and local premium private labels differently, and the country-of-origin had a clear effect on the price consumers were willing to pay for a local or international premium private label. The study by Tikkakoski (2018), provides a useful background into the perceptions on global and local brands but the culture of Finnish consumers is vastly different to that of South African consumers

Research conducted in Iran made use of quantitative surveys of 200 volunteers and found that 60% of consumers, would purchase and prefer global brands over local brands, even when the price is more for a product (Zareei & Ashtiani, 2015). The findings show that even if the global and local brands were in the same quality range, 89% of respondents would select the global brand. Similar to the findings of Masood and Tawab (2012), this study found that 90% of consumers purchase global brands as a status symbol. According to the study, prestige associated with a global brand product was considered the most important factor when consumer's consider a purchase (Zareei & Ashtiani, 2015).

Global and local brands can shape a consumer's perceptions on what they buy (Bristow, 2016). In a Nielson report on the uncommon sense of the consumer, nearly three quarters of the global respondents said that brand origin is as important as or more important, than other purchasing drivers, which include choice, price, function and quality (Bristow, 2016). The Nielson survey also showed that was not the case for everyone, because everyone has different perceptions depending on what is being bought (Bristow, 2016). The report found that brands that deliver a strong value proposition, will connect better with consumers and will have an advantage in the market. Approximately six of the ten respondents stated, that buying local brands is more important to them because it then supports local businesses (Bristow, 2016).

According to an article by Carufel (2016) on local versus global brands nearly 75% of global consumers listed brand origin as their key purchase driver. In a survey released by Nielson about consumers key purchase drivers, it was reported that a consumer will not always choose a global brand over a local brand or vice versa as it depends on what is being purchased and that motivates the consumer's decision (Carufel, 2016). The category of the product affects whether a consumer is going to buy a global or a local brand. In the Nielson survey, as stated by Carufel (2016) also found that if food and beverages are being purchased then local brands were favourable, whereas global brands were preferred when purchasing fashion brands and beauty products. According to Carufel (2016), there are various decision making factors that motivate consumers when purchasing products, namely; value, experience with the brand, sales and product benefits. It is also important to know that these decision factors do differentiate for each generation.

According to Roth (2016) millennials are different from any other generation. Roth (2016) further stated that this was because they have a different behaviour when it comes to spending their money and what their preferences are when purchasing. With millennials entering their prime earning stages it is important for retailers to understand that there will be differences on what their preferences are. Millennials rely on instant gratification more than any other generations meaning that their savings are not as good as the generations before. Millennials are seen as one of the fastest growing generations in terms of purchasing power for this specific reason (Roth, 2019). It was stated that millennials are very loyal towards brands and are very conscious when it comes to the price of products (Roth, 2019).

Brands can vary in many different sectors but this study will look at fashion brands specifically.

In a study conducted by Krupka, Ozretic-Dosen and Previsic (2014), the perception of a brands name/origin and its perceived luxury was done. The study explored participants perceptions and their thoughts of fashion brands with regards to their country of origin. It was found that luxury expectations were far higher for global fashion brands. While local brands luxury perceptions were not as high. Results from this study also showed consumers are willing to pay more for a global fashion brand in comparison to a local fashion brand. This did not stop people from purchasing local fashion brands but they preferred and saw global fashion brands as more luxurious (Krupka, Ozretic-Dosen and Previsic, 2014).

Most of the research studies stated above make use of Aaker's (1991) model of brand equity. The most important differences between the models are related to the number of brand equity dimensions. Aaker (1991) separates brand equity into four dimensions, which are, brand awareness, perceived quality, brand associations and brand loyalty. The most common motives for studying brand equity are for financial purposes and also to gain positive consumer perceptions (Aaker, 1991).

2.5 CONCLUSION

From the research presented within this study, it can be concluded that consumer's perceptions of local and global brands differ quite significantly. The basis of these perceptions are based off country of origin, type of product, price and brand equity. From the previous research, it was evident that brand equity was commonly used in determining perceptions or preferences of local and global brands. Majority of the literature agreed in stating that global brands are perceived to have a higher brand equity than local brands. The literature reported that millennials are seen as one of the fastest growing generations in terms of purchasing power. The research presented provides a useful background on the topic, as well as an indication of the gaps in research. As previously stated, there is no qualitative research on millennial's perceptions of local versus global brands in South Africa. The study by Krupka et al (2014), showed that in terms of fashion brands, global fashion brands had a greater perception than local fashion brands. This research is necessary as it will assist marketers and brands managers to ensure positive brand equity. For all marketing companies worldwide it is brand equity which marketers and brand owners are endeavouring to secure, so as to be market leaders.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1.1 RESEARCH PARADIGM

Consumer perceptions are defined as a marketing concept, that incorporates a consumer's impression, awareness, or consciousness about a company or its offerings (Clootrack, 2020). The entire process of consumer perception begins when a consumer sees or gets information about a brand and continues until the consumer starts to build an opinion about the brand (Clootrack, 2020). Perceptions of a phenomenon vary from one consumer to the depending on subjectivity, expectations and past experiences (Ryan, 2018).

Interpretivism states that social reality is created out of human thoughts and actions (Ryan, 2018). The philosophy requires the researcher to capture the subjective meaning of the social phenomenon and to interpret and understand the consumer's thoughts and actions (Ryan, 2018). To understand an individual consumer's perception of local and global brands, understanding and interpretation is required.

As this is an exploratory study on the perception of South African millennial's towards local and global brands, this study is situated within the interpretivist paradigm (Thomas, 2010). This paradigm was chosen over the other paradigms because the interpretivist paradigm assumes that reality is a state of instability and as such, is in constant change, which requires a deeper understanding of participants reality and perceptions. All human behaviour is influenced by a number of different factors which tend to be subjective in nature. Interpretivists believe that reality is socially constructed and as a result every person will perceive a phenomenon differently. Quantitative research provided on this topic, does not delve into understanding perceptions of consumers on an individual level. The study aims to gain a deep understanding of consumers perceptions of this phenomenon. This paradigm was chosen because it was suited for this study, unlike the positivism paradigm. The positivism paradigm point is to uncover the laws that govern human behaviour, the same way scientists have discovered the laws that govern the physical world (Thomas, 2010). The advantage of using an interpretivist paradigm are that the research will gain insight into consumer/millennials perceptions thereby complimenting existing quantitative research for a better understanding.

This paradigm is related to the study because this study aims at gaining an in depth understanding of the perceptions of millennials towards local and global brands (Thomas, 2010). As this research looks at the exploration of millennial's perceptions towards local and global brands, it can be said that the interpretivist paradigm is in alignment with the nature of the study by making use of qualitative research (Thomas, 2010).

3.1.2 RESEARCH APPROACH

Qualitative data was used in this study to gain a deeper understanding of the perception of millennials towards local and global fashion brands (Thomas, 2010). Qualitative research involves an interpretivist approach and tries to explore and interpret a situation in terms of what people provide (Thomas, 2010). Semi structured interviews are seen as the best option for this research design because it allows the researcher to understand the thinking process of millennials.

This research study was exploratory research because this allowed the researcher to understand an unknown area of research (Du Plooy-Celliers, 2014). An inductive approach was used, as it allowed the researcher to interact with and gain a deeper understanding of consumers perceptions (Du Plooy-Celliers, 2014).

The inductive approach was chosen because it was best suited for the study as the interpretivist paradigm allows the researcher to collect information, analyse it and formulate a theory based on the information and observations (Du Plooy-Celliers, 2014). The inductive approach entails gathering the data first and afterwards coming up with theories. While the deductive approach creates a hypothesis on a theory that is already developed. The inductive approach was chosen for this study since it more well suited (Du Plooy-Celliers, 2014).

3.2 RESEARCH PLAN

3.2.1 POPULATION

A population in research is explained as a collection of people that a researcher wants to draw their conclusions from (Mack, 2019). Within a population there is a target population, which is narrowed into an accessible population, that was used in the study. To narrow the scope of the research, the participants were chosen based on their geographic location, due to time and resource constraints. A population is too large to study each individual, therefore an investigation is limited to the sample that was drawn from the population. The general

population for this study refers to all millennials within South Africa that are aware of fashion brands both locally and globally.

A target population is made up of the individuals from which the sample might be drawn (Mack, 2019). The target population for this study was millennials within South Africa, specifically Gauteng, who are aware of both local and global fashion brands.

The accessible population is explained as the population in research, to which the researchers can apply their conclusions (Mack, 2019). The accessible population for this study were millennials based in Johannesburg, South Africa, who are aware of both local and global fashion brands.

3.2.2 SAMPLING

The unit of analysis for this study was the chosen South African millennials, whose perceptions were recorded and transcribed. More specifically, it was the South African millennials aged between 24 to 39 years old, who are aware of both local and global fashion brands. The research was targeted towards the individuals perceptions, so the unit of measurement was the individual (Blackstone, 2017).

The sampling method that was used for this research was the non-probability sampling method. Which means that the likelihood for the selection of candidates is not known and because of this sample, it is not necessarily representative of the larger population (Blackstone, 2017). As the participants were selected based on the researcher's discretion, purposive sampling was the most appropriate. This approach is usually used when using the public for opinions, which is appropriate for qualitative research (Barratt, 2009).

As to what was said previously, the participants must be aware of both local and global fashion brands. This shows that the purposive sampling technique is most appropriate as the study made use of participants who are best suited or aligned to the intentions of the research. The study aimed to gain insight into the participants thoughts, feelings and perceptions of local and global fashion brands. With the characteristics and parameters for the sample defined, this allowed for purposive sampling. The purposive sampling method was selected because the sample was chosen with purpose.

The sample size was three people. This was because the sample was interviewed through semi structured interviews. Due to the nature of exploratory research, the small sample size was sufficient in gaining insight into the participants perceptions. By having a small sample size it allowed for a deeper understanding (Blackstone, 2017).

3.2.3 DATA COLLECTION METHOD

The data collection method that was used for this study was semi structured interviews. These semi structured interviews were done in a face to face manner, with the participants chosen with purpose for the study. Semi structured interviews allowed for the discovery of information that may not have been thought of as relevant to the study. Semi structured interviews made it possible to gain a deeper understanding as well as the lived experience of the participants. This has allowed for the participant and the interviewer to understand an idea or a statement in greater detail. Semi structured interviews were more flexible compared to structured interviews and this allowed for follow up questions to the participants responses which needed more elaborating. Semi structured interviews allowed for all the questions to be prepared before the interview took place (Creswell, Ebersohn, Eloff, Ivankova, Jansen, Nieuwenhuis, Pietersen & Plano Clark, 2016).

The participants of this study were millennials based in Johannesburg, South Africa who are aware of both local and global fashion brands. The participants were approached randomly and were asked if they met the sample requirements for the study. They were then asked if they would like to volunteer and were informed of the ethical considerations. The requirements being, if the participant has purchased fashion brands before and if they are a millennial between the ages of 24 to 39 years old. The participants were informed that data collected would be anonymous and would be used for the purpose of the completion of the research project.

These semi structured interviews were conducted privately with only the researcher and participant present. Interviews were recorded, allowing the researcher to make note of non-verbal cues. Also whilst the semi structured interview were happening, notes were taken of potential gaps that were needed to be looked.

The study was originally going to be done on Zoom calls but because of COVID-19 and the lockdown regulations being in place, this allowed for a change in face-to-face interaction to happen again. Semi-structured interviews were done in person at the researchers house

and not on Zoom. The number of participants for this study has changed from five participants to three due to lockdown restrictions. This would allow for a more insightful and in depth discussion with the participants while saving time and resources.

For the purpose of this study and to gain the insights needed for the study, semi structured interviews were implemented. The interviews made use of exploratory questions, which required the participants to answer the questions asked in as much depth as possible. These answers were recorded and transcribed in order to be made sense of and gain the necessary insights.

3.2.4 DATA ANALYSIS METHOD

The data analysis method that was used by the researcher in order to analyse the qualitative data collected was the thematic approach to data analysis. A thematic analysis is defined as the method of analysing and reporting of data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The thematic method was used because it was the best approach to find out about the participants' views, opinions, knowledge, experiences or values. The thematic method lets the researcher shift from reading all the data that was collected, to finding patterns that exist from the data gathered (Balkissoon, 2017). When using this method, it is known that themes emerge from the data that was collected and are not predetermined by the researcher (Balkissoon, 2017). Thematic approach identifies and interprets patterns that are of meaning within the qualitative data (Balkissoon, 2017). This is an iterative process as the themes are linked back to the theory and literature (Balkissoon, 2017).

The thematic analysis aims to analyse and identify common themes from the data. It is a process of data reduction, by means of identifying themes. An inductive approach was used and the research will not pre determine codes or themes from theory. This method was seen as the most appropriate method because it allowed for the data to lead the themes which will be used for the analysis. This directed the researcher to organise the findings in a manner that is logical from the results that were found (Balkissoon, 2017).

In this process, the semi structured interviews were transcribed into text and then were analysed through a process of coding. When all the data was coded, the dominant themes emerged and provided the researcher with the data found (Braun & Clarke, 2013). The themes explained what the interviewees process, perspective and thoughts were towards

fashion brands that are either local or global in order to evaluate the brands customer based brand equity.

After the semi-structured interview, a coding thematic analysis was used as a tool to analyse and capture the data that was received.

The dimensions from the brand equity model such as perceived quality, brand associations, brand awareness and brand loyalty have been identified within the data analysis as the themes and categories. The dimensions were used in order to formulate the semi structured interview questions. Identifying these themes and South African Millennials' perceptions towards local and global fashion brands, allow us a way of tracking themes and perceptions.

Caulified (2020) explains that there are many methods to doing a thematic analysis but these six steps are the most common. These steps are familiarization, coding, generating themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes and writing up.

Familiarization is the first step of thematic coding and this is done in order for the researcher to gain an understanding of the data. This was done by transcribing the audio, reading through notes taken on non-verbal cues and generally looking through the data to get familiar with it (Caulified, 2020).

Coding followed which meant reading the answers and finding similarities or differences. This, in other words, means identifying the categories when reading through the data and highlighting the terms expressed by the participants. The categories here are referred to as codes to describe their content (Caulified, 2020).

The next step was generating themes, this is when the researcher finds useful information from the data. This includes the organising of the codes to identify relationships between them and the constructing themes (Caulified, 2020).

Reviewing themes was the next step and this is when the researcher compared the data set of themes that was gathered to the original set of data. This was done to see if there is any similarities (Caulified, 2020).

Defining and naming of the themes then followed, which explains the themes and the contribution each one gives. This also included referring back to the literature (Caulified, 2020).

The final step was evaluating and writing. This is the process of when the researcher looks at each theme and evaluates it to see what they really mean. This would include where the research questions are answered and the contributions are made. This also included discussing the relationships between the themes and categories (Caulified, 2020).

3.2.5 TRUSTWORTHINESS

Trustworthiness is a qualitative measure that is used to make sure that the data that was collected is relevant and contains authentic results (LaBanca, 2010). To ensure that trustworthiness is present in the study, it should bring in four criteria being credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Koonin, 2014). These criteria are not the purpose of the study, but the aim is to achieve these to attain trustworthiness.

Credibility means the accuracy with which the researcher interpreted the data that was collected by the participants of the study. Credibility is linked to the believability and the truth that is found from the findings (Du Plooy-Celliers, 2014). The researcher will need to spend time with participants to better understand them and gain insight into their lives. The researcher will ensure that the participants are purposively chosen for the study so that information obtained will be credible. (Koonin, 2014).

Transferability is the ability of findings to be able to be applied to a similar situation and give similar results. This refers to how applicable the insights gained are to other participants beyond the sample (Du Plooy-Celliers, 2014). Although qualitative research does not aim at generalising results, by ensuring transferability, the results of this study can be used to help other research studies. By making sure that the sample used in the study represents the population this means that transferability has increased (Koonin, 2014).

Dependability is the reliability of the process of integrating the data that has been collected, analysed and findings. Dependability of a study means that the study can be conducted at another time and will yield similar results. To achieve this the researcher will provide a detailed explanation of the data collection and analysis (Du Plooy-Celliers, 2014). Dependability refers to how consistent the research was and the extent to which the

research can be replicated (Koonin, 2014). Although qualitative research does not aim for replication, in detailing the data collection and analysis the study aims to attain dependability.

Confirmability means how well the data that was collected supports the findings and the interpretation of the research after it is inspected. This means the degree of neutrality of the insights gained (Du Plooy-Celliers, 2014). In other words confirmability is known as how well the data collected supports the results of previous research. (Koonin, 2014).

3.3 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this research paper aims to evaluate how South African millennials perceive local versus global brands. Since this study had an exploratory nature, a qualitative approach was seen as the most appropriate choice. The non-probability method along with purposive sampling was used to sample millennials based in Johannesburg, South Africa, who were aware of both local and global fashion brands. Semi structured interviews were conducted with the volunteered participants as a way to collect all the data and information that was needed. After this had been successfully completed, a thematic content analysis was used to evaluate and interpret the data.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS

This chapter includes the researcher's analysis and interpretation of the qualitative data that was collected during the three semi structured interviews. The data that was collected for this research was analysed using the thematic analysis. Thematic analysis interprets patterns within the qualitative data.

The 4 categories below of Aaker's brand equity model have been identified. These categories below include related themes that have been established through coding the findings. This has allowed the researcher to group findings and insights that relate to each theoretically, together. Each category explored each research objective, with the objectives being listed below.

- Explore millennials perceptions of brand awareness of local versus global fashion brands

- Explore millennials perceptions of brand associations of local versus global fashion brands
- Explore millennials perceptions of perceived quality of local versus global fashion brands
- Explore millennials perceptions of brand loyalty of local versus global fashion brands
- Explore millennials perceptions of local versus global brands

4.1 CATEGORY ONE: PERCEIVED QUALITY

This category explored research objective three, millennial consumers perceptions of perceived quality of local versus global fashion brands. Perceived quality is the customers perception of the overall excellence or superiority of a brand, related to the intended purpose of the brand and relative to alternatives (Aaker, 2009). Two themes emerged from the data, namely; 'quality perception' and 'price perception.'

Theme 1 – Quality Perceptions

All of the participants viewed global fashion brands as *“top of the range quality”* while local fashion brands were *“not as good as global.”* Participants quality perceptions were based on previous purchase experiences of global fashion brands. According to Participant A, global fashion brands are *“good and durable. Like the best, you know.”* In saying this, Participant A is saying that global brands are of a suitable quality and that they last longer. Participant B commented that local fashion brands *“aren’t up to date with the fashion trends like global brands.”* Despite the difference in quality perceptions, the participants did not view local fashion brands negatively, however participant’s preference would be to purchase global brands over local brands based on the perceived quality. This was interpreted that the participants don’t expect high quality from local fashion brands and that they purchase these brands knowing that they are of a lesser quality. Zhou, Teng and Poon (2008) explain this preference for global brands on consumer’s beliefs that global brands are ‘trendy’ and high in quality. The findings are supported by Coetzee’s (2018) quantitative study of millennial’s perceptions of local versus global brands, where South African millennials perceived the quality of global fashion brands to be higher than that of local fashion brands. According to Winit, Gregory, Cleveland and Verlegh (2014) when a brand is perceived as global, consumers have higher quality assessments, compared to those of local brands. It is important to note that the availability and distribution of a brand is a quality signal that reflects market acceptance (Coetzee, 2018).

Theme 2 –Price Perception

Participant's opinions of quality were closely linked to their perception of price, where global fashion brands were perceived as higher in quality and therefore more expensive than local fashion brands. Participant's price perceptions were based on previous purchase experiences of global and local fashion brands. Participant B stated that "*there is a big difference because global fashion brands are much more expensive.*" Participants all agreed that global brands were "*too expensive*" and local fashion brands were "*cheap because of the quality*". Participant A said, "I think the quality is not as good as global brands and labels" showing that they think local fashion brands are of inferior quality compared to those globally. Despite the differences in price perceptions, the participants would still purchase global fashion brands even though they are more expensive than local fashion brands. This result aligns with previous research findings, where the perceived relative price of a brand functions as an indicator of quality (Ismail, Masood & Tawab, 2012; UKEssays, 2018). It is important to note however, that millennials view price, over both quality and brand source, as the deciding factor in purchasing decisions (Lapidus, 2017). In terms of research objective three, the perceived quality of millennials is higher for global brands versus local brands. It is important to note that despite a lower perceived quality, millennials did not view local brands negatively and this does not result in negative brand equity of local brands. As per the Aaker's (2009) definition, perceived quality is a subjective customer judgement, based on the intended purpose and relative alternatives of a brand. This indicates that millennials do not view local and global fashion brands as relative alternatives, instead local fashion brands are compared with other local fashion brands. Therefore, the perception of local brands, although lower when compared to global brands is relative to other local brands.

4.2 CATEGORY TWO: BRAND AWARENESS

Category two explored research objective one, millennial consumer's perceptions of brand awareness of local versus global fashion brands. Two themes emerged from the data, namely; 'Brand Recall' and 'Reasons For Brand Recall'.

Theme 1– Brand Recall

In order to understand participants brand awareness, they were asked to give names of fashion brands. Table 1 below provides the names of fashion brands mentioned by participants, as well as the frequency.

Table 1: Names and frequency of fashion brands mentioned by participants

Fashion brand	Frequency
Dior	1
Zara	2
Mr Price	3
Cape Union Mart	1
K-Way	1
Nike	1
Cotton On	2
True Religion	1
Poetry	1
H&M	1
Country Road	1

Table 1 above indicates that all participants mentioned Mr Price, with Zara and Cotton On being mentioned by at least two participants. These results show that millennial participants recall brands that are popular and trending. This is an indication of brand recall, which is the ability of customers to think of a brand name from their memory when told to think of a category of products (Kenton, 2018). Brand recall tends to indicate a stronger connection to a brand than brand recognition, which refers to the ability of customers to identify a specific brand by its attributes (Kenton, 2018). Brand awareness is what leads to brand recognition and is the knowledge that a brand exists (Kenton, 2018)

When asked to name the fashion brands participants consider as part of their purchasing process, Zara and Cotton On were the most frequently mentioned brands, as shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Fashion brands considered during purchase decision process

Fashion brand	Frequency
Zara	2
Mr Price	1
Cape Union Mart	1
Nike	1
Cotton On	2
Poetry	1

Despite all participants brand recall of Mr Price, only one of the participants considered Mr Price when making purchasing decisions. The fact that Zara and Cotton On are considered during purchasing decisions aligns with the previous findings that global brands are

preferred over local fashion brands. The findings therefore indicate that participants have brand awareness of both local and global fashion brands, however when considering purchases the preference is for global fashion brands. According to Winit *et al.*, (2014), there is higher brand awareness and consideration of Northern Hemisphere fashion brands than for Southern Hemisphere fashion brands. This relates to the participants findings of global fashion brands being considered more than local fashion brands.

Theme 2- Reasons For Brand Recall

Participant's reasons for considering a particular brand when making purchase decisions were all fairly similar. The reasons provided were linked to participants budget and how up to date the brands fashion is. Participant B stated that "*I'm a student and I have a budget in terms of clothes*". Participant C considered "*brands that are up to date with the latest fashion trends in the world*" when making purchasing decisions. From the results, the participants were aware of both local and global fashion brands, however more global brands were mentioned than local brands when considering what brands to purchase. From the results, the participants were aware of both local and global fashion brands, however more global brands were mentioned than local brands when considering what brands to purchase. Aaker's (1991) brand equity theory identified brand awareness as an element of brand equity and states that brand awareness contributes to brand equity. The findings indicate that the awareness of both local and global fashion brands do not necessarily equate to consideration when purchasing. When considering fashion brands for purchase decisions, the brands mentioned were linked to affordability and fashion trends.

4.3 CATEGORY THREE: BRAND ASSOCIATIONS

This category explored research objective two, millennial consumer's perceptions of brand associations of local vs global fashion brands. Two themes emerged from the data, namely; 'words associated with local and global fashion brands' and 'feelings associated with local and global fashion brands'.

Theme 1– Words associated with local and global fashion brands

All of the participants viewed local fashion brands as "*cheap and affordable*", while global fashion brands were "*quality and expensive*". Participant's brand associations were based on previous purchase experiences of global and local fashion brands. According to Participant C, words associated with local fashion brands are, "*traditional, affordable and unique*". The use of 'traditional' indicates a representation of local culture, however, used in

combination with *'unique'* can be interpreted as a positive association. Also according to Participant C, global fashion brands are, *"expensive, luxurious, up to date and have a wide range"*. This response shows that global fashion brands are associated with luxury, variety and higher prices. According to Keller (2009), luxury offerings vary in terms of their functional use and provide customers with comparable symbolic and experiential benefits, such as prestige and social status, which mostly come from intangible attributes of the brand. This aligns with the findings related to perceived quality above in that millennials perceptions of global brands are not viewed as alternatives to local fashion brands. Similarly, millennials associations of local fashion brands millennials were not negative. The findings are supported by Tikkakoski (2018), that found that local brands were not associated with luxurious characteristics whereas global brands were associated with prestige.

Theme 2– Feelings associated with local and global fashion brands

The words provided by millennials were closely linked to their feelings associated with local and global fashion brands. Overall, millennials feelings towards global fashion brands related to prestige, such as feeling admired, respected and important. Feelings associated with local fashion brands were helpfulness. According to Participant C, global fashion brands result in feeling, *"prestigious, elite and successful"*. This aligns with previous findings in that millennials view global fashion brands as having a higher status than local fashion brands. Participant B commented that feelings associated with the purchase of local fashion brands were *"helpful, because I'm like helping the community and the country"*. Being helpful can be considered as empathetic and supportive. The findings are supported by Kapferer (1997), who stated that the global brands have better associations than local brands, since they are preferred by most and associated with a higher prestige. The findings for research objective two indicate that millennials associations of global and local fashion brands are different and as with previous findings, are not viewed in comparison with each other.

4.4 CATEGORY FOUR: BRAND LOYALTY

This category explored research objective four, millennial consumers perceptions of brand loyalty of local versus global fashion brands. Two themes emerged from the data, namely; 'meaning of brand loyalty' and 'loyalty towards brands'.

Theme 1– Meaning of brand loyalty

In order to understand brand loyalty, the participants were asked to explain what brand loyalty meant to them. All participants mentioned the similar answers, with Participant A defining loyalty as *“purchasing a brand no matter the price”* and Participant B explaining loyalty as *“buying a specific brand all the time over another brand”*. For millennials, brand loyalty means purchasing a brand repeatedly, regardless of price, and supporting the brand over an extended period of time. Aaker (1991), stated that brand loyalty implies that brand equity has been created. Therefore, if a customer is loyal to a brand then the brand has brand equity.

Theme 2– Loyalty towards brands

Participants were also asked to describe and explain their loyalty to fashion brands. All of the brands mentioned by the participants were global fashion brands. According to Participant B *“I’m definitely loyal to Cotton On and Nike”* and Participant C stated *“I would say Zara and Cotton On”*. These findings could be attributed to the findings of perceived quality above. Global fashion brands have a higher perceived quality, which drives financial performance of a brand. The findings are supported by Gallaher (2020), who states that fashion brands that have a bigger audience tend to promote a higher level of loyalty. Gallaher (2020), further mentions that brands, like H&M, Zara, and Cotton On have a huge audience range. In terms of research objective four the findings indicate that millennials seem to be more loyal to global fashion brands.

4.5 CONCLUSION

From the presentation and interpretation of the findings above, it can be seen that the research question of understanding the perceptions of South African millennials, in terms of local versus global fashion brands has been addressed. Perceptions were addressed and explored on how they contribute to brand equity. Brand equity was described as value that is added to a brand, in order to make it more favourable to the consumer (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2009). Each aspect of Aaker’s brand equity model contribute to the overall brand equity of local and global fashion brands. One aspect that was found throughout the results, is that millennials do not view local fashion brands in the same "bracket" as global fashion brands. Therefore, the "lower" perceived quality and associations are not negative because for millennials, they compare local with local and not local with global. The findings that were gathered and interpreted for this research will be used to help marketers/business owners to understand millennials’ perceptions of local versus global brands better. This chapter also addressed the gaps that needed to be filled within the research. These

interpretations were backed up with previous literature to show correlations between the two.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

5.1 RESEARCH QUESTION AND OBJECTIVES ADDRESSED

This chapter aims to draw together key aspects from the primary and secondary findings in order to address the research question and objectives. The research goal of this qualitative research study was to explore the perceptions South African millennials have, on local versus global brands. This study made use of fashion brands in order to ascertain the perceptions of global versus local brands.

The research question was explored through a qualitative approach, which made use of semi-structured interviews and previous literature. The literature review was conducted in order to gather existing information on the topic, to contribute to the findings. Aaker's brand equity model was explored to gain a better understanding of the participants perception of brand equity, on local and global brands.

The research goal of the study was addressed with a literature study of past findings and semi structured interviews. The use of semi-structured interviews allowed for a more in-depth insight into how the participants perceived local and global fashion brands. The participants were asked questions relating to each one of the aspects that Aaker refers to in the model, which relates to the objectives of this study that were addressed.

The first objective was to explore millennials perceptions of brand awareness of local versus global fashion brands. From the findings it can be inferred that participants seem to be more aware of a brand when the brand is popular and trending. The findings in this case showed that participants were more aware of global fashion brands than local fashion brands. This aligns with previous literature as Kenton, (2018) stated that brand awareness is what leads to brand recognition and is the knowledge that a brand exists.

The second objective was to explore millennials perceptions of brand associations of local versus global fashion brands. From the findings it appears that millennials do not view local fashion brands in the same bracket as global fashion brands. Therefore the lower

associations of local fashion brands are not negative for millennials because they compare local with local and not local with global. This correlated with previous literature as Tikkakoski (2018), stated that local brands were not associated with luxurious characteristics whereas global brands were associated with prestige.

The third objective explores millennials perceptions of perceived quality of local versus global fashion brands. From the findings it was shown again that millennials do not view local fashion brands in the same bracket as global fashion brands when it came to perceived quality. The findings showed local fashion brands to be of a lower quality but this was not negative because millennials seem to compare local with other local brands and not local with global brands. This aligned with previous literature as Coetzee's (2018) stated that millennials perceived the quality of global fashion brands to be higher than that of local fashion brands.

The last objective explored millennials perceptions of brand loyalty of local versus global fashion brands. From the findings it was inferred that participants seem to be more brand loyal when the brand is a global brand that is well known by the public. This agreed with previous literature as Gallaher (2020), stated that fashion brands which have a larger audience, tend to promote a higher level of brand loyalty.

The overall finding of this research was that millennials seem to have higher perceptions of global fashion brands as opposed to local fashion brands in all aspects of Aaker's brand equity model. From this it is understood that there is greater brand equity for global fashion brands over local fashion brands. This aligned with previous literature as a study by Krupka *et al.* (2014), showed that in terms of fashion brands, global fashion brands had a greater perception to consumers than local fashion brands.

This research solved the research problem by conducting a qualitative study, on millennials perceptions, of local versus global brands. Previously there has been no research available using this approach. There was only a study using a quantitative approach available, which did not make use of millennials. This allowed for the research to use the qualitative approach and answer the 'why' questions rather than just providing the statistics on the topic. This has allowed for the gap to be filled in this area and provided information for others.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

This study specifically focused on millennials within Gauteng South Africa, who are aware of both local and global fashion brands. The study also only explored the perceptions of three participants. It is recommended that future studies incorporate different age groups to explore, as results may differ from what has been stated above. Since the sample size was not that large, it is recommended that more than ten participants should be explored in order to gain greater insight into the research problem. A mixed method approach could have been utilised to gain a comprehensive understanding of the research study.

5.3 ANTICIPATED CONTRIBUTION

The contribution that this study aimed to make is to contribute to a better understanding of what South African millennials perceptions are towards fashion brands that are local or global. This will give a better understanding into the millennials market in South Africa and help local and global brand companies understand this generation better so that they can maximise their revenue and future sales. This study gives understanding into what the perceptions of brand equity are towards local and global fashion brands.

5.4 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Since this study needed consumers perceptions, a group of willing, voluntary participants were needed in order to conduct the study. Participants were approached randomly in a public space at a respectable distance and asked if they were a millennial and also were asked if they were aware of both local and global fashion brands. The participants of this study were informed of what the study is exactly about and were asked if they were willing to participate in a semi structured interview with the researcher. The participants were informed that data would be collected from them and would be used in a research project. The study made use of participants who were best suited or aligned to the intentions of the research. The participants volunteered and were not forced in any way to take part in the study. The participants did not gain anything from the semi structured interviews so there was no bribery.

Permission was asked to record the semi structured interview, solely for the purpose of transcribing and referring to it when the analysis of the data was done. The participants were told that they did not have to give their names for the interviews as it is not mandatory but were asked to sign a consent form for ethical reasons. The participants of this study were told that the data and information that was gathered from them was strictly confidential and

will not be shared with unauthorised individuals. If the researcher decided to discuss the respondents with others, they would be asked their permission to do so.

Since the study was conducted in the year of 2020 and the world is in a global pandemic (COVID-19), the participants were asked if they were comfortable to do a semi structured interview face to face and if they were not comfortable, then the interview was done on a video platform of the researchers choice.

The findings from the semi structured interviews were stored safely away since they were confidential. It was important for the researcher to be ethical because of their reputation to society. The researcher should not falsify information, rig any results, be biased and mis-use information. By the researcher falsifying information it is unethical because it's intentionally changing results and data which may affect future research

The researcher ensures that the research ethics were practised throughout the whole semi structured interview process and that the findings were not skewed in any way or form. The researcher also ensured that there was no bias in any way when selecting the participants for this study. Ethical clearance was obtained from the IIE in order for the study to be done.

5.5 LIMITATIONS

The definition of a limitation in the context of research means the constraints that are in place within the study, are not in the researchers control. This includes the likes of time, money and access to information (Enslin, 2014).

Time is a limitation because the study has to be conducted and finished by the end of the year 2020. Since this research is making use of the non-probability convenience sampling, this means that the data collected cannot be generalised to represent the whole population. Another limitation of this study is that the research is limited to only Johannesburg, South Africa millennials.

This study did not generalise, due to the small sample size, but this was not the purpose of the research. A detailed description of the collection and analysis was done so that the research could be used but not generalised.

Another limitation of this study could be that one of the participants interviewed did not understand one of the interview questions and this could cause the results and findings to be skewed. The study was conducted in the year 2020, which is when the global pandemic of COVID-19 is currently taking place. This made it more difficult to contact people due to social distancing rules and many people not having internet access. Since this is a study that has not been similarly conducted by other South Africans before, it made it difficult to find other results and referrals to compare to.

LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: EXAMPLE OF CONSENT FORM

Consent form for participants

I, _____, agree to participate in the research conducted by Matthew Mason about exploring millennials perceptions of local versus global brands.

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.

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

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

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

Signature Date

APPENDIX 2: ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER



06 October 2020



Student name: Matthew Mason

Campus: Vega Bordeaux



Re: Approval of RESE 8419 Proposal and Ethics Clearance



HONOURS ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER

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

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

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

We wish you all the best with your research!

ADVTECH HOUSE

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



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APPENDIX 3: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

What brands do you recall when you think of fashion clothing?

What brands do you consider when you purchase fashion clothing? Can you explain why?

What are your perceptions local and global fashion brands? (Is there a difference for you? What differences? Why is there a difference? If you don't see them differently, why?)

Would you say that the country a brand originated in is a determining factor of your purchase?

Would you say that COVID-19 has altered your perception of local and global brands? How?

When you think of local fashion brands:

- (a) What words do you associate with them and why?
- (b) What feelings do you associate with them and why?
- (c) What perceptions do you have of their quality?

When you think of global fashion brands,

- (a) What words do you associate with them and why?
- (b) What feelings do you associate with them and why?
- (c) What perceptions do you have of their quality?

What does the term "brand loyalty" mean to you?

Can you describe and explain your brand loyalty to any fashion brands?

APPENDIX 4: FINAL RESEARCH REPORT SUMMARY DOCUMENT TABLE

Research Purpose	Research Question	Research Rationale	Seminal Authors/ Sources	Objectives	Paradigm	Approach	Data collection method	Ethics	Key findings	Recommendations
The purpose of this qualitative research study is to explore the perceptions South African millennials have on local versus global brands.	What are the perceptions of South African millennials in terms of local versus global fashion brands?	Conducting this study would allow for a better understanding of local and global brands and South African millennials perceptions towards them	Tikkakoski, Janika (2018) Bajaj, Smriti (2007) Aaker, D.A (2009) Coetzee, Z (2018)	-Explore millennials perceptions of brand awareness of local vs global fashion brands -Explore millennials perceptions of brand associations of local vs global fashion brands -Explore millennials perceptions of perceived quality of local vs global fashion brands	Interpretivism paradigm	Qualitative approach	Semi-structured interviews	Ethical clearance letter Privacy and anonymity in terms of disclosing the participants information Participants volunteered and were not forced	The overall finding of this research was that millennials seem to have higher perceptions of global fashion brands as opposed to local fashion brands in all aspects of Aaker's brand equity model. From this it is understood that there is greater brand equity for global fashion brands over local fashion brands.	It is recommended that future studies incorporate different age groups to explore as results may differ from what has been stated above. Since the sample size was not that large it is recommended that more than ten participants should be explored in order to gain greater insight into the research problem.
Research Problem	Literature review	Key Concepts	Key Theories		Population	Sampling	Data analysis method	Limitations	Key contributions	
There is no research available that shows millennials perceptions towards global and local fashion brand within South Africa.	Theme 1: Brands Theme 2: Local vs global brands Theme 3: Brand equity Theme 4: Perceptions Theme 5: Millennials	Brand equity Local vs global brands Brand Perceptions Millennials	Aaker's brand equity model	-Explore millennials perceptions of brand loyalty of local vs global fashion brands -Explore millennials perceptions of local vs global brands	Target population millennials within South Africa, specifically Gauteng, who are aware of both local and global fashion brands Accessible population Millennials based in Johannesburg, South Africa, who are aware of both local and global fashion brands.	Probability sampling or non-probability sampling Non-probability sampling Sampling method Purposive sampling Size 3 participants	Unit of analysis South African millennials aged between 24 to 39 years old, who are aware of both local and global fashion brands Data analysis method Thematic approach	Lack of time Lack of financial resources Small sample sized used Limited to Johannesburg	To contribute to a greater understanding of the perceptions millennials have on local and global fashion brands. Help companies understand this generation better so that they can maximise their revenue and future sales.	A mixed method approach could have been utilised to gain a comprehensive understanding of the research study.