



# **An exploration of the influence of Femvertising on Castle Lite's Brand Image amongst South African Female Consumers.**

By

Karabo Ntshweng



Supervisor: Tatiana Ndlovu

**Word Count [11 980]**

Submitted in partial fulfilment of BA Honours in Strategic Brand Communication at  
Vega School, a brand of the Independent Institute of Education (IIE) on 28 August  
2020

## **DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that the Research Report submitted for the BA Honours in Strategic Brand Communication 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

To challenge outdated gender stereotypes, contribute to female empowerment and build deeper emotional connections with female consumers, brands have made use of femvertising (Becker-Herby, 2016). One such brand is South African premium beer brand *Castle Lite*, which has been committed to the empowerment of women over the last couple of years (Smith, 2019).

The purpose of this study was to explore the influence of femvertising on *Castle Lite*'s brand image amongst South African female consumers. Guided by the Affect Transfer Hypothesis theory, the study investigated consumer attitudes towards femvertising and how those attitudes ultimately influence brand.

The study is qualitative in nature, and a focus group was the data collection method used, which allowed participants to give deep insight into their thoughts, feelings and attitudes towards femvertising, and how ultimately these attitudes influence *Castle Lite*'s brand image. The sample was made up of five Johannesburg based women aged between 24-35 who are regular *Castle Lite* drinkers.

The results of this paper indicate that South African women have positive attitudes towards femvertising, and this form of brand activism can positively enhance the image of a brand if executed authentically and is aligned with the core values of the brand.

**Keywords:** *Brand activism, Brand image, Female Empowerment, Gender Representation Femvertising, Attitudes toward advertisements (Aad), Attitudes toward brands (Ab)*

# Contents

|                                                                             |           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>DECLARATION .....</b>                                                    | <b>i</b>  |
| <b>ABSTRACT .....</b>                                                       | <b>ii</b> |
| <b>LIST OF FIGURES.....</b>                                                 | <b>v</b>  |
| <b>CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....</b>                                         | <b>1</b>  |
| 1.1 Background and Contextualisation.....                                   | 1         |
| 1.2 Rationale .....                                                         | 3         |
| 1.3 Problem Statement .....                                                 | 4         |
| 1.3.1 <i>Why is the problem worth investigating?</i> .....                  | 4         |
| 1.3.1 <i>Research Questions</i> .....                                       | 5         |
| 1.3.2 <i>Research Objectives</i> .....                                      | 5         |
| 1.4 Purpose Statement .....                                                 | 5         |
| 1.5 Conceptualisation .....                                                 | 6         |
| 1.6 Overview of Research Methodology .....                                  | 8         |
| 1.7 Structure of Paper.....                                                 | 8         |
| <b>CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW .....</b>                                   | <b>10</b> |
| 2.1 Brand Activism.....                                                     | 10        |
| 2.2 Gender Representations in Advertising.....                              | 11        |
| 2.3 Female Empowerment in Advertising.....                                  | 12        |
| 2.4 Femvertising .....                                                      | 13        |
| 2.5 Brand Image .....                                                       | 14        |
| 2.6 Attitude Toward Advertisement (Aad) and Attitude Toward Brand (Ab)..... | 15        |
| <b>CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....</b>                                 | <b>17</b> |
| 3.1 Research Paradigm .....                                                 | 17        |
| 3.2 Research Design and Approach .....                                      | 19        |
| 3.3 Population and Sample.....                                              | 20        |
| 3.4 Data Collection .....                                                   | 21        |
| 3.5 Data Analysis.....                                                      | 23        |

|                             |                                                                  |           |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| 3.6                         | Limitations and Delimitations .....                              | 24        |
| <b>CHAPTER 4:</b>           | <b>FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION .....</b>                             | <b>26</b> |
| 4.1                         | Findings .....                                                   | 26        |
| 4.1.1                       | <i>Attitudes towards Femvertising .....</i>                      | <i>26</i> |
| 4.1.2                       | <i>Attitudes towards Castle Lite .....</i>                       | <i>27</i> |
| 4.1.3                       | <i>Castle Lite's Use of Femvertising .....</i>                   | <i>28</i> |
| 4.1.4                       | <i>Representation, Stereotypes and Gender Equality .....</i>     | <i>30</i> |
| 4.1.5                       | <i>Femvertising influence on Castle Lite Brand Image .....</i>   | <i>31</i> |
| 4.2                         | Trustworthiness .....                                            | 32        |
| 4.2.1                       | <i>Credibility .....</i>                                         | <i>32</i> |
| 4.2.2                       | <i>Transferability .....</i>                                     | <i>32</i> |
| 4.2.3                       | <i>Dependability .....</i>                                       | <i>32</i> |
| 4.2.4                       | <i>Confirmability .....</i>                                      | <i>33</i> |
| <b>CHAPTER 5:</b>           | <b>CONCLUSION .....</b>                                          | <b>34</b> |
| 5.1                         | Concluding answers to research questions .....                   | 34        |
| 5.1.1                       | <i>Attitudes towards femvertising .....</i>                      | <i>34</i> |
| 5.1.2                       | <i>Attitudes towards Castle Lite's Use of Femvertising .....</i> | <i>35</i> |
| 5.1.3                       | <i>The Influence of Femvertising on Brand Image .....</i>        | <i>35</i> |
| 5.2                         | Implications of findings for future practices .....              | 37        |
| 5.3                         | Conclusions .....                                                | 37        |
| 5.4                         | Ethical Considerations .....                                     | 38        |
| <b>REFERENCE LIST</b> ..... |                                                                  | <b>40</b> |
| <b>ANNEXURE</b> .....       |                                                                  | <b>44</b> |
| Annexure 1.                 | Concept Doc Table .....                                          | 44        |
| Annexure 2.                 | Interview Schedule .....                                         | 45        |
| Annexure 3.                 | Consent Form Example .....                                       | 46        |

## **LIST OF FIGURES**

|                                                                  |    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Figure 1: Conceptual Framework: Affect Transfer Hypothesis ..... | 16 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|----|

# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This research paper is a qualitative exploratory study into the concept of brand activism in the form of femvertising, and its influence on *Castle Lite*'s brand image amongst South African female consumers. According to Swerdborg (2018), the purpose of exploratory research is to gain a better understanding of something. The aim was not to validate or draw conclusions but rather to gain further understanding on the influence of femvertising on *Castle Lite*'s brand image amongst female consumers in South Africa which can assist brands with consumer insights that can inform strategy when creating campaigns that are targeted at South African women.

The study explored the attitudes South African female consumers have towards the use of femvertising by *Castle Lite* and whether this form of brand activism can build positive attitudes towards the brand.

The study made use of past and present research on femvertising to expand the reader's knowledge on femvertising and its relationship with brand image. An association was drawn on how the use of femvertising by *Castle Lite* influences its brand image amongst South African female consumers.

## 1.1 Background and Contextualisation

Brand activism is an increasingly popular practice in which "brands voluntarily take a stance on what they believe is good for society" (Philip & Kotler, 2017:448). In recent years, there has been an influx of brand campaigns that feature female empowerment messaging ("Femvertising") where brands take an activist approach to appeal to women in more meaningful ways, to address issues of gender equality and challenge outdated gender stereotypes (Drake, 2017).

Studies have found that femvertising can contribute to brand image and have been applauded for positive representations of women, particularly in the beauty category (Drake, 2017). However, this study aimed to analyse the influence of femvertising within the South African context, particularly in the alcohol industry, which Enslie (2019) states has a long history of objectifying and misrepresenting women in its advertising.

In their study on gendered alcohol marketing, Atkinson, Sumnall, Begley and Jones (2019) state that alcohol brands have come a long way since their days of stereotyping women in their advertising, with a shift towards aligning their brands with messages of sophistication, fun, friendship, empowerment and positive representations of women.

According to Ab inBev (2019) *Castle Lite* is one of South Africa's most progressive mixed gender beer brands. Targeted at consumers between the ages 24-35, the brand is committed to challenging the perception that beer is not for women. As a result, the brand has been introducing innovations and messaging in their advertising that break this barrier. In an interview with the brand director of *Castle Lite* in the South African media and marketing publication, Bizcommunity, it was revealed that as the biggest premium beer brand on the African continent, *Castle Lite* has a responsibility to show an inclusive and positive world, with communication that portrays both women and men equally (Smith, 2019)

In 2018, radio personality, Dineo Ranaka, sparked a conversation on social media addressing the society's stereotype that beer is only for men, using the hashtag #HoldMyBeer. Women across the country soon joined in on the conversation and shared opinions regarding society's views on women who drink beer and the misrepresentation of women in beer commercials (Lotze, 2019).

Following the #HoldMyBeer movement, on International Women's Day that year, *Castle Lite* published a video on social media, which was an apology to women for perpetuating gender stereotypes in their advertising, objectifying women and not acknowledging that women can drink what they wish to and be anything that they choose to be (Lotze, 2019).

According to *Castle Lite*, by issuing this apology, they took a strong stance to change how the brand portrays women and made a firm promise to their 1 million female *Castle Lite* drinkers to represent them accurately and respectfully in all their brand communications in future (Smith, 2019).

Since the #HoldMyBeer campaign, *Castle Lite* has held true to its promise to empower women. Under their hip-hop passion point, they went on to launch #HerStory, an all-female hip hop experience, which shed light on the untold stories of women in the hip-hop genre and provided a platform to recognise and celebrate female hip hop artists, in an industry that is still heavily male dominated (Smith, 2019).

To take their commitment to empowering women even further, *Castle Lite* announced international female rapper, Cardi B, as the headliner for their 2020 instalment of *Castle Lite Unlocks*, an event they have been running for the last 10 years (Castle Lite, 2020).

In their efforts to support a cause, brands may take their activism too far and may not be able to authentically connect with their consumers, as result, these acts of activism may be rejected and perceived as a gimmick (Kotler & Sakar, 2017). Therefore, it is important to measure the effectiveness of brand activism and how it influences brand image amongst consumers (Maneet & Sudhir, 2011).

This research study applied the Affect Transfer Hypothesis theory to examine the influence of femvertising, on *Castle Lite's* brand image amongst female consumers. Affect transfer hypothesis (ATH) refers to how the consumer's attitude towards advertising directly influences their attitude towards the brand (Ramesh, Saha, Goswami, Sekar, & Dihiya, 2018).

## **1.2 Rationale**

Brand image refers to how a brand is perceived in the minds of consumers. It is the set of beliefs, ideas and attitudes that the consumer has towards the brand. Kotler and Gertner (2002) state that brand image is a requirement for building a strong brand. Ahmed (2016) suggests that organisations use brand image to build a competitive advantage in the market that will enhance their overall image and build the brand. According to Drake (2017), brands make use of femvertising to build stronger emotional connections with women, and in turn, enhance brand image. While femvertising has been applauded for the positive portrayals of women and in driving social change, there is limited research validating the results of femvertising and its impact on brand image. The study aimed to understand the attitudes South African female consumers have towards *Castle Lite's* use of femvertising and whether it influences the brand's image positively or negatively.

As stated by Kotler and Sakar (2017), brands need to be careful how they use brand activism to connect with consumers. The purpose of the study was to gather information for *Castle Lite* and other brand strategists with findings and insights that

can inform their strategies when trying to authentically engage with South African female consumers and build strong emotional connections with them.

### **1.3 Problem Statement**

Through their ongoing use of femvertising, *Castle Lite* takes an activist stance. Since 2018, the brand has made use of female empowerment advertising to address the lack of female representation in their advertising in the past and to also address society's outdated stereotypes that beer should not be consumed by women. According to Maneer and Sudir (2014), brands that are socially responsible may reap the rewards of an improved brand image.

While femvertising has been applauded for the positive portrayals of women and driving social change (Drake, 2017), sometimes brand activism can be perceived as a gimmick to consumers (Kotler & Sakar, 2017).

This study investigated the attitudes female consumers have towards *Castle Lite*'s use of femvertising and how ultimately the brand's image is influenced.

#### ***1.3.1 Why is the problem worth investigating?***

Women are leaders in governments, businesses and are increasingly important consumers worldwide (Apelgren-Coleman, 2020). According to Kamore (2019), in a study conducted by Nielsen in 2018, it was revealed that there are 18 million female consumers in South Africa and 60% of them are the primary purchasers within South African households.

South African women are also faced with many challenges; according to Marais (2019), South Africa is ranked 4<sup>th</sup> when it comes to gender-based violence against women and has the sixth largest pay gap between men and women in Africa. As stated by Drake (2017), brands have made use of femvertising to address the following issues and connect with women on a more emotional level.

Apelgren-Coleman (2020) claims that brands still develop products and campaigns without really getting to the core of what women want and what truly resonates with them. The study investigated whether South African women resonate with femvertising campaigns and what their attitudes are towards brands that take an activist stance on issues that affect South African women. This study is important because if brands want

to engage and connect with women authentically, and address issues that affect them, they will need to truly understand how to tailor their messaging to make an impact.

### **1.3.1 Research Questions**

To investigate how femvertising in *Castle Lite*'s social media advertising affects female consumers' attitudes towards the brand. The following research questions have been formulated.

- I. What are female consumer attitudes towards Femvertising?
- II. What are female consumer attitudes towards *Castle Lite*'s use of Femvertising?
- III. What is the influence of Femvertising towards *Castle Lite*'s brand image?

### **1.3.2 Research Objectives**

Based on the abovementioned research questions, the following research objectives have been set:

- I. To determine female consumer attitudes towards the concept of femvertising
- II. To determine female consumer attitudes towards *Castle Lite*'s use of femvertising
- III. To determine the influence of Femvertising towards *Castle Lite*'s brand image

## **1.4 Purpose Statement**

This research study made use of the Affect Transfer Hypothesis theory to examine the influence of femvertising on *Castle Lite*'s brand image amongst female consumers. Based on the seminal work of Mitchell and Olson (2000), the Affect Transfer Hypothesis Theory states that the attitudes that a consumer has towards a piece of advertising they see, has a direct impact on the attitude they have towards the brand that is being advertised.

By gaining knowledge of the attitudes of the consumers using the following model, the study aimed to gain in-depth understanding on the role of femvertising on brand image and brands of all types, and is not limited to alcohol brands with information that will

inform their strategies when they make use of femvertising. These insights can assist brands to be authentic in their use of femvertising when targeting female consumers.

## 1.5 Conceptualisation

| Concept               | Definition                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Context                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Brand Activism        | A phenomenon in which brands become activists and attempt to create social change. By taking this activist approach, brands show concern for the communities they serve and try solving global problems which their customers care about (Kotler & Sakar, 2017)                                                                                                                                      | For the context of this paper, femvertising is presented as a form of brand activism.<br><br>By making use of femvertising, brands take an activist approach to solve problems that are related to women, such as gender equality and the empowerment of women. |
| Gender Representation | Gender representations in advertisements provide powerful behavioural models to emulate or react against. According to O'Barr (2006) generally, masculine images express control, energy, manhood, bravery, and competition, while feminine images represent elegance, submissiveness, nurturance, and co-operation. These stereotypes frequently appear in popular culture (including advertising). | Drake (2017) states that femvertising is used to reject traditional gender stereotypes in advertising and aims to change the way women have been represented by advertising and the media in the past.                                                          |
| Female Empowerment    | The action of increasing the status of women within society. Cornwall (2018) states this is the                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Advertising that has employed empowerment themes and rejected traditional ways of                                                                                                                                                                               |

|                             |                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                             | process of women taking control and ownership of their lives through expansion of their choices                                                                             | stereotyping women, make use of femvertising. The aim of the study is to investigate whether South African women feel empowered by femvertising advertisements.                                                                                 |
| Femvertising                | Femvertising is defined as advertising that makes use of pro-female messaging and visuals that are empowering to women and girls (Becker - Herby, 2016)                     | Brands make use of femvertising to take an active stand in society and build emotional connections with their female consumers (Drake, 2017). The study investigates consumer attitudes towards femvertising and how it influences brand image. |
| Attitude towards ad (ad)    | The attitude thoughts and feelings consumers have towards a piece of advertising (Kirmani & Campbell, 2009).                                                                | The study gains in-depth understanding of consumer attitudes towards femvertising and <i>Castle Lite's</i> use of femvertising                                                                                                                  |
| Attitude towards brand (ab) | Attitudes consumers have towards a brand after they have been exposed to their advertising (Kirmani & Campbell, 2009).                                                      | This study explores the attitude consumers have towards <i>Castle Lite</i> and their use of femvertising to target female consumers.                                                                                                            |
| Brand Image                 | The unique set of associations that consumers link to a brand (Keller, 1993). It is subjective, formed by what the consumer thinks and develops over time (Kapferer, 2012). | The study aims to understand the influence of femvertising on brand image and whether this form of brand activism enhances <i>Castle Lite's</i> brand image in the minds of the consumer.                                                       |

## **1.6 Overview of Research Methodology**

This research is an exploratory cross-sectional study which used a qualitative approach to collect data. Five Johannesburg based, female, *Castle Lite* beer drinkers between the ages of 24 – 35 were interviewed in the form of a focus group, which was held online. Data was analysed using a deductive qualitative content analysis approach. A detailed discussion on methodology can be found in chapter 3.

## **1.7 Structure of Paper**

### **Chapter 1: Introduction**

This chapter provides context and background of the study and a motivation why this was important research to conduct in the field of brand communications. Detailed problem and purpose statement are provided, followed by research questions and objectives of the overall study.

### **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

Key concepts are defined to provide the reader with an understanding of how these terms are relevant to the study. This chapter consists of a comprehensive summary and analysis of existing literature on the topic and provides a theoretical foundation to assist in answering the research question.

### **Chapter 3: Methodology**

Research methodology provides a thorough overview of the research design and tools used to answer the research question. The chapter addresses the world view that guides the study, qualitative data collecting methods that were used are discussed in detail, as well as population and sampling methods used. A clear description of the data collection process is discussed, as well as data analysis techniques that were used to make sense of the data. Finally, limitations and delimitations of the study and how they were addressed, is discussed.

## **Chapter 4: Data Findings**

Findings are discussed based on the data that was collected and analysed and presented in a narrative format. The findings are linked to previous literature and key insights and interpretations are provided. The trustworthiness of the findings is also evaluated in this section.

## **Chapter 5: Data Analysis and Recommendations**

The final chapter provides detailed interpretation, discussion and key findings of the study based on the research question and the objective of the study. An evaluation of whether the research question was answered, and the research goal achieved is discussed, as well as future implications of the study and ethics are considered.

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The following section provides a critical review of the existing literature on the concepts of brand activism, gender representation, female empowerment, femvertising, attitudes towards advertising (Aab) and attitudes towards brand (Ab) and finally, brand image.

### 2.1 Brand Activism

The field of brand communications has seen a trend in which brands take an activist approach and express their views on a cause or problem that affects society (Shetty, Venkataramaiah & Anand, 2017). Referred to as brand activism, this phenomenon of brands promoting social change can be defined as a value driven strategy that brands utilise to incorporate their thoughtfulness and awareness of current and future societal attributes (Kotler & Sakar, 2017).

Maneet and Sudhir (2011) assert that brands do not only adopt activism strategies because it is the right thing to do, but for the purpose of strengthening their brands. Traditionally, brands have been marketable based on their performance, characteristics, where positioning was of the essence. However, Kotler and Sakar (2017) argue that positioning is no longer enough.

Today, consumers have higher expectations and value brands that are more about society than profits (Carroll, 2008). As a result, brands use their advertisements to express their political standpoint to connect with their potential consumers on an emotional level (Kotler & Sakar, 2017). Consequently, taking a stand on societal issues is one of the best ways brands can reach and build emotional connections with consumers (Peloza & Shang, 2011). These investments in activism, can lead to promotion of the brand image (Du, Bhattacharya & Sen, 2007).

Although brand activism may positively affect consumer attitudes (Shetty *et al.*, 2017) there is an opposite effect to brand activism where consumers may perceive the activism as a gimmick (Kam, & Deichert, 2017). This may result in consumers boycotting the brand (Philip & Kotler, 2017). Similarly, Shetty *et al.* (2017) found that failed acts of activism may affect the reputation of the brand and consumer attitudes towards the brand.

Kotler and Sakar (2017) suggest that brand activism can be expressed in the following multiple forms; business, political, environmental, legal, economic and social activism. The latter refers to societal and community issues such as race, LGBTQ, gender equality and female empowerment (Abdallah, Jacobson & Lund, 2018).

In recent years, gender equality and female empowerment have become a prevalent theme in advertising where brands have taken a firm stance on challenging stereotypical gender roles and ensuring their messaging is pro-women (Becker-Herby, 2016). Based on this premise, Drake (2017) argues that by addressing gender equality and challenging stereotypes in their advertising, brands show a clear involvement in social activism, which is a subset of brand activism (Shetty *et al.*, 2017). As stated by Becker-Herby (2016), femvertising is regarded as a form of brand activism.

To gain an understanding of how brands have taken an activist approach through the empowerment of women, it is crucial to unpack gender representation in advertising and the shift towards positive portrayals of women.

## **2.2 Gender Representations in Advertising**

Brands are held to account for the roles that they play in women's reflection, representation and advocacy (Kantar, 2018). As a result, the past five decades has seen a considerable amount of published literature on gender stereotypes, particularly in the way that women are portrayed in advertising (Grau & Zotos, 2016).

Stereotypes are sets of concepts that pertain to a social category whereas gender stereotypes refer to the belief that certain attributes differentiate men and women (Eisend, 2010). In advertising, gender stereotypes have been prevalent as they provide a way to simplify information for people and offer ways to make sense of the world (Johnson & Grier, 2012).

Generalisations based on gender have been used by brands to promote products since the 1960s and are still prevalent in advertising today (Eisend, 2010). Historically, brands would portray women only as; housewives, stupid or incompetent, passive, unable to make major decisions and sexual objects of the male gaze (Eisend, 2010). However, the advertising industry has begun to change its portrayal of women as objects and has moved towards portraying women as active, independent, and sexually powerful (Gill 2008).

This significant shift can be attributed to women's increasing financial independence and changes in the family structure (Zimmerman & Dahlberg, 2008). Furthermore, Gill (2008) states that women's anger towards being objectified and showered with unrealistic, idealised images of femininity has pushed brands to change the way they engage with their female consumers and their representation of women.

Zimmerman and Dahlberg (2008) emphasise that negative role portrayals can have a negative effect on the way consumers perceive the brand. A study conducted by J. Walter Thompson (2018) revealed that women skipped advertisements or switched off their televisions if they felt that they were negatively stereotyped. In the same study, 85% of women felt that brands needed to catch up with the real world when portraying women in their advertising (J. Walter Thompson, 2018).

Grau and Zotos (2016) state that by challenging traditional gender stereotypes, brands take an active stand in creating equal opportunities for all genders. This shift towards rejecting traditional gender stereotypes has seen a rise in brands creating campaigns that empower women (Johnson & Grier, 2012). In a study on femvertising, Drake (2017) found that female empowerment in advertising can contribute to brand image.

## **2.3 Female Empowerment in Advertising**

Female empowerment refers to the process of women taking control and ownership of their lives through the expansion of their choices (Cornwall 2018). According to the United Nations (2020), the empowerment of women and girls is essential to economic growth and the promotion of social development. As a result, female empowerment has become a prevalent theme in brand communications, with the messages being positively received by women (Drake, 2017).

According to Wojcicki (2016), women are more than twice as likely to think of a brand that made an empowering advertisement or buy a product because they were positively represented and empowered in the advertisement. Drake (2017) suggests that modern women have greater economic and political power than previous decades, so brands have tailored their messaging to resonate with these changing demographics and represent women in a confident, liberated, independent and empowered way.

Advertisements which employ empowerment themes have been applauded for challenging stereotypical gender roles and raising awareness about issues facing women and girls. This has led to the rise of femvertising (Drake, 2017).

## **2.4 Femvertising**

Coined in 2014, the term 'femvertising' is used to describe advertising campaigns that challenge traditional gender stereotypes widely used in advertisements (Abdallah *et al.*, 2018). Defined as advertising that "employs pro-female talent, messages, and images that empower women and girls" (Hunt (2017:25), femvertising is a brand activism tactic used by brands to celebrate women rather than to objectify them (Abdallah *et al.*, 2018). By making use of femvertising, brands take an activist approach in order to build emotional connections with their female consumers (Drake, 2017).

Gender equality in the form of female empowerment has existed in advertising in various forms for decades, however, what is regarded as pioneering about femvertising is the self-awareness and the questioning of female stereotypes (Abdallah *et al.*, 2018). There are key principles that are commonly found in the majority of femvertising campaigns, which include the following: the use of female talent that is diverse, pro-female messaging, challenging outdated stereotypes and portraying women in an authentic manner (Becker-Herby, 2016)

Drake (2017) found that women who were exposed to advertisements that employed femvertising indicated significantly higher positive attitudes towards the brand. Additionally, Erasmus and Mwase (2018) noted that female consumers in the South African context resonated with femvertising campaigns and believe that femvertising can contribute to gender equality and their empowerment, if done correctly and authentically.

As stated by Shetty *et al.* (2017), if activism related advertising is done properly and resonates with the personal values of the consumer, it may impact the brand positively with the consumers showing support by buying the product or service.

Abdallah *et al.* (2018) argue that even though it has been proven that femvertising can be a valuable tool for brands and can contribute to the empowerment of women and creating social change, authenticity is key. Drake (2017) further states that if

femvertising is done properly and authentically, it can improve brand appeal amongst women.

The use of femvertising has proven to be successful in industries like the beauty category, such as Dove's groundbreaking #RealBeauty campaign, with the company reporting multi-billion profits since the inception of female empowerment initiatives in their messaging (Drake, 2017). The use of femvertising by beauty brands has contributed positively to the way consumers perceive the brand, as a result, enhancing the image of the brand (Abdallah *et al.*, 2018).

Enslie (2019) asserts that alcohol companies have begun to follow suit and have used days such as #InternationalWomensDay to take an active stand in pushing the agenda for women empowerment and using femvertising to build strong emotional connections with their female consumers.

## **2.5 Brand Image**

Throughout the history of brand communications, brand image has been recognised as an important concept (Kapferer, 2012). Defined as "the set of associations linked to the brand that consumers hold" (Keller, 1993:2), brand image is connected to the receiving side of the consumer. It is subjective and formed by the consumer's interpretation (Abdallah *et al.*, 2018). These mental associations related to the brand, are created in the minds of the consumer through exposure to brand marketing communications, social influence and consumption experiences (Abdallah *et al.*, 2018). In addition, Kapferer (2012) suggests that brand image is not concerned with the functional benefits of a product but is shaped by the marketing activities of a brand. Ramesh *et al.* (2018) suggest that brand image is formed in the consumer's mind based on the knowledge, trust and perceptions they have towards the brand.

In today's competitive marketplace, brands use strategic differentiators to attract consumers and build emotional connections with them (Abdallah *et al.*, 2018). By building a distinctive brand image, brands can become more proficient in building positive feelings towards the brand amongst consumers. Naseri, Moadeli, Severi and Ling (2013) state that strong brand image can create superior brand messages over a rival brand.

According to Kapferer (2012), brands need to build a strong brand image which is in line with what consumers expect of the brand. Abdallah *et al.* (2018) suggest that consumers have higher expectations of brands and show more loyalty to brands that provide them with more than just the products/ or services they sell. Brands make use of brand activism in order to enhance their brand image amongst consumers and differentiate themselves amongst competitors (Kapferer, 2012).

In her study on femvertising, Drake (2017) concluded that female empowerment advertising has a direct influence on consumer perceptions towards the brand, therefore, to evaluate how the use of femvertising affects brand image in the mind of consumers, their attitudes towards femvertising should be analysed.

## **2.6 Attitude Toward Advertisement (Aad) and Attitude Toward Brand (Ab)**

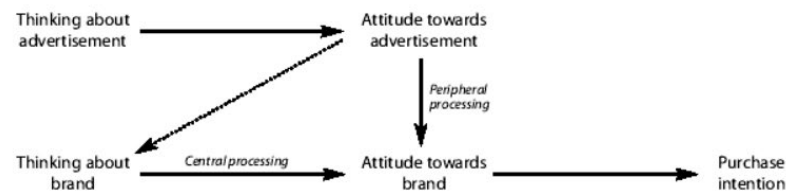
As stated by Kirmani and Campbell (2009), the concept of “attitude toward ad” refers to consumer’s thoughts and feelings towards the advertisement. On the other hand, “attitude toward brand” refers to the consumer’s reaction and liking towards the brand after they have been exposed to the advertisement by the brand (Ramesh, Saha, Goswami, Sekar, Dihiya, 2018). The affect transfer hypothesis theory explains the way consumer’s perceptions of an advertisement might influence their attitude towards the advertisements (Aad), as a result, influence attitudes towards the brand (Aab).

Faircloth, Capella and Alford (2001) suggest that attitudes towards the brand have a direct influence on the brand image. In a study on consumer perceptions towards femvertising, Abdallah *et al.* (2018) found that if the femvertising message is executed correctly and authentically the attitudes and perceptions towards the brand will be positively enhanced, and, as a result, may have a positive effect on the image of the brand.

Three other models that were considered to measure attitude towards femvertising and its influence on brand image were the dual mediation hypothesis, the reciprocal mediation hypothesis and the mediation hypothesis which all account for the perceptions consumers have towards advertisements. However, they do not discuss how these responses affect the way the consumers perceive the brand after they have been exposed to that advertisement (Stewart, Kammer-Kerwick, Koh, & Cunningham, 2018). Lewinski *et al.* (2014) propose that to measure the effectiveness of

femvertising, brands need to review and measure consumer responses and perceptions towards these advertisements.

As a result, the affect transfer hypothesis is the most appropriate framework to evaluate consumer attitudes towards femvertising and how *Castle Lite*'s brand image may be affected by this form of brand activism in the minds of consumers. The consumer sees the advertisement, they have a certain attitude towards the advertisement, that particular attitude then directly has an influence on the way they perceive the brand which can then influence them making a purchase of that particular product or in the context of this study, will influence the image the brand in the mind of the consumer.



**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework: Affect Transfer Hypothesis**

## CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To understand the influence of the femvertising phenomenon on *Castle Lite*'s brand image, this explorative study adopted a qualitative approach. Kothari (2004) states that qualitative research is concerned with understanding the "human side of an issue" it provides information on behaviours, emotions, attitudes, beliefs and how individuals experience a certain phenomenon. The purpose of this study was to gain rich and in-depth knowledge of female consumer's attitudes towards femvertising. As stated by Strydom and Bezuidenhout (2014), the use of qualitative research design methods enable the researcher to probe the participant's responses further and provides the opportunity for them to fully express themselves in their own words and to elaborate on their answers, which quantitative research does not allow.

The following section outlines the world view that guided the study and what methods the researcher adopted to answer the research questions.

### 3.1 Research Paradigm

Research paradigms or world views are sets of beliefs or thought patterns that are shared between scientists about how a research problem should be addressed and understood (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014).

Positivism, Interpretivism and Critical Realism are the three dominate world views that a researcher can adopt to guide the process of their study. Positivism makes use of controlled experiments to find cause-effect relationships, Interpretivism aims to gain in-depth understanding of human behaviour and Critical Realism recognises the differences in natural and social sciences and believes that science needs to be evidence based and rational (Jackson 1997).

To guide the study on the influence of femvertising on the brand image of *Castle Lite*, an interpretivist approach was adopted. According to Mcimicata (2011), Interpretivists believe that human beings cannot be studied the same way as objects are studied, like positivists do. They are constantly evolving and are influenced by the ever-changing environment in which they exist (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014). The study aimed to understand consumer attitudes which needed subjective opinions and interpretations from participants.

Phenomenologists assess the way individuals make sense of the world around them and aim to gain understanding and interpret human actions from the point of view of the person being studied. Unlike positivists, who want to understand causal relationships, phenomenologists want to understand human behaviour (McMicata, 2011). This study investigated what consumers feel and think when they see femvertising messaging, how it affects them and how they interpret the brand activism tactics used by *Castle Lite* to construct brand image. The researcher spent time with participants while interviewing, engaging and observing what is meaningful to them.

The epistemological approach towards interpretivism requires the researcher to fully grasp people's views and common sense; this is an important source of knowledge for the researcher. This view believes that people's interpretation is not objective but based on social context (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014). Therefore, participants' realities cannot be generalised. Femvertising has been studied in other countries, but this study examined the interpretations and realities of female consumers in South Africa. Jackson (1997) states that views, opinions and interpretations of consumers differ across the world due to many factors such as cultural background, therefore social phenomena should be studied in context.

The ontological position of interpretivism believes that reality is fluid and is based on human interaction (Jackson, 1997). Depending on culture, experiences and circumstances of people, interpretation of femvertising amongst the consumers may not be the same. The meta-theory approach to interpretivism requires an in-depth understanding of people's realities, therefore information was collected, analysed and then findings were analysed, based on the information received (McMicata, 2011). This approach allowed for a story to be told, providing findings that are rich and detailed.

Understanding how consumers view femvertising was the objective of the study, therefore in-depth conversations, from a subjective view, allowed for a deeper understanding of the phenomenon. Du Plooy-Cilliers (2014) suggests that interpretivists value the uniqueness of different realities, which is important for this study as individual opinions and attitudes are being studied. As a result, the phenomenological interpretivist approach was the best suited world view to guide this study.

### **3.2 Research Design and Approach**

The purpose of the study was to understand the attitudes individuals have towards the femvertising phenomenon; therefore, it is a qualitative phenomenological study in nature. According to Kothari (2004), the focus of a phenomenological study is to uncover what people experience and how they interpret those experiences. As stated by Mcmicata (2011), phenomenological research design is regarded as an appropriate approach for the researcher to take if the aim of the study is to understand people's perspectives, perceptions and interpretations of a social phenomenon.

According to Du Plooy-Cilliers (2014), interpretivists depend on qualitative research to gather information. Qualitative research seeks to explore a phenomenon by making use of semi-structured research tools that are textual and open-ended to describe individual experiences (Kothari, 2004). These experiences are subjective and allow the researcher to probe for in-depth explanations, interpretations and meanings of action from the participant. To understand the attitudes and perceptions female consumers have towards femvertising, rich data about consumers' feelings, and perceptions were gathered, therefore a qualitative research design was best suited for the study.

Mack and Woodsong (2005) state that qualitative research aims to understand a research problem from the viewpoints of the local population it involves. Therefore, by making use of a qualitative research approach, the researcher gained specific cultural information on the views, behaviours and attitudes from a South African female consumer perspective.

Qualitative methods can obtain complex textual descriptions of how people are experiencing a given research problem (Kothari, 2004). The opinions, behaviours, attitudes and perceptions of the participants were crucial to understanding the influence of femvertising on brand image.

The research design allowed for the participants to answer in their own words without being forced to choose a fixed response. Qualitative studies are unanticipated by the researcher and allow for flexibility on the part of the researcher (Strydom & Bezuidenhout, 2014).

The study investigated *Castle Lite*'s 2018 femvertising social media campaign where they wrote a letter to their female consumers. This was the beginning of the brand's use of femvertising messaging in their advertising, hence this time period was identified.

### **3.3 Population and Sample**

Bezuidenhout (2014) states that the unit of analysis in research refers to the major entity that is being analysed in the study. The unit of analysis in this study was individuals who are South African female consumers. They are the focus of this study and their attitudes and opinions were used to answer the research question.

The total group of people that information is required from for a research study is referred to as the population (Pascoe, 2014). Everyone that falls into the population parameters and has the equal chance to be included forms part of the target population (Pascoe, 2014). In this study, the target population was South African female consumers aged between 24 - 35 who are *Castle Lite* drinkers. According to Smith (2019), *Castle Lite* has 1 million female consumers in SA, therefore for the purpose of this study, the population had to be narrowed down to a size that was accessible to the researcher.

Pascoe (2014) states that accessible population refers to the section of the population that can be included in the study, it is more refined than the target population. For the purpose of this study, the population was narrowed down according to the following parameters.

The participants were Johannesburg based, where the research took place. They needed to have been exposed to advertising from *Castle Lite* in the past two years on at least one social media platform, because the brand primarily uses social media to communicate its campaigns. The female consumers were *Castle Lite* beer drinkers, between the ages of 24-35, which is the primary target market age for the brand.

Due to the small scale of the study, a non-probability sampling method was used, namely purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is used when participants need to possess certain characteristics required by the researcher to fulfil the research objectives (Bezuidenhout & Crone, 2014). This sample had to have specific characteristics in order to be selected, such as being *Castle Lite* drinkers.

The researcher gained access to participants through a social media platform – Twitter, calling for participants who fell within the population parameters of the study to volunteer to take part in the research study. This also allowed the researcher to pre-screen participants and ensure that they fit all the characteristics stipulated in the sample frame. The selected participants were contacted via email to arrange dates and times for the focus group and they were given consent forms to participate in the study and give permission for audios of them to be recorded and transcribed.

This research is a cross-sectional study that had time and budget constraints; therefore, the proposed sampling method was the most suitable to achieve the research objectives.

### **3.4 Data Collection**

Primary data for the study was collected through a focus group. Du Plooy-Cilliers (2014) suggests that focus groups allow for a discussion of opinions and feelings in a natural way. The aim of the study was to gain in-depth understanding of attitudes, therefore, by making use of a focus group, the researcher obtained evidence from different viewpoints. Group dynamics in a focus group allow for open discussions and responses that can be elaborated on with rich explanations of lived experiences and meanings from the individual participants (Kothari, 2004).

Due to the corona virus pandemic and the national lockdown that was taking place in South Africa during the time of the study, the focus group took place via Zoom, an online video meeting platform. The focus group began with a brief introduction and overview of the research topic. The focus group then discussed general attitudes towards femvertising and then they were shown *Castle Lite*'s femvertising campaign from 2018, titled #HoldMyBeer.

A discussion took place to gain understanding on the thoughts, attitudes, feelings, and perceptions the participants have towards the use of these femvertising messages that have been used by *Castle Lite*. The focus group allowed for debates to take place, and more in-depth responses. In an exploratory research, a key element is that responses are not limited to a specific question to allow for the various responses. Bezuidenhout and Cronje (2014) found that the disadvantage of focus groups is that some participants may not be as outspoken as others and may be hesitant to

contribute their opinions so it was important for the researcher to ensure that everyone got a fair chance to speak and express their thoughts.

The researcher recorded the focus group and carefully transcribed the data once it was collected.

### **3.5 Data Analysis**

A qualitative content analysis was used to find themes and patterns that brought structure and meaning to the findings (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014). The study was guided by a conceptual framework; therefore, a deductive qualitative content analysis approach was used (Davis, 2014). The researcher made use of coding to group data and find the words, phrases and sentences that were most relevant to answering the research questions and ultimately, achieving the objectives of the study.

Based on theory suggested by Kothari (2004), the researcher followed the eight steps detailed in figure 2 to analyse the data.

**i. Preparation of data**

Recorded audio from the focus group was transcribed into text and read multiple times by the researcher to get an intimate understanding of the data that was gathered.

**ii. Definition of coding unit to be analysed**

To manage data into manageable chunks, Khan (2014) suggests that the researcher indicates whether they used a participant's words, phrases, sentences or paragraphs to use as a coding unit. In this study, the researcher made use of the participant's words and sentences that the researcher found relevant to the study to establish concepts and themes.

**iii. Development of themes**

According to Bezuidenhout and Cronje (2014), a crucial part of coding is to define every code, theme and category systematically to be able to apply it to the researcher's text consistently. The researcher moved codes back and forth to group those that had similarities together. The researcher also ensured that the themes relate back to the Affect Transfer Hypothesis Theory which was the framework that guided the study.

**iv. Interpretation of data**

The themes and categories identified were interpreted and linked back to existing findings and theories so that the researcher could draw meaning from the text.

**v. Report on methods and findings**

The researcher reported on the process that was followed to code, analyse and interpret the data as truthfully as possible.

**vi. Review of themes**

The researcher tested the consistency of the category definitions and identified all problems related to coding and made sure they were resolved.

**vii. Coding all text**

Relevant themes were named and defined by the researcher and all data was contextualised, based on the research questions. These were related to thoughts and feelings expressed about femvertising, how female consumers judge how they are represented in advertising, consumer attitudes towards *Castle Lite*'s use of femvertising and other concepts identified in the literature review.

**viii. Assessing coding consistency**

Consistency of all coding that was conducted was double-checked by the researcher and the supervisor.

### **3.6 Limitations and Delimitations**

Limitations of a study refer to restrictions and potential problems that the researcher can foresee that may possibly threaten the validity of the study (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014). Due to budget and time constraints, the following study was a cross-sectional study with only a limited time for data collection and analysis.

The study examined the use of femvertising by *Castle Lite* and not multiple brands, this is regarded as a constraint because the findings could not be generalised (Erasmus & Mwase, 2018). Due to the small scale of the study, there were restrictions with the sampling group. Only participants from Johannesburg were considered, which limited the findings. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic which was at its peak in South Africa at the time that the research was conducted, data was collected online, by making use of a video meeting platform. This took away from face-to-face human interaction between the researcher and the participants, particularly in the focus group, where usually, everyone, including the researcher, would be in the same room and the researcher would be able to notice non-verbal cues.

Delimitations refer to the boundaries that the researcher has set for the study (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014) For this study, the sample framework was follows; the participants were Johannesburg based, between the ages of 24 – 35 and had to be *Castle Lite* beer drinkers. The participants were all female and had to have access to the internet and be users of social media to be considered for the study.

## CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter details the findings from the data collection described in Chapter 3. Data was analysed using thematic content analysis. According to Caulfield (2020), thematic analysis is a method used to analyse qualitative data. To collect data, the researcher conducted a focus group via an online video platform, Zoom. The focus group was made up of five Johannesburg based female participants between the ages of 24 - 35 who are *Castle Lite* drinkers and are active on social media.

The researcher examined common themes and patterns of meaning that came up repeatedly to draw findings. The following study was guided by the Affect Transfer Hypothesis Framework therefore a deductive content analysis approach was used to analyse the data and draw findings which are discussed below.

### 4.1 Findings

#### 4.1.1 Attitudes towards Femvertising

In order to facilitate a comfortable discussion within the focus group, a definition of femvertising was given to the participants and two examples of femvertising advertisements were played to allow them to gain a better understanding of the concept. This enabled them to give their opinions, thoughts, feelings, and attitudes towards the use of femvertising. It is important to note that at the beginning of the conversation, participants were not familiar of the term femvertising, however, when a definition was given and examples of the advertisements were shown to them, they developed an understanding of the concept and theme in advertising that they had been exposed to multiple times.

A recurring theme that emerged from participants was that femvertising advertisements usually made them feel empowered and proud to be women when they were exposed to the advertisements. One participant responded, *“I feel empowered and uplifted when I see women like me.”* Another participant expressed that femvertising advertisements reflect what is happening in society today and a much-needed shift towards acknowledging women and putting them at the forefront. *“There are lots of male dominated industries and whilst people are focusing on gender equality, inclusion, empowering women and recognising their power, we still have a long way to go, these femvertising advertisements reflect the change and show that*

*we are all equal*” said one of the participants. As stated by Becker-Herby (2016), women are responding favourably to femvertising campaigns because they champion women and girls and empower them in various ways.

Three of the five participants revealed that they related more to advertisements that made use of femvertising than advertisements that were more generic in their approach. However, one participant revealed that they were sceptical of brands making use of femvertising and expressed that some brands jump on the bandwagon during holidays such as “women’s month” and do nothing for the upliftment of women outside of that/thereafter. *“Every August it’s as if all these brands wake up and remember hey, women in our country are faced with many issues, let’s put a campaign together to show them that we care and we’ll get them to buy our products too so we’re doing our bit for the community while making profits”* expressed one participant. This view supports Kotler and Sakar (2017), who claimed that brand activism efforts run the risk of being portrayed as gimmicks if they are not executed authentically.

The general attitude towards femvertising amongst the participants was positive and recurring themes were that of inclusion, empowerment and representation which Becker-Herby (2016) claims are the main principles of any femvertising message. As discussed in the literature review, it is important to measure the attitudes towards brand activism efforts in order to evaluate the campaign’s effectiveness and whether it resonates with consumers or not (Kotler & Sakar, 2017). The findings reached the study’s objectives of investigating, first and foremost, what the general attitudes towards femvertising are amongst the participants.

#### **4.1.2 Attitudes towards Castle Lite**

Before exposing participants to *Castle Lite*’s femvertising campaign, there was a discussion on *Castle Lite* as a brand. The researcher’s intention was to evaluate *Castle Lite*’s brand image in the minds of the consumers currently. According to the Affect Transfer Hypothesis theory, once exposed to messaging from an advertisement, the attitudes towards that particular advertisement directly affect the consumer’s attitude towards the brand (Mtichell & Olsen, 2000), therefore, it was important to establish how the consumer currently views *Castle Lite*, in order to evaluate the influence of femvertising on the brand’s image. When asked to describe how they viewed *Castle Lite* in words, participants made use of words such as “classy”

“sophisticated” “fun” “friendship and companionship” “music” and “refreshing”. The words used by the participants to describe the brand support the claim that alcohol brands have shifted to using themes of sophistication, fun, and friendship in their advertising in recent years (Atkinson *et al.*, 2017).

Participants revealed that women who drink beer were still shamed by society and *Castle Lite* is perceived as the classier drink of choice as compared to other beers, particularly beers that are packaged in brown bottles. According to Murff (2015), marketers in the beer industry worldwide position green beer bottles as premium hence consumers associate them with being the “classier” / “expensive” beer of choice. “I know everyone has their preferences when they choose their beer, but for me, that sexy green bottle makes me feel like I’m drinking quality stuff, and that’s why I’ve always stuck to my *Castle Lite*” revealed one participant.

Participants had positive attitudes towards *Castle Lite*, one participant revealed that she did not only consume the beer because of the “great taste” but because she thought the brand is “cool” and reflects her personality as a young South African. “*I am proud to be a Castle Lite drinker; I hold my green bottle proudly in my hand even though I am aware of society’s backward perceptions of female beer drinkers*” she said. The findings revealed that the consumers already had positive attitudes towards *Castle Lite* even when they were not originally aware of their use of femvertising or their intention to be more empowering towards women.

#### **4.1.3 Castle Lite’s Use of Femvertising**

When exposed to *Castle Lite*’s #HoldMyBeer campaign, which was an apology to women by *Castle Lite* about the many years of objectifying women in their advertising, themes of representation, stereotypes and gender equality emerged. Participants expressed how they felt “seen” and “validated” by the brand and felt that they matter. The participants revealed how they noticed that the brand made use of different types of women, black, white, different shapes and sizes as opposed to what they would usually see in traditional alcohol advertisements, one participant made an example referring to a previous *Castle Lite* advertisement “*I remember their old ad, where a man was the centre of the ad and they had used women in bikinis out in the freezing cold, it’s good that they recognise their past mistakes*”. Becker-Herby (2016) revealed that although brands are slowly moving away from misrepresenting women in their

advertising, quite often the depictions of women in the media and advertising do not accurately mirror the facts that represent women in society such as their buying power, their leadership roles in business and their changing roles in society.

One participant, revealed that her immediate thought when she saw the #HoldMyBeer campaign from *Castle Lite* was *“what did they do that drove them to apologise”* expressing that *“brands are often reactive, and will speak up on issues when they are forced to or when they are responding to a crisis or backlash from consumers”*. She expressed how brands usually jump on the wagon of something that had gone viral and did not always feel that their acts of activism were genuine. Becker-Herby (2016) suggests that authenticity is the most important aspect of femvertising. Consumers are concerned with the motives and intentions of the brand behind the campaign and whether their values and actions match what they claim to stand for in their communications.

Participants also expressed that they felt that the brand had taken a long time to take women seriously and that it is something they should have championed in the past. When asked whether they believed *Castle Lite*’s apology, participants revealed that they did believe *Castle Lite*’s use of femvertising because they were aware of the brand’s support of female artists. They felt that the apology was more believable because the brand had gone on to support South African female musicians and were practising what they preach.

One participant said *“I hate it when brands come out on women’s day or youth day and pretend that they care, then never follow up with the work that they said they stand for. Especially alcohol brands, who never seem to stick to one cause”*. This statement supports Abdallah *et al.* (2018) who claim that consumers believe brands that are ethical in their business practices. If they are advocating for gender equality, that needs to be reflected in the business, such as having enough representation of women in management, for their communication efforts to come across as genuine and not just an advertising campaign to sway women to buy their products.

One of the main objectives of the study was to uncover truths about consumer’s attitudes towards *Castle Lite*’s use of femvertising and whether they had positive reactions towards the brand’s #HoldMyBeer campaign. Overall, participants had

positive reactions and attitudes and expressed that they believed what the brand was saying.

#### **4.1.4 Representation, Stereotypes and Gender Equality**

Representation, gender equality and stereotypes were a recurring theme in the discussion amongst the participants. They revealed that the campaign broke common stereotypes about women drinking beer and made drinking beer look cool and acceptable amongst women which is something they did not always witness in other alcohol advertisements and within society. *“This ad makes me feel proud to be a Castle Lite drinker”* revealed one participant. *“I feel seen and heard as a woman. Castle Lite recognises me as a woman and recognises other women too. Most beers are very masculine”*. Another participant revealed that as a South African woman, she felt like she was being represented authentically, whereas in so many advertisements she felt like some brands still get representation of women, particularly black women, wrong.

Gender equality was another theme that came up where participants revealed that by *Castle Lite* making this apology and also using female artists in their other campaigns and concerts, *Castle lite* showed that they are determined in their fight for gender equality and the mission to uplift and empower women. One participant however, expressed that the brand was not promoting the work that they do to empower women enough, she said *“had I not been on social media, or a part of this discussion right now, I would have been completely unaware of the work that Castle Lite does for South African women. There are many women who are beer drinkers who come from all walks of life who also deserve to see how the brand is rejecting traditional ways of representing women and how they are empowering women in the music scene”*. One participant however expressed that in as much as the brand empowers women in their events and also in the #HoldMyBeer campaign, she was still sceptical about what is happening in the boardroom and if the brand was really ‘walking the talk’ and practising what they preach in terms of how they conduct business.

#### **4.1.5 Femvertising influence on Castle Lite Brand Image**

When participants were first asked about their thoughts of *Castle Lite* before being exposed to the femvertising advertisement, they had positive attitudes towards the brand already however, they associated it with words like classy and sophisticated and had not associated the brand with anything related to women and gender equality. They still had reservations about being female beer drinkers and expressed that society still viewed them differently because they are beer drinkers. After being exposed to the advertisement, participants revealed that they felt empowered, seen and heard by the brand and that it enhanced their love for the brand beyond purely based on taste. One participant said *"I was not aware of this campaign prior to this. this gives me a new perspective on the beer"*. Another participant expressed the following; *"knowing that they book women for their concerts and push women in hip hop makes me feel like they are genuine about their stance on women. They are actively trying to make a change and that makes me appreciate the brand even more"*. While the majority of participants showed positive attitudes towards the brand's use of femvertising, one participant said *"In a country that has one of the highest statistics of gender based violence, with alcohol playing a big factor in men's violent ways, I also think it's important for the brand to not alienate men in the conversation"*. The participant revealed that it is good to have campaigns that target women and empowers them, however the brand needs to also target the perpetrators, who are mostly men, to really make the change that they are trying to make in the lives of women in South Africa.

The brand's use of femvertising enhanced their existing positive attitude towards the brand and expressed that the campaign felt genuine and authentic and represented them as South African women. The Affect Transfer Hypothesis theory states that attitudes towards the advertisement, directly affect the consumer's attitude towards the brand. The participants revealed positive attitudes towards the #HoldMyBeer campaign and expressed how the brand made them appreciate their number one choice of beer, *Castle Lite*, even more. As mentioned in the literature review, Drake (2017) states that femvertising can have a direct impact on the image of the brand; these participants revealed that their positive perceptions of *Castle Lite* were further enhanced when they came to the realisation that the brand actively supports and stands for women and their empowerment.

## **4.2 Trustworthiness**

To measure trustworthiness of the research study, qualitative researchers need to demonstrate that the data that has been analysed was conducted in a precise, consistent and credible manner. Koonin (2014) states that trustworthiness can be divided into the following; credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability.

### ***4.2.1 Credibility***

Credibility refers to how accurately the researcher interprets the data that is provided by the participants (Koonin, 2014). To ensure credibility, the researcher spent enough time collecting and analysing the data to interpret the findings as accurately as possible. The focus group was recorded and transcribed so that participants were not misquoted and notes for non-verbal cues were made during discussions so that researcher could refer to them easily when analysing the data.

### ***4.2.2 Transferability***

The degree to which a study's results and analysis can be applied beyond a specific research project and applicable to other contexts, situations, populations and times is referred to as transferability (Koonin 2014).

The following study is a cross-sectional study and had a limited time period therefore exposure and outcome happened simultaneously, unlike in a longitudinal study where the researcher can establish a true cause and effect relationship (Solem, 2015). As a result, transferability in this study may be low. However, as recommended by Koonin (2014), the researcher established transferability by providing a thick description of the phenomenon and provided a detailed and robust account of the experience during data collection. This provided a rich and full understanding of the research setting and allows outside readers and researchers to make transferability judgements themselves.

### ***4.2.3 Dependability***

The consistency of the integration process between the data collection method, data analysis and the theory generated from the data is referred to as dependability (Koonin, 2014). Even though this is a qualitative study, reliability of the data was enhanced through an intercoder reliability check. Solem (2015) refers to this as the

extent to which two or more coders agree on the coding of the content or data that is being analysed so there is an agreement on the coding system. The researcher established inter-coder reliability by having her supervisor assess, audit and critique her coding system and findings. The researcher also made use of intra-coding reliability, which according to Koonin (2014), refers to the consistent way the researcher codes. These two processes ensured that the data that was coded is reliable and therefore dependability of the study could be established.

#### **4.2.4 Confirmability**

According to Koonin (2014), this element of trustworthiness refers to the degree in which the data collected supports the findings and interpretation of the researcher. The findings need to flow directly from the data. In this paper, the researcher described the research process fully and ensured that the findings were based on the participant's narratives and words and the personal bias of the researcher was removed.

The researcher provided a detailed description of the research process as well as the rationale as to why certain themes were grouped together in the coding stage of analysis. The researcher kept a reflective journal during the research process to constantly reflect on everything that was happening throughout the research process to provide valuable insight as to how the themes emerged.

## CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

The following study aimed to explore the influence of femvertising on *Castle Lite's* brand image amongst female consumers by uncovering truths about their attitudes towards the brand's use of this form of activism to engage and build meaningful connections with women. This section analyses findings from the study, how they answer the research questions and discusses implications for future studies.

### 5.1 Concluding answers to research questions

The main objectives of the study *were to determine what female consumer attitudes are towards femvertising, what their attitudes are towards Castle Lite's use of femvertising and finally, what influence femvertising has on Castle Lite's overall brand image.*

#### 5.1.1 Attitudes towards femvertising

One of the key findings was that women generally have positive attitudes towards femvertising if the brand reflects the same message in their day-to-day business practices. These claims are supported by Becker-Herby (2016) who found that consumers do not only look at the authenticity of the product itself but rather how authentic the business is in what they champion. Similarly, Abdallah *et al.* (2018) revealed that even though there is a significant difference between brand image and brand identity, the brand's advertising campaigns need to align with the organisation's internal values. Gender equality and women empowerment need to be something that the organisation takes seriously within the business to ensure that their femvertising campaigns are authentic and credible. As stated by Kapferer (2012), brand image is not only shaped by the functional benefits of a product, but heavily influenced by the marketing activities of a brand. Therefore, it is important to have clear values, and authentically convey these in brand campaigns.

The study revealed that consumers feel empowered and represented by femvertising messages, which reflect the changing roles of women in society today. They were supportive of brands that actively take a stance on women empowerment and care for the community over profits, which is in line with Kotler and Sakar (2017), who suggest that brands that take a clear stance on societal issues, are favoured by consumers of today.

### **5.1.2 Attitudes towards Castle Lite's Use of Femvertising**

According to the Affect Transfer Hypothesis theory, which guided this study, the attitudes consumers have towards a brand's advertisement have a direct influence on their attitude towards the brand and whether they will support the brand or not (Kirmani & Campbell, 2009). Participants in the study revealed their positive thoughts and feelings towards *Castle Lite* and expressed how they believed the brand's efforts in the #HoldMyBeer campaign, particularly because the brand had not only apologised for objectifying women in their past advertisements but they had carried on the work of actively supporting and empowering women even years after the #HoldMyBeer campaign. As discussed in the paper, *Castle Lite* has been actively hiring female ambassadors, they have used female artists as headliners in their concerts and have created campaigns that are for the advancement of women, particularly in hip hop, a music genre that is still male dominated today. The study revealed that it is important for brands to champion women, not only on women's month, but actively work towards the advancement of women consistently.

The study also revealed that the brand already had a healthy brand image in the minds of consumers however, the femvertising enhanced it even further. This shows that it is important for brands to realise that one activism campaign will not fix all its problems, taking a stance on societal issues and addressing women's issues can assist with brand favourability alongside their other brand campaigns.

Participants' positive attitudes towards *Castle Lite's* use of femvertising, are in line with Drake (2017), who found that femvertising messages amongst consumers enhanced the positive attitudes they had towards the brand, therefore contributed to the overall image of *Castle Lite*. Results of this study showed that brand appeal and attractiveness towards the brand were affected after being exposed to *Castle Lite's* femvertising campaign, with participants revealing that they "loved" the brand even more, after realising that they champion women and represent them truthfully and authentically.

### **5.1.3 The Influence of Femvertising on Brand Image**

The main objective of the study was to explore how the use of femvertising influences *Castle Lite's* brand image. As stated by Kapferer (2012), brand image serves as a strategic differentiator and is important to build strong, competitive brands as well as

build emotional connections with consumers. Furthermore, Keller (1993) suggested that brand image is strongly connected to brand equity, therefore it is important to measure the brand activism that brands embark on and how they affect the image of the brand. The findings in this study support those of Drake (2017), who found that brands that made use of femvertising received a stronger emotional response from women due to the empowering messages which resonated with them.

After being exposed to *Castle Lite*'s #HoldMyBeer campaign which had all the principles of femvertising which Becker-Herby (2016) explains as pro-female messaging, positive portrayals of women and rejecting old stereotypes, the participants had higher positive attitudes towards *Castle Lite*. The participants' positive attitudes towards *Castle Lite*'s femvertising were motivated by the brand's continuous efforts to empower women and were not viewed as a gimmick which Kotler and Sakar (2017) claim are one of the biggest risks that come with brands taking a public stance on societal issues.

Existing theory revealed that brands taking an active stance on issues that affect society can directly influence their bottom line, their connections with consumers and enhance their brand image (Du, Bhattacharya & Sen, 2007). This statement is supported by findings in this study which revealed that the consumer's view of *Castle Lite*'s femvertising campaign as authentic and genuine, created a deeper connection to the brand that they already favoured.

Literature on the Affect Transfer Hypothesis Theory states that when consumers express likeability towards an advertisement, that has a direct impact on the way they view the brand, and their attitudes towards the advertisement influences their overall attitude towards the brand (Kirmani & Campbell, 2009). This study showed that the consumer's positive thoughts and feelings towards *Castle Lite*'s femvertising campaign, enhanced their attitudes toward the beer brand, therefore, the image of the brand was positively enhanced. This evidently answers the main research question of the paper, which was to explore how femvertising influences *Castle Lite*'s brand image.

## 5.2 Implications of findings for future practices

Brands exist in the world where consumers support them, based on the values that they hold and whether they care about the community and the planet. When brands take an active stance on a social issue, they can build deeper and more meaningful connections with their consumers. The study aimed to contribute to expand on the understanding of femvertising within the South African context. By uncovering deeper truths about female consumer attitudes towards the use of femvertising by *Castle Lite*, the study aimed to inform brand communication strategists with valuable insights as to how they can authentically engage with their female consumers, when they choose to take an active stance on an issue that is affecting society.

The study revealed that female consumers have positive attitudes towards femvertising campaigns and if executed authentically, messages of empowerment in advertising can enhance brand image. It is important however, that brands ensure that their business practices and values are aligned with the cause that the brand chooses to champion, otherwise consumers may reject the brand and perceive it as inauthentic.

The findings of this research encourages brand strategists not only in the alcohol category, but other industries too, to use empowering messages in their female-targeted campaigns, recognising that the use of femvertising can enhance the brand image positively and contribute to building strong, meaningful brands while building deep emotional connections with their consumers.

## 5.3 Conclusions

This research study aimed to explore the influence of femvertising on *Castle Lite*'s brand image amongst female consumers. The findings of the paper answer the main research questions. The first objective of the paper was to explore the attitudes consumers have towards femvertising and it was revealed that consumers have positive attitudes towards femvertising and feel empowered, validated and represented by the pro-female messages from brands taking an active stance to support women. The second objective delved into the attitudes towards *Castle Lite*'s use of femvertising and participants expressed how their positive attitudes towards *Castle Lite* were motivated by the ongoing support and empowerment that *Castle Lite* actively shows women, even beyond their campaigns. The study revealed and

supported previous research, that the authentic use of femvertising by *Castle Lite* positively enhanced the image of the brand amongst female consumers in South Africa.

For further expansion on this present study, future researchers can consider using a larger sample group with different demographics. Future studies could explore femvertising in other industries, outside of alcohol and beauty categories, to investigate how attitudes towards empowerment messages may vary across different industries. Finally, researchers could also explore which empowerment themes are more impactful or resonate with women more, for example, body positivity vs gender equality in the workplace.

## **5.4 Ethical Considerations**

As stated by Louw (2014), ethics are the professional codes of conduct that set the standard of attitudes and behaviour of the researcher. Ethics are crucial in research because they affect all the stakeholders, which include participants, the public, the academic institution as well as the researcher.

For this study, all participants were over the age of 18 and were required to sign a consent form which also stated that the focus groups and interviews would be recorded. The participants were volunteers; therefore, no incentives were given. The participants were notified that this study was for academic purposes and they would have access to findings.

The confidentiality and anonymity of all participants was prioritised throughout the study. The focus group took place online, in a closed, password protected group with only participants of the study present. The participants were given the right to withdraw from the study or withdraw any responses or comments should they have wished to do so.

Focus group and interview guidelines were carefully considered and followed when collecting data and the researcher ensured that personal bias was removed, and the study remained objective. No participants were harmed in the process of data collection and the health and safety of the participants was a priority for the researcher. Due to the Covid-19 virus, social distancing was adhered to by conducting the focus group online via a video meeting platform.

All data that was collected was stored on the researcher's password protected computer and will be destroyed after five years. The collection of primary data for the study began only once ethical clearance from the academic institution was granted.

## REFERENCE LIST

- Atkinson, A., Sumnall, H., Begley, E., & Jones L. 2019. *Literature on Gendered Alcohol Marketing and its Effect: Exploring the Targeting and Representation of Women*. Liverpool John Moores University. (White Paper) Liverpool: Institute of Alcohol Studies. [Online] Available at: <http://www.ias.org.uk/uploads/pdf/IAS%20reports/rp39102019.pdf> [Accessed 26 May 2020]
- Abdallah, L.K., Jacobson, C., Liasse, D., & Lund, E. 2018. Femvertising and its effects on brand image: *Strategic Brand Management Papers*. [Online] Available at: <http://lup.lub.lu.se/luur/download?func=downloadFile&recordId=8963765&fileId=8963766> [Accessed 19 May 2020]
- Becker-Herby, E. 2016. The Rise of Femvertising: Authentically Reaching Female Consumers. [Online] Available at: [https://conservancy.umn.edu/bitstream/handle/11299/181494/Becker-Herby\\_%20Final%20Capstone\\_2016.pdf;sequence=1](https://conservancy.umn.edu/bitstream/handle/11299/181494/Becker-Herby_%20Final%20Capstone_2016.pdf;sequence=1) [Accessed 26 May 2020]
- Bezuidenhout, R, M. 2014. Research paradigms and traditions. In: Bezuidenhout, R.M., Davis, C., and Du Plooy-Cilliers, F. eds. *Research Matters*. Cape Town: Juta and Company Chapter 16.
- Carroll, A. B. 2008. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Corporate Social Performance (CSP). In R. W. Kolb (Ed.), *Encyclopaedia of Business Ethics and Society* (pp. 509-517). Thousand Oaks, CA.: SAGE Publications.
- Cornwall, A. (2016). Women's Empowerment: What Works? *Journal of International Development*, 28(3): 342–359. doi:10.1002/jid.3210
- Du Plooy-Cilliers, F. 2014. Research paradigms and traditions. In: Bezuidenhout, R.M., Davis, C., and Du Plooy-Cilliers, F. eds. *Research Matters*. Cape Town: Juta and Company Chapter 2: 27 – 31
- Enslie, C. 2019. How alcohol companies are using International Women's Day to sell more drinks to women, *The Conversation*, 7 March 2019. [Blog]. Available at: <https://theconversation.com/how-alcohol-companies-are-using-international-womens-day-to-sell-more-drinks-to-women-113081> [Accessed 27 May 2020].
- Erasmus, M., & Mwase, J. 2018. *Exploring the influence of femvertising on brand resonance*. Honours in Brand Communications Research Paper. IIE Vega. [Online] Available at: [https://www.vegaschool.com/PDFs/Articles/students/MikyalaErasmus\\_and\\_JoeMwase.pdf](https://www.vegaschool.com/PDFs/Articles/students/MikyalaErasmus_and_JoeMwase.pdf) [Accessed 26 May 2020]
- Du, S., Bhattacharya, C. B., & Sen, S. (2007). Reaping Relational Rewards from Corporate Social Responsibility: The Role of Competitive Positioning. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 24(3): 224-241. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijresmar.2007.01.001>

- Drake, V. 2017. The Impact of Female Empowerment in Advertising (Femvertising). *Journal of Research in Marketing*, 7 (3): 599 – 593. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.jormonline.com/index.php/jorm/article/view/199> [Accessed on 19 April 2020]
- Eisend, M. 2010. A meta-analysis of gender roles in advertising. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 38(4): 418–440. [Online] Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-009-0181-x> [Accessed 16 May 2020]
- Faircloth, J., Capella, L., & Alford, B. (2001). The Effect of Brand Attitude and Brand Image on Brand Equity. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 9(3): 61-75. [Online]. Available at: [www.jstor.org/stable/40470049](http://www.jstor.org/stable/40470049) [Accessed 27 May 2020].
- Grau, S., & Zotos, Y. 2016. Gender stereotypes in advertising: A review of current research. *International Journal of Advertising*, 35 (5) pp: 761-770. [Online] Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2016.1203556> [Accessed 21 May 2020]
- Gill, R. (2008). Empowerment/Sexism: Figuring Female Sexual Agency in Contemporary Advertising. *Feminism & Psychology*, 18(1): 35–60. doi:10.1177/0959353507084950.
- Hunt, A. 2017. *Selling Empowerment: A Critical Analysis of Femvertising*. Senior Communications Honours Thesis. Boston College. [Online] Available at: <http://hdl.handle.net/2345/bc-ir:107483> [Accessed 21 May]
- Edelman Earned Brand Global Report (2018). *A Study of How Brands Can Earn, Strengthen and Protect Consumer-Brand Relationships*. [Online] Available at: [https://www.edelman.com/sites/g/files/aatuss191/files/2018-10/2018\\_Edelman\\_Earned\\_Brand\\_Global\\_Report.pdf](https://www.edelman.com/sites/g/files/aatuss191/files/2018-10/2018_Edelman_Earned_Brand_Global_Report.pdf) [Accessed 27 April 2020]
- Jackson, J. 1997. *World Views, Paradigms, and the Practice of Social Science Research*. [Online]. Available at: [http://www.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-binaries/13885\\_Chapter1.pdf](http://www.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-binaries/13885_Chapter1.pdf) [Accessed 19 May]
- Johnson, G., & Grier, S. 2013. What about the Intended Consequences. *Journal of Advertising*, 41(3): 91-106. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/citedby/10.2753/JOA0091-3367410306?scroll=top&needAccess=true> [Accessed 16 May 2020]
- Kam, C. D., & Deichert, M. A. (2017). *Boycotting, buycotting, and the Psychology of Political Consumerism* (Paper presented at the 2016 Annual Meetings of the Midwest Political Science Association). Chicago, IL. Retrieved from <https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/abs/10.1086/705922?journalCode=jop>
- Kantar. 2018. *What Women Want: An Exploration of 100 years of Marketing to Women*. Kantar: United Kingdom. [Online] Available at: <http://www2.kantar.com/l/208642/2018-11-21/81z32> [Accessed 22 May 2020]
- Kapferer, J.N. (2012). *The New Strategic Brand Management: Advanced Insights and Strategic Thinking*. 5th edition. London: Kogan Page

Keller, K.L. (2001). Building Consumer Based Brand Equity. *Marketing Management*, 10 (2): 15-19 [Online] Available at: <https://faculty.fuqua.duke.edu/~moorman/Marketing-Strategy-Seminar-2015/Session%203/Keller.pdf>

Koonin, F. 2014. Research paradigms and traditions. In: Bezuidenhout, R.M., Davis, C., and Du Plooy-Cilliers, F. eds. *Research Matters*. Cape Town: Juta and Company. Chapter 16

Lewinski, P., Fransen, M.L., & Tan, E.S.H. 2014. Predicting Advertising Effectiveness by Facial Expressions in Response to Amusing Persuasive Stimuli. *Journal of Neuroscience, Psychology, and Economics*, 7(1), pp. 1-14

Lotze, L. 2018. #HoldMyBeer pushes Castle Lite to do better, *Mark Lives*, 12 Mar 2018. [Blog]. Available at: <http://www.marklives.com/2018/03/holdmybeer-pushes-castle-lite-to-apologise-for-misogynist-comms/> [Accessed 23 May]

Maheshwari, K., & Kumar, V. 2017. *To Create a Positive Brand Image Through Corporate Social Responsibility*. Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2466844> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2466844> [Accessed 22 May 2020].

MacKenzie, S.B., Lutz, R.J., & Belch, G.E. 1986. The role of attitude toward the ad as a mediator of advertising effectiveness: a test of competing explanations. *Journal of Marketing Research*. 23(2), pp. 130-143. doi:10.2307/3151660

Nasermoadeli, A., Severi, K., & Ling, E. 2013. Exploring the Relationship between Social Environment and Customer Experience. *Asian Social Science*. 9(1) 1911-2025. [Online] Available at: <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/857f/0bc063bda120e5bedb381daa54822a8b5045.pdf> [Accessed 23 May 2020]

Peloza, J., & Shang, J. 2011. How Can Corporate Social Responsibility Activities Create Value for Stakeholders? A Systematic Review. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*. 39(1), 117-135. Available at: <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11747-010-0213-6> [Accessed 20 April 2020]

Ramesh, K., Saha, R., Goswami, S., & Sekar, D. R. 2018. Consumer's response to CSR activities: Mediating role of brand image and brand attitude. *Corporate social responsibility and environmental management*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/csr.1689>

Sakar, C., & Kotler, P. 2018. *Brand Activism: From Purpose to Action*. IDEA BITE PRESS. [eBook] Available on Amazon at: <https://www.amazon.com/Brand-Activism-Purpose-Christian-Sarkar-ebook/dp/B07K71B413> [Accessed May 2020]

Shetty, AS., & Venkataramaiah, NB.. 2019. Brand activism and millennials: an empirical investigation into the perception of millennials towards brand activism. *Problems and Perspectives in Management*, 17(4), pp. 163-175. [Online]. Available at: <https://businessperspectives.org/journals/problems-and-perspectives-in-management/issue-333/brand-activism-and-millennials-an-empirical-investigation->

[into-the-perception-of-millennials-towards-brand-activism](#)

doi:10.21511/ppm.17(4).2019.14 [Accessed 7 May 2020]

Smith, M. 2019. *#WomensMonth: Silke Bucker knows how to make it in a man's world*, *Bizcommunity*, 23 August 2019. [Blog] Available at: <https://www.bizcommunity.com/Article/196/697/194648.html> [Accessed 21 May 2020]

Stewart, K., Kammer-Kerwick, M., Koh, H., & Cunningham, I. 2018. Examining digital advertising using an affect transfer hypothesis. *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing*. [Online]. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1108/JRIM-07-2017-0053> [Accessed 26 May 2020]

United Nations. 2020. *Sustainable Goals Developmental Goals*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/gender-equality/> [Accessed 27 May 2020]

Wojcicki, S. 2016. The effectiveness of Empowering Ads on Youtube. May 2016. *Think with Google*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.thinkwithgoogle.com/consumer-insights/youtube-empowering-ads-engage/> [Accessed 26 May 2020].

Xu, H., & Tan, Y. 2020. Can Beauty Advertisements Empower Women? A Critical Discourse Analysis of the SK-II's "Change Destiny" Campaign. *Theory and Practice in language Studies*, 10(2), pp. 176-188. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.academypublication.com/ojs/index.php/tpls/article/view/tpls1002176188> [Accessed 21 May 2020]

Zimmerman, A., & Dahlberg, J. 2008. The Sexual Objectification of Women in Advertising: A Contemporary Cultural Perspective. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 48(1), pp. 71–79. doi:10.2501/s0021849908080094

# ANNEXURE

## Annexure 1. Concept Doc Table

Title: An exploration of the influence of Femvertising on Castle Lite's Brand Image amongst South African Female Consumers.

| Research Purpose/<br>Objective                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Primary Research Question                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Research Rationale                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Seminal Authors/<br>Sources Literature                                                                                        | Literature Review –<br>Conceptual Framework                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Paradigm                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Approach                                                                                                                                                                      | Data Collection Method(s)                                                                                                                                                                                                | Ethics                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Findings                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | References                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| This research study aimed to apply the Affect Transfer Hypothesis theory to examine the influence of brand activism, in the form of Femvertising, on Castle Lite's brand image amongst female consumers. By gaining knowledge of the perceptions and attitudes of the consumers, the study aimed to gain in-depth understanding on the role of Femvertising on brand image. | What influence does the use of femvertising have on Castle Lite's brand image amongst South African Female Consumers                                                                                                               | Alcohol brands are using femvertising to target female consumers, the research will investigate what effects this phenomenon has on the image of the brand. Most research has been conducted internationally, and in the beauty category. This study aims to contextualise the phenomenon to SA and provide brand managers with findings and insights that can inform strategy when they are trying to connect with female consumers. | Keller, KL. 2001. Building Customer-Based Brand Equity<br><br>Kapferer, J.N. (2012). Philip Kotler and Christian Sarkar, 2017 | <b>Affect Transfer Hypothesis</b><br><br>Theory assumes that attitudes consumers have towards an ad, directly influence the attitude they have towards the brand.<br><br>Among four models on attitudes towards ads, it has been supported empirically in that direct positive linear relationship between Aad and Ab was found | The research will be considered through the phenomenological interpretivism lens. This study aims to understand the perceptions and attitudes of consumers, and how they make sense of the world around them, therefore subjective views are extremely important.<br><br>epistemological approach towards interpretivism requires the researcher to fully grasp people's views and common sense in their context.<br><br>ontological position of interpretivism believes that reality is fluid and is based on human interaction. Depending on culture, experiences and circumstances of people their interpretation of Femvertising may not be the same | Qualitative research methods will be used<br><br><b>Population</b><br><br>South African female consumers<br><br>Non-probability purposive sampling                            | Focus group that will be conducted digitally due to Covid-19 restrictions<br><br>Semi-structured in-depth interviews (digitally)<br><br>Qualitative Content analysis of Castle Lite's #HerStory and #HoldMyBeer campaign | Confidentiality and anonymity of Participants<br><br>All participants will be volunteers there will be no incentives given to participants.<br><br>Careful consideration of focus group and interview guidelines to be followed<br><br>Participants will have access to findings and results<br><br>Social distancing during covid 19 to ensure health and safety. | Female consumers in SA have a positive attitude towards femvertising if it is executed authentically and in line with the core values of the business.                                                                                           | Kapferer, J.N. (2012).<br><br>Philip Kotler and Christian Sarkar, 2017<br><br>Goffman, E. (1979).<br><br>Drake, V. 2017. The Impact of Female Empowerment in Advertising (Femvertising)<br><br>Hunt, RA. 2017. Selling Empowerment A critical analysis of femvertising |
| Research Problem                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Secondary Questions                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Key Concept                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Key Theories                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Sampling                                                                                                                                                                      | Data analysis                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Limitations                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Anticipated contribution                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Femvertising has gained popularity in the alcohol industry, as brands take an activist approach and challenge outdated gender stereotypes. the study aims to understand the attitudes of consumers and how Femvertising influences Brand image.                                                                                                                             | Q1. What are female consumer attitudes towards Femvertising?<br><br>Q2. What are female consumer attitudes towards Castle Lite's use of Femvertising?<br><br>Q3. What is the influence of Femvertising towards Castle Brand image? | Brand Activism<br><br>Brand Image<br><br>Gender Stereotypes in advertising<br><br>Female Empowerment<br><br>Femvertising<br><br>Consumer attitudes towards ad / Consumer attitudes towards brand                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Affect Transfer Hypothesis                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | meta-theory approach to interpretivism requires an in-depth understanding of people's realities, therefore information will be collected, analysed and then theory will be formulated based on the information received.<br><br>interpretivists value the uniqueness of different realities, which is important for this study as individual opinions and attitudes are being studied.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Five women who live in Johannesburg between the ages of 24-35, use social media, have internet access, and are Castle Lite drinkers<br><br>Non-probability purposive sampling | Data was recorded and transcribed.<br><br>Qualitative content analysis<br>Where coding will take place to develop themes and categories to interpret the findings.                                                       | The study was conducted in Johannesburg. With a small sample size<br><br>Cross-sectional study with time constraints for data collection and analysis.<br><br>Due to covid-19, focus group was conducted online via zoom. Online video meeting platform                                                                                                            | Findings can inform insights for brand managers that want to authentically engage with South African female consumers<br><br>Valuable insights into femvertising in the alcohol beverage category and can be implemented across other industries | Abitol, A., Sternadori, M. 2016. YOU ACT LIKE A GIRL AN EXAMINATION OF CONSUMER PERCEPTIONS OF FEMVERTISING.<br><br>Abdallah, LK., Jacobson, C., Liasse, D., Lund, E. 2018. Femvertising and its effects on brand image                                                |

## Annexure 2. Interview Schedule

### **What are female consumer attitudes towards Femvertising?**

What do you think of ads that use female empowerment as a theme to speak to women?

Do you relate to ads that use Femvertising?

How do ads that use Femvertising make you feel?

Do you believe brands that make use of Femvertising when trying to speak to you as a woman?

### **What are female consumer attitudes towards Castle Lite's use of Femvertising?**

What do you think of the following ads by Castle Lite that use Femvertising?

Describe your first thoughts when you saw the Femvertising ads from Castle Lite that you have just been shown?

Do you feel well represented as a South African woman in the following ads?

Do you think these ads are empowering to women?

### **What is the influence of Femvertising towards Castle Lite's brand image?**

What do you think of the castle lite brand?

When you think of castle lite what words would you associate with it?

What do you think Castle Lite's image is???

What do you think of Castle Lite using Femvertising?

Do you believe their use of Femvertising?

Do you buy Castle Lite because of the way they represent women?

Would you stay loyal to the brand if they continue to empower women in their advertising?

Does the use of Femvertising by Castle lite make you feel positive or negative towards the brand?

## **Annexure 3. Consent Form Example**

### **CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS**

To whom it may concern,

My name is Karabo Ntshweng and I am a student at Vega School. I am currently conducting research under the supervision of Tatiana Ndlovu about femvertising and its influence on Castle Lite's brand image amongst South African Female Consumers

I would like to invite you to participate in my study. In order to explain to you what your participation in my study will involve, I have formulated questions that I will try to fully answer so that you can make an informed decision about whether or not to participate. If you have any additional questions that you feel are not addressed or explained in this information sheet, please do not hesitate to ask me for more information. Once you have read and understood all the information contained in this sheet and are willing to participate, please complete and sign the consent form below.

#### **What will I be doing if I participate in your study?**

I would like to invite you to participate in this research because I would like to find out your views on Castle Lite's use of Femvertising. If you decide to participate in this research, I would like to ask you a couple of questions relating to Castle Lite and its use of Femvertising.

You can decide whether or not to participate in this research. If you decide to participate, you can choose to withdraw at any time or to decide not to answer particular interview questions.

#### **Are there any risks/ or discomforts involved in participating in this study?**

Whether or not you decide to participate in this research, there will be no negative impact on you. There are no direct risks or benefits to you if you participate in this study. You might, however, indirectly find that it is helpful to talk about your views on Castle Lite. If you find at any stage that you are not comfortable with the line of questioning, you may withdraw or refrain from participating.

#### **Do I have to participate in the study?**

- Your inclusion in this study is completely voluntary;
- If you do not wish to participate in this study, you have every right not to do so;

- Even if you agree to participate in this study, you may withdraw at any time without having to provide an explanation for your decision.

### Will my identity be protected?

I promise to protect your identity. I will not use your name in any research summaries to come out of this research and I will also make sure that any other details are disguised so that nobody will be able to identify you. I would like to ask your permission to record the interviews, but only my supervisor, I and possibly a professional transcriber (who will sign a confidentiality agreement) will have access to these recordings. Nobody else, including anybody at Vega School, will have access to your interview information. I would like to use quotes when I discuss the findings of the research, but I will not use any recognisable information in these quotes that can be linked to you.

### What will happen to the information that participants provide?

Once I have finished all interviews, I will write summaries to be included in my research report, which is a requirement to complete my BA Honours in Strategic Brand Communication. You may ask me to send you a summary of the research if you are interested in the final outcome of the study.

### What happens if I have more questions about the study?

Please feel free to contact me or my supervisor should you have any questions or concerns about this research, or if there is anything you need to know before you decide whether or not to participate.

You should not agree to participate unless you are completely comfortable with the procedures followed.

My contact details are as follows:

Karabo Ntshweng

[REDACTED]

The contact details of my supervisor are as follows:

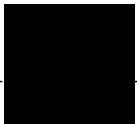
[REDACTED]

## Consent form for participants

I,  agree to participate in the research conducted by Karabo Ntshweng about the influence of femvertising on Castle Lite's brand image amongst South African Female Consumers.

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

1. I agree to be interviewed for this research.
2. My confidentiality will be ensured. My name and personal details will be kept private.
3. 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.
4. I may choose not to answer any of the questions that are asked during the research interview.
5. I may be quoted directly when the research is published, but my identity will be protected.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature 

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date 21/07/2020

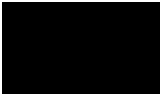
## Consent form for audio-recording / video recording

I, , agree to allow Karabo Ntshweng to audio/video record my interviews on Zoom as part of the research about the influence of femvertising on Castle Lite's brand image.

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

1. My confidentiality will be ensured. My name and personal details will be kept private.
2. The recordings will be stored in a password protected file on the researcher's computer.

3. Only the researcher, the researcher's supervisor and possibly a transcriber (who will sign a confidentiality agreement) will have access to these recordings.

—  \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_21/07/2020\_  
Date