

BRAND PERSONALITY PERCEPTIONS OF LUXURY SEDAN MOTOR VEHICLES AMONGST THE SOUTH AFRICAN GENERATION Y COHORT

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2015

DECLARATION

I, **Philasande Sokhela** declare that BRAND PERSONALITY PERCEPTIONS OF LUXURY SEDAN MOTOR VEHICLES AMONGST THE SOUTH AFRICAN GENERATION Y COHORT is my own work and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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DECLARATION OF LANGUAGE EDITING

26 November 2014

To whom it may concern

This is to confirm that I, the undersigned, have language edited the completed research of Philasande Sokhela for the Master of Commerce thesis entitled: Brand personality perceptions of luxury sedan motor vehicles amongst the South African Generation Y cohort.

The responsibility of implementing the recommended language changes rests with the author of the thesis.

Yours truly,

Jomoné Müller

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ABSTRACT

Key words: Brand personality, Personality scale, Luxury sedan, Motor vehicles, Generation Y, South Africa

Brand personality is a set of human personality traits that are relevant to a brand. A distinctive brand personality serves a symbolic or self-expressive function and helps to create a set of unique and favourable associations in the consumer's mind. Generation Y consumers are considerably more brand and image conscious than any other generational cohort. Given that motor vehicles, especially luxury motor vehicles, are a conspicuous consumption item that are often used to signal status to others, luxury motor vehicle marketers need to understand Generation Y members' perceptions of brand personality. Aaker (1997) developed a brand personality trait scale to measure brand personality perceptions. This study established a factor structure for Aaker's (1997) brand personality trait scale applicable for luxury sedan brands. This adapted brand personality trait scale was used to investigate the brand personality perceptions of luxury sedan motor vehicles amongst Generation Y.

The target population for this study was defined as students registered at South Africa's public HEIs in 2014. This study made use of a non-probability convenience sample to select one traditional university campus and one university of technology campus located in the Gauteng province of South Africa. Self-administered questionnaires were distributed in two separate steps. Step 1 of the study distributed the questionnaire to 65 participants to identify Generation Y students' top-of-the-mind awareness concerning luxury sedan motor vehicle brands. Step 2 of the study distributed 500 questionnaires to investigate the brand personality perceptions of luxury sedan brands amongst Generation Y students by means of Aaker's (1997) brand personality trait scale. Step 2 also investigated Generation Y students' purchasing intentions of luxury sedan motor vehicles by making use of an adapted a scale by Zeithaml *et al.* (1996:31-46). The statistical analysis included exploratory factor analysis, descriptive statistical analysis and significance tests.

The findings of the study suggest that Generation Y students' top three luxury sedan brands are BMW, Mercedes-Benz and Audi. The brand personality perception results revealed that all three brands are associated with the 'Competence' and 'Sophisticated' brand personality dimensions. In addition, BMW is also associated with the 'Excitement'

brand personality dimension. The findings of the study also suggest that Generation Y students do have purchasing intentions of luxury sedan motor vehicles. Some gender differences regarding Generation Y students' brand personality perceptions and purchasing intentions of luxury sedan motor vehicles do exist. However, the differences are limited with a small effect of practical significance.

The study offers insight into the brand personality perceptions in the South African market. Generation Y consumers have unique perceptions regarding different brands and it is therefore important to gain insight regarding their perceptions. The results presented in this study can aid the marketers of the selected luxury sedan motor vehicle brands in identifying the personality traits associated with their brand. This information can be compared with their current marketing strategy to determine if any differences exist between the desired and perceived brand personality. This can also help the marketers to tailor the marketing strategy accordingly to achieve the desired brand personality.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Brand personality is a set of human personality traits that are relevant to a brand (Aaker, 1997:347). Auzolay and Kapferer (2003:5) explain that since there are various definitions of brand personality, it is important to define the concept of personality clearly, as this will influence the context through which it is being used. (Ranjbar, 2010 & Keller, 1993). People typically use different brands, including prestige brands as a way of expressing themselves to others and signalling their uniqueness (Rook, 1985:252).

According to Plummer (1984:25), as quoted in Geuens, Weijters and De Wulf (2009:97), brand personality is a significant factor in understanding how consumers choose between different brands. Brand personality forms a major component of brand identity. Kapferer (2008:12) emphasises that a brand's identity is its meaning, which is created by the business.

Keller (2006:74) highlights that brand personality serves to create a strong brand identity. Therefore, businesses will be better able to position their brands successfully if they have clearly defined a brand's attributes and traits (Wood, 2000:666). Uggla (2006:787) cites that brand architecture refers to the link between brands and certain human-like characteristics, which creates certain associations. Khare and Handa (2009:65) points out that brand personality underpins the postmodern branding and fulfils a multifaceted function in businesses targeting consumers, especially in terms of their marketing communications.

Brand personality has a direct influence on consumer behaviour. A distinctive brand personality helps to create a set of unique and favourable associations in the consumer's mind and, therefore, evokes an enhanced sense of brand equity (Ranjbar, 2010:11). A well-defined and established brand personality serves to encourage brand preference amongst consumers and helps develop stronger emotional ties with, and trust and loyalty in the brand (Malhotra & Naresh, 1988:211). Aaker (1996:349-350) indicates that brand personality is one of the most significant dimensions of the brand identity and plays an important role in the consumer decision-making process.

Noting the salience of brand personality in creating a brand identity, Aaker (1997) developed a brand personality trait scale based on the Big Five personality traits model of human personality. The scale consists of five generic dimensions, namely 'excitement, sincerity, competence, sophistication and ruggedness'. This scale has served as a brand personality measure in several studies (Geuens *et al.*, 2009:97, Aaker *et al.*, 2001; Kim, Han & Park, 2001).

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Clark (2013:1) indicates that the luxury motor vehicle market in South Africa is dominated by three main German brands, BMW, Mercedes-Benz and Audi, and that together these brands have a market share of around 80 per cent. Luxury motor vehicle sales accounted for about 18 per cent of total passenger motor vehicle sales in 2012 (Clark, 2013:1). There are various definitions of the Generation Y cohort but this study opted for Market's (2004:21) definition. Generation Y, is defined as individuals born between 1986 and 2005 (Market, 2004:21). Generation Y represents an important current and future target market to marketers (LaSalle, 2003:3), including those in the luxury motor vehicle market. Given that motor vehicles, especially luxury motor vehicles, are a conspicuous consumption item that are often used to signal status to others (Han *et al.*, 2010:27), luxury motor vehicle marketers need to understand Generation Y members' perceptions of brand identity and their attachment to brands.

Marketers want to attract individuals in the Generation Y cohort and earn their loyalty (Williams & Page, 2011:2). Generation Y consumers are considerably more brand and image conscious than their predecessors in the Generation X and Baby Boomer cohorts (Deloitte, 2014:4). According to a survey conducted by Deloitte 2014, brand image determines which vehicles are permitted into the Generation Y cohort's consideration set. The survey revealed that more than 67 per cent of Generation Y participants indicated 'brand image' as a critical aspect when purchasing a luxury motor vehicle. Nearly half (47%) of these participants indicated that their impressions from other consumers who drive a luxury motor vehicle would affect their purchase. This is in contrast to a previous survey by Deloitte (2010) that suggested that only 33 per cent of Generation X and 24 per cent of Baby Boomer consumers' purchases are influenced by the impressions of other consumers.

Generation Y consumers tend to establish a holistic relationship with a particular brand, meaning that the brand should play an important role in their lives (McAlexander *et al.*, 2002:377).

The brand personality trait scale developed by Aaker (1997) suggests that the dimensions used in the brand personality scale operate in different ways or influence consumer preference for different reasons (Aaker, 1997:353). For example, 'sincerity', 'excitement' and 'competence', tap an innate part of human personality, while 'sophistication' and 'ruggedness' tap a dimension that individuals desire but do not necessarily have. Aaker (1997:354) suggests that 'other practical applications of the research also exist' other than the theoretical. A Brand personality perception study on motor vehicles was conducted by Ranjbar (2010:2) in Iran. However, brand personality research or related research in South Africa is limited. As such, the research undertaken in this study will significantly contribute to understanding the consumer behaviour of the Generation Y cohort, particularly that relating to the luxury motor vehicle industry of South Africa. This research study sought to measure the perceptions of Generation Y individuals on a brand personality scale of the luxury sedan motor vehicle market in South Africa.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study addresses the following objectives:

1.3.1 Primary objective

The primary objective of this study was to determine the brand personality perceptions of luxury sedan motor vehicles amongst the South African Generation Y cohort.

1.3.2 Theoretical objectives

In order to achieve the primary objectives, the following theoretical objectives are formulated for this study:

- Define branding.
- Define brand personality.
- Describe Aaker's (1997) brand personality trait scale.
- Identify the role of brand personality within the marketing strategy.

- Determine the influence of brand personality on consumer behaviour and purchasing intentions.
- Define luxury sedan motor vehicles and outline this sector's current state within the South African market.

1.3.3 Empirical objectives

- Identify Generation Y students' top-of-the-mind awareness concerning luxury sedan motor vehicle brands.
- Establish a factor structure for Aaker's (1997) 42 brand personality traits applicable for luxury sedan brands.
- Investigate the brand personality perceptions of luxury sedan motor vehicles amongst Generation Y students by means of Aaker's (1997) brand personality trait scale.
- Determine whether gender differences exist regarding Generation Y students' brand personality perceptions of luxury sedan motor vehicles.
- Investigate Generation Y students' purchasing intentions of luxury sedan motor vehicles by making use of an adapted a scale by Zeithaml et al. (1996).
- Determine whether gender differences exist regarding Generation Y students' purchasing intentions of luxury sedan motor vehicles.

1.4 HYPOTHESES TESTING

A hypothesis is a statement about the relationship between variables (Hair *et al.*, 2008:56). Hypotheses testing involves making assumptions about a phenomenon of interest and then testing that assumption (Berndt & Petzer, 2011:253). The significance level for testing the hypotheses formulated in this study was set at $\alpha=0.05$ (Smith, 2004: 3). The decision rule for the hypotheses was applied as follows:

- If P-value is $\geq \alpha$, conclude H_0
- If P-value is $< \alpha$, conclude H_a

A null hypothesis (H_0) indicates no difference or association between the variables, whereas an alternate hypothesis (H_a) states that there is a difference or association between the variables. The following hypotheses will be tested and reported on in Chapter 4.

- H₀1: Brand personality perceptions of luxury sedans do not differ between males and females
- H_a1: Brand personality perceptions of luxury sedans differ between males and females
- H₀2: Purchasing intentions of luxury sedans do not differ between males and females
- H_a2: Purchasing intentions of luxury sedans differ between males and females

The next section discusses the research design and methodology used in the study.

1.5 RESEARCH DESIGN METHODOLOGY

The study comprises a literature review and empirical study. The empirical study was conducted by means of quantitative research, using the survey method.

1.5.1 Literature review

In order to underpin the empirical study, a review of South African and international literature was conducted using secondary data sources that included the Internet, textbooks, business journals, academic journals, and online academic databases.

1.5.2 Empirical study

The empirical portion of this study comprised of target population, sampling frame, sampling method, sample size, measuring instrument and data collection method, and statistical analysis, discussed as follows:

1.5.2.1 Target population

The target population intended for this study was registered students in the higher education institutions (HEIs) of South Africa. This target population was defined as follows:

- Element: Students registered at the HEIs of South Africa
- Sampling units: South African public registered HEIs
- Extent: South Africa
- Time: 2014

1.5.2.2 Sampling frame

This study focused on the students registered at two South African HEIs located in the Gauteng province.

1.5.2.3 Sampling method

In this study, a non-probability, convenience sample was taken from the sample frame. The study included respondents in such a manner that the sample was representative of the population of South Africa by means of gender and race.

1.5.2.4 Sample size

In Step 1 of the study, a sample of 65 participants was selected in order to determine Generation Y students' top-of-the-mind awareness concerning luxury sedan motor vehicle brands in South Africa. Following this, the historical approach was used to determine the sample size of 500 respondents for Step 2 of the study. This is in line with similar studies regarding the measurement of brand personality (Bouhleb *et al.*, 2011; Ranjbar, 2010; Long-Yi, 2010 & Matzler *et al.*, 2006).

1.5.2.5 Measuring instrument and data collection method

In Step 1 of the study, a sample of 65 participants were requested to complete a questionnaire indicating which luxury sedan motor vehicles first came to their mind; that is, applying the top-of-the-mind-awareness method. The top three brands (BMW, Audi Mercedes-Benz), identified from this step were then included in the questionnaire used for Step 2 of the study. In Step 2, a sample of 500 participants was requested to indicate their brand personality perceptions of luxury sedans on a self-administered questionnaire.

Section A of the questionnaire requested data related to the demographics of the participants. Section B used the brand-personality-trait scale developed by Aaker (1997). This scale measured the participants' perception of brand personality of the top three brands of luxury sedans using a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree). Section C measured the purchasing intentions of the participants using an adapted version of Zeithaml *et al.* (1996) scale on purchasing intentions. Again, a five-point Likert scale was used to record responses.

The questionnaire used in Step 2 of the study was pre-tested and pilot tested on a sample of participants that did not form part of the sampling frame. In addition, the 65 participants used in Step 1 of the study were excluded from the sample used for Step 2 of the study.

1.5.2.6 Statistical analysis

The captured data was analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), Version 22.0 for Windows. The following statistical methods were used on the empirical data sets:

- Reliability and validity analysis
- Descriptive analysis
- Significance tests
- Factor analysis

1.6 CHAPTER CLASSIFICATION

Against the background information provided in this chapter, the remainder of this dissertation comprises the following chapters:

Chapter 2: Branding and brand personality

In this chapter, the literature concerning brand personality is reviewed. This is followed by a discussion of the role of brand personality in the marketing strategy. This chapter also considers the role that brand personality plays in consumer behaviour, affective loyalty and purchasing intentions. The current state of luxury sedan motor vehicles within the South African market is discussed. Thereafter, a review of the literature concerning current perceptions of brand personality of luxury sedan motor vehicles is discussed.

Chapter 3: Research design and methodology

The population, sampling frame, sampling method and data collection method are discussed in this chapter. In addition, the statistical techniques used to analyse the captured data are outlined.

Chapter 4: Data analysis and interpretation

Within this chapter, the research findings are analysed, interpreted and evaluated.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and recommendations

This chapter comprises a review of the entire study and provides the conclusions drawn from the study. The limitations of the study are outlined and recommendations emanating from the study are made for further research.

1.7 ETHICS STATEMENT

This research project adheres to the principles of academic research by protecting the identities and interests of respondents, while conforming to the ethical writing standards of academic research. All information provided by the participants is treated confidentially and the responses provided are reported in aggregate. The participation in this study was voluntary.

1.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter focused on the relevant aspects of the overall study. Brand personality is a significant concept to consider in the preparation of a marketing strategy. Personality traits are intangible features of a brand that play a major role in developing a relationship between the brand and the consumer. People tend to match themselves with specific brands that match their personality type. Marketers need to understand these personality types and tailor their marketing activities according to these differences.

Generation Y is the future target market. They represent the majority of the new age generation of robust personalities and impulsive buying decisions. Much of their purchasing decisions are influenced by peers, social media and the web. Understanding their perceptions about brands is vital. This is why this study takes a look at these specific brand personality perceptions of the cohort.

The chapter speculated on the overall framework of the study. Theoretical and empirical objectives are outlined. The classification of the chapters was also discussed with reference on how each section dealt with different aspects of literature. The following chapter, Chapter 2, provides a detailed discussion on the underlying literature of the topic under review.

CHAPTER 2: DEFINING THE BRANDING CONCEPT

2.1 INTRODUCTION

As stated in the previous chapter, the primary objective of this study is to determine the brand personality perception of luxury sedan motor vehicles amongst the South African Generation Y cohort. The main aim of this chapter is to provide the overall theoretical framework of the study by giving insight into brand personality as a concept. Furthermore, it aims to provide context while illustrating the importance and relevance of investigating the brand personality of luxury sedans.

The different sections of this chapter contribute to the overall overview of the study. Section 2.2 provides a detailed definition of the term branding and brand personality (Section 2.2.9). The focus of Section 2.3 is on Aaker's brand personality trait scale, while Section 2.4 investigates the role of brand personality in the marketing strategy. Section 2.5 elaborates on the influence of brand personality on consumer behaviour and purchasing intentions. Section 2.6, provides a definition of a luxury sedan while Section 2.7 discuss the current state of the luxury sedan motor vehicle market in South Africa. Section 2.8 outlines some of the factors influencing the purchase decisions of luxury sedans. The final section of this chapter, describe some aspects of the Generation Y cohort, which is the target population used in this study.

2.2 DEFINING BRANDING

The term branding originates from an Old Norse term '*brandr*' that means to burn (Blackett, 2004:1). Farmers would burn their livestock to create a distinguishable mark that trade buyers would be able to distinguish between the owners. A distinguishable mark also allows manufacturers to brand their products to differentiate their uniqueness (Adjei, Mensah, and Adu-boahen, 2014:156). The manufacturer can establish a proprietary name for a product through the creation of a distinguishable mark (Kotler and Keller, 2006:304). Branding is, however, more than merely creating a mark or establishing a name, and is regarded as a complex phenomenon (Maurya & Mishra, 2012:122). There are several definitions of the term brand but for the purpose of this study, the definition offered by the American Marketing Association (AMA, 2007:404) is used:

'A Brand is a name, term, sign, symbol, or perhaps a design that defines the marketer or seller of a product or service.'

A brand is a convenient distinguishable mark that allows for the classification of products and segmentation of markets (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010:242). A brand helps the customers to recall different brands and identify the preferred manufacturer. Maurya and Mishra (2012:122) argue that brands are ever-present and influence people's social, economic, cultural, and religious lives directly. Branding affects the way that consumers perceive and express themselves in society.

Branding is part of people's everyday lives (Bernstein, 2003:1134). The idea of branding has become so popular that there are few products that go unbranded. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2010:242), branding allows businesses to sell their products distinctively among competitors. Branding also provides the business with distinctive legal protection, such as patents or trademarks. Therefore, businesses need to conceptualise their brand meaning for consumers to form a relationship with the overall brand.

According to Adjei *et al.* (2014:156), there are several aspects of branding that should be considered in order to understand the theory behind the concept. These aspects include brand name, brand mark, brand image, brand awareness, brand loyalty and brand equity.

2.2.1 Brand name

A brand name is an element of a brand that is constructed using a combination of letters and/or numbers that make up a word (Kotler, 2006:450). An example of a manufacturer brand name is BMW, which in English stands for Bavarian Motor Works (BMW, 2013). Consumers can generally differentiate between manufacturers using the brand name.

According to Belén del Río *et al.* (2001:452), a product's value, trade and the business itself are enhanced when a product is identified over time by a brand name. Kotler and Armstrong (2010:242) add that the concept of a brand name helps the consumer to identify a product that can satisfy his or her needs. Consumers have a wide choice of products when making a purchase and it is therefore crucial for marketers to create an easily recognisable brand name. The brand name can also be supported by a brand mark to assist in making the brand recognisable.

2.2.2 Brand mark/logo

In contrast to a brand name, a brand mark cannot be expressed verbally. Maurya and Mishra (2012:123) define a logo as a symbolic sign, mark or icon of the actual brand. It is unique from that of the competitors (Adjei *et al.*, 2014:156). The brand mark serves as a distinguishable mark for consumers to identify a particular brand. It can therefore also be considered as a brand because it incorporates some of the aspects of the definition of a brand by the American Marketing Association (AMA, 2007:404). Consumers use this sign, symbol or brand mark to identify the uniqueness of the brand. Klink (2003:154) propose that a brand name and brand mark can assist in the communication of the brand's image.

2.2.3 Brand image

Brand image may be defined as the concept the consumers have in their minds regarding a particular brand (Aaker, 1996:69). Bian and Moutinho (2011:194) point out that the brand image is the 'set of brand associations in consumer memory'. These associations are a result of the interactions the consumer had with the brand. Bian and Moutinho (2011:193) assert that one crucial aspect of marketing activity is to communicate the brand image to selected target markets.

Globalisation has provided consumers with a vast amount of brand choices leading to their perception of the various brands and guiding their purchase decisions. Pappu, Quester and Cooksey (2006:697) emphasise the importance of a brand image for brands that compete in international context. International brands have the challenge of maintaining the core essence of the brand globally. Brand image can be the influencing factor in the overall brand impression. The impression that a brand creates influences the familiarity of a brand among consumers.

2.2.4 Brand awareness

Aaker (1997:5) defines brand awareness as consumers' ability to recall and recognise brands in different settings. McDonald and Sharp (2000:5) state that brand awareness is a set of brands that consumers give a considerable amount of attention when making a serious purchase decision. O'Guinn *et al.* (2009:33) indicate that brand awareness is a significant factor indicating consumers' knowledge about the brand. Indeed, brand awareness entices consumers, leaving them more knowledgeable about the brand.

When engaging in a purchasing situation regarding a motor vehicle, consumers would seek information about the brands' features. It is therefore vital for marketers to understand the cue that consumers grasp about the brand.

Berger *et al.* (2007:461) clarify that in most cases, brands offer different levels of product variety that consumers can easily identify. This variety can act as a cue that can directly affect consumers' inference about the brand and the type of brand the consumer chooses.

2.2.5 Brand loyalty

Loyalty can be defined as the customer's willingness to buy repeatedly from the seller over the long-term (Boshoff & Du Plessis, 2009:319). The overall impressions formed by the consumer can result in a long-term relationship with the brand (Lombard 2007:25). Furthermore, the relationship can be formed through a series of interactions. Consumers who are loyal to specific brands dominate the luxury sedan market (Strach & Everett, 2006:107-110). The more loyal consumers become to a brand, the higher the value of that brand. Brand loyalty is therefore closely related to brand equity (Adjei *et al.*, 2014:157).

Keller (1993:17) support this statement by arguing that one aspect of brands is that when there is strong brand equity there will be stronger brand loyalty. It is therefore crucial for marketers to understand this relationship and the role that sales can play in enhancing brand loyalty and brand equity.

2.2.6 Brand equity

Aaker (1991:15) defines brand equity as a combination of assets interlinked with a brand's name and symbol, adding significant contribution to the value provided by the product to a business or a business's customers. Kotler and Armstrong, (2010:243) add that brand equity is the unique effect that influences the customer's behaviour when exposed to the product and the marketing activities. Brand equity measures the brand's strength in terms of the consumer preference and loyalty. Elliott and Wattanasuwan (1998:131) articulate that the meaning of a brand and a brand's equity must cohere to the lived experience of purchase and usage. The concept of brand equity helps marketers to define their distinctiveness among competition (Sze & Hamid, 2012:102).

In addition, Wood (2000:662) highlights that brand equity can be the force that drives competitive advantage. It is derived from knowledge experience of the consumer on the

product as the business is offering it. According to Sze and Hamid (2012:102), a business needs to build solid brand equity for their products to prolong its competitiveness in the market. Brand equity can be enhanced by means of a brand strategy that will consequently improve brand loyalty as well.

2.2.7 Brand strategy

Brand strategy refers to the way businesses blend and match their brand's name on the product and the representation of the brand globally (Aaker, 2004:10; Laforet & Sunders, 1999:52-53; Olins, 1990:3). The strategy is established in line with the broader portfolio of the business that has ownership of the brand. According to Knox and Freeman (2006:696), much attention has been directed to the acquisition and retaining of customers as a strategy of brand development. Marketing managers need to formulate a proper branding strategy in order to achieve marketing objectives.

Brand strategy is also a vital part of the overall marketing strategy. Holt and Cameron (2010:12) indicate that brand strategies ensure that business goals are achieved and brand culture is enhanced. Businesses, however, vary in context and there is therefore no universal rule for the establishment of brand strategies. Shahri (2011:52) asserts that a branding strategy aims to establish a unique identity and position of the brand in the market.

2.2.8 Brand positioning

Brand positioning is referred to as an instilled conception about the brand in the consumer's mind (Ghodeswar, 2008:6). Venter and Van Rensburg (2009:218) define positioning as the placement of the brand within the consumer's mind relative to competitors. Sujan and Bettman (1989:454-456) indicate that a significant concept to consider in brand positioning is the similarity and the difference of the brand as perceived by the consumer relative to other brands.

Positioning is a defining factor of the product's position in the market. A marketer may have several choices when positioning a new brand in the market. According to Fuchs (2010:1766), businesses can position their brands with an infinite number of linkages and associations. For example, a vehicle manufacturer may associate itself with quality, class, style or speed.

A business tries to establish a sustainable competitive advantage through positioning in terms of tangible features and intangible attributes in the consumers mind (Gwin & Gwin, 2003:30). Kotler and Keller (2006:310) opine that positioning results in a successful creation of a customer value proposition that outlines the reasons why the customer should buy the product. Therefore, a well-positioned brand tends to appeal to a certain segment as a result of the differential advantage created through positioning. Ghodeswar (2008:5) suggest positioning as an extension of brand personality that influences the brand directly. A business can position their brand based on their brand personality to successfully create a strong relationship with their customers (Keller & Richey, 2006:75).

2.2.9 Brand personality

Brands tend to possess certain attributes that relate to human characteristics (Aaker, 1997:347). These brand attributes can be defined as the brand's personality. Consumers can relate to these attributes of the brand and build a relationship with the brand (Freling & Forbes, 2005:150). Kim *et al.* (2002:197) stress that the degree through which people select particular brands to express themselves enhances their self-identity. Müller (2014:532) indicates that the challenge businesses face is to create brands with specific personalities to appeal to their target market. Marketing managers therefore need to make their marketing activities much more compatible with their consumers.

The brand personality concept is the one that gradually reflects the facet of branding dynamics based on usable brand attributes (Keller, 2003:596, Kapferer, 1998:44, Carr, 1996:4, Upshaw, 1995; Batra *et al.*, 1993:84-85). Brand personality is an effective marketing communication tool that a business can utilise to influence its consumers' perceptions (Zalthman, 1997:425). In addition, brand personality can serve as a guide for business marketing strategies. A brand personality trait scale can be utilised to measure consumer's perceptions of a brand's personality. Aaker's (1997) scale is the most widely used and referenced brand personality trait scale in the literature.

2.3 AAKER'S BRAND PERSONALITY TRAIT SCALE

Aaker (1997:351) developed a framework consisting of 42 personality traits, divided into the five dimensions of sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication and ruggedness. The scale items were selected from an initial list of 309 traits, which was first reduced to 114 traits, and later to 42 traits (Aaker, 1997:349). The initial list of traits was obtained by means of qualitative research as well as established personality scales from marketing

and psychology (Aaker, 1997:349). Aaker’s scale dimensions therefore have definite similarities to the renowned ‘Big Five’ personality dimensions from psychology. Seemingly, the psychological research had converge to a more robust and reliable factorial composition of human traits. Table 2.1 below indicates the facet dimension of the ‘Big Five’ personality dimensions.

Table 2.1: The ‘Big Five’ model of personality traits

Trait	Description
Openness	Curious, original, intellectual, creative and open to new ideas.
Conscientiousness	Organised, systematic, punctual, achievement oriented and dependable.
Extraversion	Outgoing, sociable, talkative and enjoy being in social situations.
Agreeableness	Affable, tolerant, sensitive, trusting, kind and warm.
Neuroticism	Anxious, irritable, temperamental and moody.

Source: Goldberg (1990:1216)

Figure 2.1 indicates the ‘Big Five’ personality dimensions from the psychological perspective. Every person has each of these personality traits embedded in them. How people rate themselves on some traits, whether high or low, constitutes the uniqueness that can be referred to as personality. Aaker’s personality trait scale is similar to the three dimensions of the ‘Big Five’ model. Sincerity can be associated with the agreeableness dimension, excitement can be related to extraversion and competence can be associated with conscientiousness.

In order to develop a concrete understanding of the concept of a brand personality scale, the term personality needs to be defined. Almund (2012:12) posits that personality reflects patterns of behaviour that people take in response to their thoughts and feelings. These patterns may include physical aspects of behaviour such as feelings like being calm rather than cognitive. Auzolay (2003:147) asserts that personality is clearly defined by traits and

is distinct from the cognitive aspects of a person. Personality can indeed be identified by certain behaviour, the exact same way that consumers can attribute personality to a brand according to its perceived behaviour (Reed *et al.*, 2012:311-313).

Figure 2.1, sheds light on the Aaker’s personality scale formed using some inputs from the ‘Big Five’ personality model.

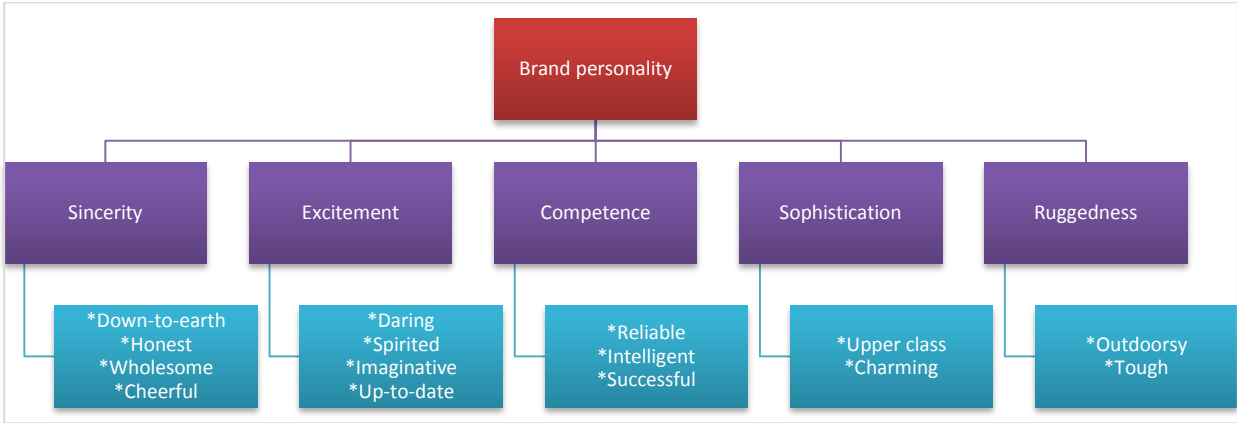


Figure 2.1: Aaker’s Brand personality Framework

Source: Aaker (1997: 354)

This model of brand personality is relevant for the study based on the idea that it will allow businesses to find a unique position in the market. Businesses can use measurement models like a brand personality trait scale to determine their current position within the market in terms of brand image. Rajagopal (2006:55-57) emphasises that these traits should be unique and distinguishable from the brands in the same product category. The following table highlights the five brand personality dimensions according to Aaker (1997) with the related 42 traits.

Table 2.2: Aaker's brand personality dimensions with related items

Factor name	Traits	Factor name	Traits
Sincerity	1. Down-to-earth	Competence	12. Reliable
	2. Family-oriented		13. Hard-working
	3. Small-town		14. Secure
	4. Honest		15. Intelligent
	5. Sincere		16. Technical
	6. Real		17. Corporate
	7. Wholesome		18. Successful
	8. Cheerful		19. Leader
	9. Sentimental		20. Confident
	10. Friendly		
	11. Original		
Excitement	21. Daring	Sophistication	32. Upper class
	22. Trendy		33. Glamorous
	23. Exciting		34. Good-looking
	24. Spirited		35. Charming
	25. Cool		36. Feminine
	26. Young		37. Smooth
	27. Imaginative		Ruggedness
	28. Unique	39. Masculine	
	29. Up-to-date	40. Western	
	30. Independent	41. Tough	
	31. Contemporary	42. Rugged	

Source: Aaker 1997

A good understanding of these traits is important for future studies on brand personality and the further implications that brand personality have on consumer behaviour. The conclusion can be drawn from the theory above that marketing managers need to have a solid understanding of consumer behaviour to be able to develop marketing strategies that incorporate brand personality and human personality traits. Aaker's scale measures current brand personality so that the business can determine how to adapt their marketing strategy to change the brand personality.

2.4 MARKETING STRATEGY ELEMENTS INFLUENCED BY BRAND PERSONALITY

Aaker (2009:12) defines marketing strategy as a tool that allows businesses to concentrate their resources on opportunities that will increase competitive advantage. Venter and Van Rensburg (2009:7) concur and suggest that a marketing strategy identifies the most effective use of resources to achieve marketing objectives. The significance of a strategy is to anticipate competitor's strategic moves, such as a simple move like increasing prices or more complex moves, such as new product innovations (Hoppner, 2010:1). A marketing strategy is about creating a unique and valuable position in the market (Juin, 2000:25). Walker (2011:65) suggests that such valuable position can be achieved through a competitive advantage by incorporating a well-integrated programme of marketing mix elements. McCarthy (1964:5) outlines the 4p's as crucial elements in marketing, which are; product, place, price and promotion. The following section defines these elements and explores how they are influenced by brand personality.

2.4.1 Product

Ferrell (2005:15) stipulates product as one of the core elements underpinning the marketing mix. Strydom (2011:319) defines product as a consumer satisfying need and want factor that is of a tangible nature. Dolatabadi *et al.* (2012:305) argue that in order to develop a positive brand personality, managers must create a distinction about the product offering in the consumers' minds relative to other brands.

Han *et al.* (2010:15) introduced the term brand prominence that is related to the product aspect of the marketing mix. The term allows one to simply differentiate between the visible markings on the brand that are recognisable by observers. Businesses can produce a brand that has a loud brand or an alternatively quiet brand, appealing to

different types of consumers. Veller (2008:17) provides an example of brand prominence using the Volvo XC60 crossover. The vehicle was designed with a larger insignia so that it could be visible from a distance. The visible aspect of the product is crucial because consumers can easily identify the difference that exists between brands. Visual aspects of the product would therefore result in a long lasting impression in the consumer's mind that enhances the overall perception that consumers have about the brand.

Automobile manufacturers can offer symbolic attributes to differentiate their products. These symbolic attributes include, but are not limited to, the brand name, quality, and complexity (Owomoyela, 2013:487). Brand personality perceptions also differentiate by product type (Ang & Ching Lim, 2006:42). The types of product can be divided into two groups: symbolic and utilitarian. Furthermore brand personality indicates that symbolic products are self-expressive in nature and effective and are perceived as more sophisticated. In contrast, utilitarian products possess a rational appeal, providing cognitively oriented benefits (Ang & Ching Lim, 2006:42).

2.4.2 Place

A place or perhaps so-called 'distribution' can be defined as the physical location where the service encounter takes place (Goi, 2009:2-3). According to Moghaddam and Forougi (2012:21), a distribution strategy can be the best way for a business to differentiate itself. Store layout can be the most prominent feature attracting a customer. Griffith (2005:1391) suggests that a good in-store layout such as a compelling design, can directly influence consumer elaboration and enhance consumer response.

Bannat and Wandebori (2012:84) clearly indicate that store design is an incentive to show the product at its best advantage. Therefore, store layout can affect the customer's intention to visit the store, increase the time they spend in the store and increase the likeliness of making a purchase. According to Bruwer *et al.* (2013:65), the store layout is made up of features such as odours, layout, fixtures, flooring, lighting, colours and sounds. Furthermore, these components are controlled by the retailer to create an atmosphere that increases consumers' willingness to spend.

In addition, Tlapana (2009:3) indicates that there are many other factors affecting store layout decisions, these being location, store image, service levels and store environment. It is relevant for this particular study to understand that place is an important factor to consider when creating a meaningful brand image and to understand that place is the

actual place where consumers make their purchase decisions. The distribution point can be used to alter consumers' perception of a brand.

2.4.3 Price

Price is an important factor in the overall performance of the brand globally as well as in the domestic market. According to Strydom (2011:333-334), price is referred to as a payment made in exchange for something valuable or beneficial to the consumer. Marketers need to understand the aspects of pricing as well as setting the perfect price of a product. Moghaddam and Foroughi (2012:21) posit that pricing strategies have a direct impact on promotional strategies. Premium prices can therefore be associated with high quality but subsequently the advertising media should endorse high brand image, because inappropriate media will result in a lower brand image of the product. In an economic sense, consumers with higher income tend to consume high quality products and low income consumers consume low quality products (Damoense & Jordaan, 2007:137).

Jansen and Roy (2009:192) agree that when consumers are not fully informed about the product quality before making a purchase, the quality is judged based on the price. Furthermore, a higher price is associated with higher quality. Consumers perceive products of high quality as being prestigious. Therefore, businesses often charge higher prices to signal quality and more prestigious products.

2.4.4 Promotion

Kotler and Keller (2006:310) state that promotion is a vital component in the marketing campaign, consisting of multiple tools designed to support the selling of products or services to consumers. Tjiptono (2002:219) indicates that promotion can be identified as any form of marketing communication. For instance, promotion of ideas can be regarded as advertising (Kotler & Armstrong, 2011:436-440). These ideas are sold to consumers, whom in reflection of their self-concept make decisions to accept these advertising appeals or not. Kotler (2006:311) indicates that sales promotion provides an additional incentive to convince the target market to purchase more products of the brand.

Pierre *et al.* (2011:24-25) suggest that consumer promotions have a direct impact on brand equity, mainly because promotions create awareness for the brand category. Pierre *et al.* (2011:24-25) stipulate that there is a correlation between brand personality and

sales promotion and the adverse effect both of these have on brand equity. Joshy and Siyakumaran (2009:263-264) emphasise that consumer promotion has a positive effect on brand equity in segments where consumers are loyal to the brand. It is evident that promotions have a direct impact on brand equity by successive reinforcement of changing behaviour. Clow and Baack (2013:61) conclude that advertising and promotions can change or enhance a business's image in the consumer's mind.

The marketing mix elements are crucial in the positioning of a brand. Consumers' perceptions are subject to change based on their interactions with a brand through the marketing mix. The characteristics of the product, the price it is being sold at, the place of business and all the promotional activities may influence the consumer's perception of the brand. These marketing mix elements allow the marketers to be able to target specific consumers and position their products accordingly.

2.5 BRAND PERSONALITY'S INFLUENCE ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR

Consumers are the most important part of a business (Ferrell, 2004:126). One of the major challenges that marketers deal with is trying to understand why consumers behave in a certain way. Sarker *et al.* (2013:44) highlight that information about consumers' behaviour is crucial for marketers to guide future marketing strategies.

Consumers purchase products to reflect their own personality (Freling & Forbes, 2005:150). A paper by Govers and Mugge (2004) with the title: 'I love my Jeep because it is tough like me', emphasises this argument. Consumers tend to seek out brands that match their personality. Therefore, businesses need to create brands with specific personalities to cater for these consumers (Müller, 2014:532). Personality is the result of social and environmental influences on the consumer (Sarker *et al.*, 2013:1).

Marketers need to develop advertising and products with the personality traits of their target market in mind (Lombard, 2007:42). Nowadays, people are concerned about their image and lifestyle within the society that is the direct outcome of their material prosperity. People tend to project their status through various possessions such as clothes and accessories.

Agrawal (2014:1062) emphasise that consumers do not only purchase products that satisfy their needs such as social and safety needs, but self-esteem and self-actualization

also play a role in the overall satisfaction. Marketers need to focus on communicating the brand personality traits when advertising their brands in order to reach consumers effectively and influence their purchase decisions (Agrawal, 2014:1062). It is crucial to understand how different luxury sedan brands play a role in enhancing consumers' desire to purchase. Majority of the consumers with a desire to purchase vehicles do not have informed decisions, therefore their decisions can be enhanced by the brand image.

2.6 LUXURY SEDAN MOTOR VEHICLES IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN MARKET

A sedan is a vehicle that has four doors and is mainly for transporting four or more people (Dictionary of Contemporary English, 2009:1574). The typical sedan motor vehicle is mostly for personal use and has minimal features like basic driving controls, inexpensive interior finishes and low capacity engines. However, the luxury sedan has extensive features that enhance the brand perception (Raggio, 2009:84). Luxury sedans are associated with prestige and class. Shenar (2014:47) states that the best luxury sedan delivers a balance between comfort, sportiness, luxury and refinement. German vehicles active in the premium segment are BMW, Mercedes-Benz and Audi. These brands dominate this segment with a market share of about 80 per cent (Clark, 2013:23). Other luxury sedan vehicles include Jaguar, Infiniti, Lexus, Porsche, Volvo and Land Rover (Venter, 2013:3-5).

Various studies indicate that the local automotive sector has been a market leader in the manufacturing sector of South Africa (Naude, 2013:407; Streicher, 2008:2 & Flatters, 2005). The South African automotive sector has a positive influence on the South African economy (Naude, 2013:407-408). According to Trade and Investment South Africa (TISA, 2003:3), the positive contribution of the automotive industry may be regarded as a major role player in the success of the South African economy. The 2013 economic review by the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC, 2013) indicates that the automotive industry had a solid performance, as production expanded by 50 per cent during the year 2013.

The top three luxury brands in South Africa, according to sales figures, are Audi, BMW and Mercedes-Benz. BMW has been identified as the top luxury vehicle brand in South Africa for 2013, with 27 671 units sold, followed by Mercedes-Benz's 22 636 units and Audi's 19 335 units (I Africa, 2014; Mercedes-Benz SA, 2014). These figures indicate how

lucrative the South African luxury vehicle market is and, therefore, highlight the importance of understanding the factors influencing these consumer purchase decisions.

2.7 FACTORS INFLUENCING THE PURCHASE DECISIONS OF LUXURY SEDANS

Shende (2014:2) highlights the factors that influence the purchase of a luxury sedan. These factors include, but are not limited to, the reliability of the product, the price of the product, trendy appeal, how much non-price promotion is offered, the trustworthiness and the feeling that a customer has towards the brand.

Consumers appear to have a desire to purchase particular premium brands, even when alternative brands offer similar benefits (Bronnenberg *et al.*, 2012:2472). Consumers engage online search and word of mouth before making a decision to purchase a specific brand. Strong brands have long-term relationship with their customers, since consumers tend to be brand loyal (Ghodeswar, 2008:4). Marketers need to understand the various aspects that create these long-term relationships.

Choo and Mokhtarian (2004:202) reason that a proper understanding of the relationships between personality and lifestyle factors as well as vehicle type choices have positive implications on purchases. Therefore, marketers need to understand these factors to be able to develop future marketing strategies and understand consumer decision-making. For the purpose of this study, the primary focus is on brand personality and the factors influencing vehicle choice models.

Kreindler (2014) asserts that the current automobile market is dominated by the Generation Y cohort, who surpasses the previous Generation X domination. He concludes that Generation Y purchases approximately 26 per cent of the cars, compared to the estimated 25 per cent purchased by Generation X within the same period. Therefore, it is crucial to understand the Generation Y cohort, their behaviour and their purchase intentions.

In order to understand Generation Y and their purchasing intentions, the study made use of an adapted purchasing intention scale by Zeithaml *et al.* (1996) scale. This allowed the understanding of Generation Y's purchasing intentions with relevance to the luxury sedans.

2.8 PURCHASING INTENTIONS

Consumers have different preferences as well as decision making styles. Purchasing intentions can be referred to as the future intent of buying behaviour as well as the economic decision involved in the process (Doyle, 2011). The study made use of a purchasing intention scale adapted from Zeithaml *et al.* (1996). Originally the scale had consisted of several items which focused on obtaining information regarding the behavioural intentions of consumers towards a business. The item wording as reflected in Zeithaml *et al.* (1996) read as follows:

- *Say positive things about XYZ to other people*
- *Recommend XYZ to someone who seeks advice*
- *Encourage friends and relatives to do business with XYZ*
- *Consider XYZ your first brand of choice*
- *Do more business with XYZ in the next few years*

However the original item wording was significantly changed in order to achieve the sixth empirical objective (See, Appendix A). The measurement of purchasing intention will emphasise the importance of Generation Y consumers with regard to luxury sedan motor vehicles.

2.9 GENERATION Y

Members of the Generation Y cohort are perceptive to the marketing hype created by advertisements (Williams & Page, 2011:44-45). Furthermore, Spero and Stone (2004:153-154) indicate that the web space is where this cohort congregates, interacts with friends and family, work and shop. In addition, the web is the place where Generation Y individuals turn to for information (Nicholas *et al.*, 2011:28). Therefore, the internet plays a significant role in Generation Y members' social lives.

They like to stay informed about what is currently trending and popular. Williams and Page (2011:44) speculate that the Generation Y cohort is an enigma to marketers and is likely to have more disposable income than preceding generations.

Deloitte (2014) identified specific factors that would influence the Generation Y individual in making a significant purchase decision. Deloitte's (2014) study indicates the most

prominent factors that influence Generation Y consumers to purchase a luxury sedan. Brand image was among the prompting factors in the decision to purchase a vehicle. The survey also indicates the reasons why they would not make a purchase. Affordability, operational costs and lifestyle needs were some of the reasons concluded in the survey.

It is imperative to acknowledge the Generation Y cohort's addiction to virtual social media. Marketers need to understand that this generation of brand conscious consumers are susceptible to social media. Williams and Page (2011:36) conclude that marketing on a web-based platform would be beneficial for marketers targeting the Generation Y cohort. This would allow marketers to engage with their target market, since it is their playground and where they live.

2.10 CONCLUSION

The chapter outlined the various aspects of the literature of the topic under review. The focus of the chapter was directed towards understanding the influence that brand personality has on the purchasing intentions of the consumers. It was therefore clear that research will largely contribute towards future research on the similar topics on brand personality. The following chapter addresses the research methodology and statistical methods used in the empirical portion of the study. The methodology discussed outlined how the data were prepared and the tools that were used to analyse the data.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Research solves a problem in a systematic way. Rajasekar *et al.* (2006:5) assert that research methodology defines the study methods through which one can gain knowledge. In essence, research methodology entails the overall work plan of the research. Proctor and Jamieson (2012:4) state that marketing research forms a link between the researcher and the consumer through information gathered. The concept of marketing research is about the collection, analysis and interpretation of information (Smith, 2012:5). Such information is relevant and useful in making effective marketing decisions.

Scientific methods are applied when conducting marketing research to uncover the truth about the marketing phenomena (Zikmund & Babin, 2012:6). Marketing research allows the marketer to understand the consumer in depth. The study aimed to examine the brand personality trait perceptions and the purchasing intentions of the Generation Y cohort with regard to luxury sedan motor vehicles.

This chapter elucidates on the different types of methods that were used in this study. Much of this chapter discusses the sampling plan and data collection methods. The chapter outlines the design of the questionnaire and its administration and how data are prepared. The next section discusses the research design.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Malhotra (2010:102) defines the research design as an essential foundation, framework and significant blueprint for conducting a research project. A good research design will result in an effective research project. Kumar (2005:94) defines research design as planned, structured and strategic in nature, conceived as to obtain research answers. In addition, a well thought out research design answers research questions in a valid, objective and economical way.

Kadzin (2003:3) highlights that when a researcher is planning to undertake a study, it is important to select the appropriate research design before involving participants of the study. The appropriate research design used will determine how the participants are included in the study. Parasuraman, Grewal and Krishnan (2006:56) differentiate between two types of research, namely exploratory and conclusive research:

- *Exploratory research* gathers information to shed light on a particular situation, providing an ultimatum for further research.
- *Conclusive research* confirms that the insights are true, allowing the researcher to make a decision about the course of action.

This study made use of a conclusive research approach. Malhotra and Briks (2000:76) subdivide conclusive research into descriptive research (describing some functions or characteristics) and casual research (researching cause and effect relationships). Boieje (2009:25) asserts that the descriptive nature of research deals with the 'what' of the social phenomena. The main aim of the study was to collect data regarding the brand personality perceptions of luxury sedan motor vehicles amongst a certain cohort. Therefore, a descriptive research design was utilised.

The following section discusses the approach to the research of the topic under review in detail.

3.3 RESEARCH APPROACH

Creswell (2007:3) differentiates between three approaches to research that are qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods. This section briefly discusses the two most common methods, qualitative and quantitative, as outlined by Brendt and Petzer (2011:31).

Williams (2011:65) stresses that a researcher selects the quantitative approach in response to a study requiring numerical information. In contrast, the qualitative approach being for research including, observations, textual or visual analysis, and interviews (Gill *et al.* 2008:291). Creswell (2007:3-5) indicates that there is more quantitative research than qualitative research.

This study followed a descriptive research design and, as such, the quantitative approach to data collection was followed, whereby a survey questionnaire was used to gather the required data. In order to select the sample, a strategy should be formulated to outline specific objectives that the sample should address (Boieje, 2009:20-21).

A sampling strategy is discussed in the next section to show how the sample was selected.

3.4 SAMPLING STRATEGY

The sampling strategy is the plan that the researcher outlines to be confident that the sample used in the research study will represent the population from which the sample was drawn (Landreneau & Creek, 2008:2). The sampling strategy of the study addressed target population, sampling frame, method of sampling and sample size as discussed below:

3.4.1 Target Population

Population is the total number of people in a specific geographical area of the study (Barnejee, 2010:62). Malhotra (2010:372) defines a target population as the total number of elements from which data may be collected. An incorrectly defined target population may result in an ineffective research study or misleading findings. A target population is defined in terms of the elements, sampling units, extent and term.

The target population for this study was defined as students registered at South Africa's public HEIs in 2014.

3.4.2 Sampling frame

Turner (2003:3) defines a sampling frame as the source from which a sample may be drawn. The sampling frame for this study consisted of the 25 HEIs registered in South Africa (DHET, 2014). The sampling frame also represents the elements of a target population (Malhotra, 2010:373).

This study made use of a non-probability sample to select one traditional university campus and one university of technology campus located in the Gauteng province of South Africa.

3.4.3 Method of sampling

Nel *et al.* (1998:97) highlight that there are two broad methods of sampling, namely probability and non-probability sampling. Samkange (2009:35) defines probability sampling as the randomised selection of participants that ensures that each element has an equal probability of being chosen for inclusion in the sample. Polit and Hungler (1995:279) indicate that in contrast, a non-probability relies on the personal judgement of the researcher, rather than on random selection.

Malhotra (2010:376) mentions four different types of non-probability sampling techniques, namely convenience, judgement, quota and snowball sampling. Latham (2007:8) stipulates that a convenience sample includes individuals who are ready and available. Cant (2011:78) suggests that convenience sampling is a non-probability method that is unrestricted and very cheap to conduct. A non-probability method allows the researcher to get a large number of respondents in a short space of time and minimal cost. Therefore study made use of a non-probability convenience sampling method to select the sample participants.

3.4.4 Sample size

The sample size refers to the number of elements that a study considers (Henry, 2013:117). Lenth (2001:187) emphasise that the sample size decision is important because if the sample size is too small, it will not produce useful results and if it is too big, collecting data will be excessively.

The study was divided into two steps. Step 1 identified the top three luxury sedan brands, as identified by 65 selected participants, while Step 2 involved collecting data regarding the brand personality perceptions and purchasing intentions of luxury sedan motor vehicles from the selected sample of 500 participants.

The study encompassed a predetermined number of participants that formed part of the main study (Step 2). This study utilised the historic approach to determine the sample size. Ranjbar (2010:34) conducted a similar study that measured brand personality of a Khodro car manufacturer in Iran, with a sample size of 500 participants. Therefore, this study also had a sample size of 500 participants from the two HEI's with about 250 questionnaires from each institution.

3.5 DATA COLLECTION METHOD

The following section discusses the aspects relating to the data collection methods.

3.5.1 Measuring instrument and data Collection

Hox and Boenjie (2005:593-594) distinguish between the two methods of data collection which are primary data and secondary data collection. Discroll (2011:154) refers to primary data as data collected primarily as first-hand, without the use of secondary

sources. Oschman (2004:308) defines secondary data as already collected data that has undergone statistical procedures. The study focused on primary data.

Hair *et al.* (2008:105) highlight the quantitative research method that makes use of a survey research method, consisting of a casual and a descriptive research design. The study made use of a survey research method, utilising a self-administered questionnaire. The self-administered questionnaire is designed to be completed solely without the interventions of researchers gathering the data (Wolf, 2008:805). The next section discusses the design of the self-administered questionnaire.

3.5.2 Questionnaire design

Malhotra (2010:334) states that a questionnaire can be an instrument that is used to gather information, using a set of questions. The information in the questionnaire will translate to questions that participants will and are able to answer. Collecting data from a larger sample by means of a questionnaire is convenient when a time period is specified (Jenn, 2006:32). Rattray and Jones (2007:235) conclude that questionnaires are mainly used to ease the collection of information in an orderly manner with a defined sample.

The first chapter clearly indicated the empirical objectives that served as a guide in designing the questionnaires (See, 1.5.2.4). Each questionnaire was accompanied by a cover letter (See, Appendix A), specifically addressing the details of the research and the outcomes thereof as a means to ensure professionalism. Plain language was also used for the ease of understanding the questions.

3.5.3 Questioning format

Malhotra (2010:335) defines a questionnaire as a series of questions designed to probe information from participants. Designing a questionnaire is not a science but an art (Luccobuchi & Churchill, 2010:201). The researcher needs to identify a particular scale to be used for the questionnaire to ensure that all the empirical objectives are met.

3.5.3.1 Step 1: Brand identification

The first step of the study identified the luxury sedan brands to be used in the main study. The participants were asked to record the first brand that comes to mind when they think of a luxury sedan. This technique determines the top-of-the-mind-awareness concerning luxury sedan motor vehicle brands.

Netemeyer *et al.* (2004:210) explain top-of-the-mind-awareness as the degree to which participants spontaneously think of a brand when a product category is mentioned.

3.5.3.2 Step 2: Brand personality perceptions

The second step of the study gathered data regarding Generation Y students brand personality perceptions and purchasing intentions of luxury sedan motor vehicles by means of a Likert scale. Brendt and Petzer (2011:189) identify a Likert scale as a scale consisting of verbal descriptors that can range from a 3-point to 7-point Likert scale.

The scale is indicative of varying degrees of agreeing or perhaps the extent of disagreement with a particular statement (DeVellis, 2003:78).

The study made use of a five-point Likert scale through which participants indicated their level of descriptiveness of the provided 42 personality traits as identified by Aaker (1997) to measure brand personality perceptions of respondents. The study also measured respondent's purchasing intentions on a five-point Likert scale adapted from Zeithaml *et al.* (1996).

3.5.4 Questionnaire layout

Step 1 of the study collected information regarding brand identification. Section A of the questionnaire probed participants to identify the first brand that comes to their minds when thinking of luxury sedans. Section B of the questionnaire collected information regarding the demographics of the participants.

The second questionnaire, Step 2, consisted of three sections. The first section of the questionnaire, Section A, collected information regarding the respondent's demographical information. Successively, Section B of the questionnaire, consisted of a 5-point Likert scale, aimed at determining brand personality perceptions of participants on three luxury sedan brands, as identified in Step 1. The section was aimed at gathering information regarding the descriptiveness of Aaker's (1997) brand personality trait scale as per the selected luxury sedan brands. The last section of the questionnaire, Section C, was aimed at gathering information regarding respondent's purchasing intentions of luxury sedan motor vehicles, utilising an adapted version of a scale by Zeithaml *et al.* (1996).

The sections in the questionnaire addressed different research objectives. Table 3.1 indicated which sections of the questionnaires were used to address each of the empirical objectives as outlined in Section 1.3.3

Table 3.1: Empirical objectives and the items contained in the questionnaire and study

Empirical research objectives	Section
Identify Generation Y students' top-of-the-mind awareness concerning luxury sedan motor vehicle brands	Questionnaire 1 Section 4.7
Establish a factor structure for Aaker's (1997) 42 brand personality traits applicable for luxury sedan brands.	Figure 4.9
Investigate the brand personality perception of luxury sedan motor vehicles among Generation Y by means of Aaker's (1997) brand personality trait scale.	Questionnaire 2 Section B
Determine whether gender differences exist regarding Generation Y students' brand personality perceptions of luxury sedan motor vehicles.	Section 4.8.4
Investigate Generation Y students' purchasing intentions of luxury sedan motor vehicles by making use of an adapted scale by Zeithaml <i>et al.</i> (1996).	Questionnaire 2 Section C
Determine whether gender differences exist regarding Generation Y students' purchasing intentions of luxury sedan motor vehicles	Section 4.9.4

3.6 ADMINISTRATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRES

The questionnaire was distributed in August 2014. Step 1 of the study distributed the first questionnaire to 65 participants who did not form part of the main study. Step 2 of the study distributed 500 questionnaires of which only 420 questionnaires were usable for the study. Some of the questionnaires were completed by international students and those questionnaires were discarded as the study focussed on South Africans.

The questionnaires were distributed at two public HEIs as it will be significant to reach the target population. The study only focused on registered undergraduate students to form part of the study. Students who were targeted and formed the Generation Y cohort were given a self-administered questionnaire. The questionnaires were completed during specific class times and were collected once a student was finished. The questionnaire was handed to participants after a lecture. This ensured that there was sufficient time for the questionnaire to be completed by participants at their own convenience.

3.7 PILOT TESTING OF THE QUESTIONNAIRES

Polit *et al.* (2001:467) refer to a pilot study as the small scale study that represents the feasibility of the major study. Van Teijlingen and Hundley (2002:33) suggest that by using a pilot test, the researcher can reduce the possibility of failure.

The first questionnaire (Step 1) was distributed to five participants while the second questionnaire (Step 2) was distributed to 60 participants to test the readability of the questions and the ease of understanding. None of these participants were included in the main study (Steps 1 and 2).

The Cronbach's alpha for the pilot study of the second questionnaire was computed to determine internal reliability. The results were acceptable; the Cronbach's alpha value of Section B of the pilot study was 0.915, while Section C had a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.937. According to Malhotra (2010:319), values between 0 and 1 indicated a good internal reliability, however those values below a 0, 6 mark would entail a lack of internal reliability. The resulting values for this study indicated good internal reliability and therefore the main study was then proceeded.

3.8 DATA PREPARATION

Praya (1999:89) argues that data are not just a simple process and cannot be executed roughly without proper administration. In essence, the argument is based on the fact that if the data contains errors, and omissions, these need to be corrected. Malhotra (2010:452-455) emphasises that the data needs to be cleaned as soon as the first pile of questionnaires arrive, even though fieldwork is still in progress.

During the data preparation process, the questionnaires were inspected for errors. A skilled statistician fixed the errors by replacing the missing data with the mean of the overall data. The study encountered 5 per cent or more missing responses that were

discarded. Those with less than 5 per cent were completed by a trained statistician by means of entering a mean value of the respective questions.

McDaniel and Gates (2010:486) refer to coding as assigning different codes to questions and responses. Proper coding enlightens the data capturing process.

The questionnaire was post-coded by a highly regarded statistician and with the supervision of the supervisor.

Table 3.2: The coding information used for Step 2

TYPE OF DATA	VARIABLE	QUESTION NUMBER
Demographic data	A1 to H2	Section A
Mercedes-Benz	B1_1 to B1_42	Section B
BMW	B2_1 to B2_42	Section B
Audi	B3_1 to B3_42	Section B
Purchasing intentions Mercedes-Benz	MB_1 to MB7	Section C
Purchasing intentions BMW	BMW_1 to BMW7	Section C
Purchasing intentions Audi	Audi_1 to Audi_7	Section C

3.9 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The study made use of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22.0, a package for Windows, to capture and analyse the data. The statistical methods that were applied on the empirical data sets are described in the next section.

3.9.1 Descriptive statistics

Lombard *et al.* (2011:3) define descriptive statistics as a summary of the data obtained from the participants presented in a structured and easy understandable manner. Swanepoel *et al.* (2010:54) outline the following types of descriptive statistics, namely the

frequency distribution, mean, median, mode, range, variance, standard deviation and Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO).

3.9.1.1 Frequency distribution

Malhotra (2011:484) describes a frequency distribution as the calculated distribution of responses in relation to the variables and express these in percentages. In essence, one variable is single counted at a time. Malhotra (2011:484) adds that it is the first step when analysing the frequency distributions of the data. The study made use of statistical pie charts and tables to report the frequency distributions of the data.

3.9.1.2 Mean

The mean is a basic concept of statistics (Waiter *et al.*, 2011:3). It is one of the well-known statistics used practically. The mean is used to measure central tendency (Swanepoel *et al.*, 2010:55). A mean is the summation of all the elements in the data set of variables and divided by the total number of elements.

3.9.1.3 Median

Hair *et al.* (2008:154) defines the median as a method that ranks values from high to low, and when the data is combined and divided by two, the result is the median.

3.9.1.4 Mode

The mode appears most frequently in a data set. It measures the central tendency. In addition, it is also the value where elements are heavily concentrated (Weiers, 2010:63).

3.9.1.5 Range

The difference between the largest and the smallest observation is regarded as a range (Swanepoel, *et al.*, 2010:78). It is a simple statistical concept that is easy to measure.

3.9.1.6 Variance

The variance measures how far apart the observations are from their mean (Lombard, *et al.*, 2011:71). Wichern and Johnson (2007:123) noted that the sample variance is used as a description of the variation amounts in the measurement of a particular sample. The

concept is commonly referred to as sample variance that is the mean of squared differences.

3.9.1.7 Standard deviation

The term standard deviation is a measure of spread used to portray the distance of the observations from the mean of these observations (Swanepoel, *et al.*, 2010:82). Standard deviation is calculated using the square root of variance.

3.10 EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS

Data need to be reduced into meaningful and manageable bits. Exploratory factor analysis is highly regarded as a statistical tool that can be utilised to reduce data for confirmatory or exploratory purpose (Pallant, 2010:181). Malhotra (2010:739) states that exploratory factor analysis (EFA) is a method of categorising the fundamental factors or dimensions that describes the correlations between variables.

Comrey and Lee (2013:35) agree that the correlation matrix is the starting point of the factor analysis in which the inter-correlations are presented. Field (2000:424) indicates that these matrixes can be reduced through 'identifying variables that would correlate highly with other variables, but correlate badly with variables not within the group'. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) can be used to measure the appropriateness of the factor analysis (Malhotra, 2010:638). Furthermore, Pallant (2010:183) indicates that when the KMO produces a value greater than 0.6, the sample can be regarded as significant. In factor analysis, there are two basic approaches, namely common factor analysis and principle component analysis (Malhotra, 2010:643). This study used principle component factor analysis.

3.10.1 Principle component analysis

Principle component analysis provides insights regarding several dependent variables which are inter-correlated (Abdi and Williams, 2010:433). The concept extracts information from table data and represents the information in the form of principal components. Malhotra (2010:643) outlines several methods to determine the ideal factor solution. These include only retaining those factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0, using the scree plot to determine the number of factors to extract or specifying number of factors in accordance with prior knowledge from the literature. This study will extract 5

factors based on Aaker's (1997) brand personality framework and check if all of these factors have an eigenvalue greater than 1.0.

Interpreting the factors based on their factor loadings may be a difficult exercise. A factor rotation may solve this problem. The two categories of factor rotation are orthogonal and oblique rotation (Brown, 2009:21). Orthogonal rotation includes Varimax, Quartimax and Equamax rotation techniques. Malhotra (2010:645) indicates that the most useful technique is the Varimax rotation. This study therefore made use of a Varimax rotation to extract the factors.

3.10.2 Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO)

Malhotra (2010:638) defines Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) as the test which measures the adequacy of samples. KMO is used as an index to determine the correctness of a factor analysis. A KMO value between 0.5 and 1.0 signal a useful factor analysis while a value below 0.5 indicates an inappropriate factor analysis.

3.11 RELIABILITY

Joppe (2000:1) explained reliability as the consistency of results over time, with an absolute representation of the overall population. A research instrument can be considered as reliable if the results can be reproduced over and over again. There are several ways of calculating reliability of a research instrument. These are test-retest reliability, alternative forms of reliability and internal consistency (Malhotra, 2011:318).

This study made use of a Cronbach's alpha reliability test to determine if the internal consistency of the scale was up to standard. The coefficient can range from 0 to 1 and anything below the range such as 0.6 is regarded as unreliable due to a lack of internal consistency (Malhotra, 2010:319).

3.12 VALIDITY

Golafshani (2003:599) defines validity as a determinant of research that shows the accuracy of the results. An instrument used in a research study, should be accurate and measure what it is supposed to measure. Wiid and Diggins (2013:221) indicate that validity is important because it ensures that the data gathered are valid and accurate. Kimberlin and Winterstein (2008:2279) point out that there are various types of validity, including content validity, criterion validity and construct validity.

According to Malhotra (2010:320-321), content validity is subjective and systematic to assess whether the scale items adequately cover the entire task being measured. It ensures that the instrument that was used in the study has the desired results that can be used for further studies. In general terms, content validity is referred to as the extent to which an adequate defined construct of interest is represented by a sample of items (Polit & Beck, 2006:489). The content validity of the study was assessed by the study's supervisor and co-supervisor to ensure that the content of the questionnaire was up to standard.

Oluwatayo (2012: 394) addresses criterion validity as a comparison of criterion measures with regards to correlations that are confirmed as valid. There is a high correlation coefficient present in the scores reflected on the two or more measuring instruments when compare together and accepted as valid (Kaplan & Saccuzzo, 2005: 132-135).

Assessing the construct validity involves convergent, discriminant and nomological validity. Cook and Campbell (1979: 37-39) suggested that construct validity can be tested in two validation processes, testing for convergence between two things of similar nature and secondly testing for divergence between two things which are distinctive in nature. Moreover, Spiliotopoulou (2009: 20) highlights that, when assessing the construct validity, the values ranging from 0.15 to 0.50 indicate convergent and discriminant validity. Salzberger (2013:2) asserted that nomological validity relates different measures whose validity is in question.

3.13 TEST OF SIGNIFICANCE

Test of significance represents the likelihood that the random sample chosen will not form part of the representative population (Walonick, 1996:13). The study reviewed the basics of significance testing using the null hypothesis and p – values and conducted a t – test in order to conclude the null hypothesis

Statistical significance can be determined using two broad techniques; the T-test and ANOVA as discussed below.

3.13.1 T-test

The T-test can be used to determine whether there are any existing differences between the samples. It is a measure of the difference between the means divided by the variability of the means (Hair *et al.* 2013:288). This is calculated by adding the mean value to the

standard deviation. The result thereof is the t-value, which determines the probability of the statistical significance. The T-test provides a mathematical measure to determine two sample means that had occurred with a formula by chance.

3.13.2 ANOVA

William and Wagner (2010:95) refer to ANOVA (analysis of variance) as a statistical technique that determines the difference between the mean of multiple variables. The technique uses a categorical form of independent variables in correspondence with ongoing dependent variables. Malhotra (2010:531) notes that in the null hypothesis (H_0) all the means share the same value while the alternative hypothesis (H_a) suggests that the means do not share the same value. If there do exist a difference between variables, one must determine whether the difference has any practical significance.

3.13.3 Practical significance

Matheson (2008:1) defines practical significance as a tool that assesses the extent through which the difference in the variable is large enough to be used practically. According to Pallant (2007:207), the Cohen's D-statistic is used to calculate the level of practical significance. The following indicate how it is calculated:

- $0.20 \leq D < 0.50$: indicates a small practical significance
- $0.50 \leq D < 0.80$: indicates a medium practical significance
- $0.80 \leq D$: indicates a large practical significance

These values indicate the level of significance and the effect it has on the differences.

3.14 CONCLUSION

This chapter discussed the different types of methods that were used in this study. Much of the chapter outlined the framework used in the sampling and data collection methods. Furthermore, the chapter outlined the design of the questionnaire and its administration, and how the data were prepared.

In the next chapter, the data collected during the study are analysed and interpreted. The data form part of the researcher's report on findings of useful data. The researcher was

able to interpret the findings with assistance of statistical software and meaningful methods. Descriptive statistics allowed the data to be presented in meaningful bits and reliability test results are presented. The chapter also present an EFA to refine the research instrument. Hypotheses are also formulated and tested to determine whether there are any significant differences between male and female participants.

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reports on the empirical findings of the study. The chapter provides a discussion on the data gathering process (Section 4.2). Section 4.3 provides a framework of the data analysis and the together with the coding (Section 4.3.1) and the tabulation (Section 4.3.2). The chapter consists of several sections, providing the reader with the detailed findings of the study. Section 4.4 analyses the demographics of the participants while Section 4.5 reviews the exploratory factor analysis of the study. Section 4.6 discusses the reliability of the results. Section 4.7 provides the findings relating to the first empirical objective, while Section 4.8 address the third and fourth empirical objective while 4.8 address the fifth and sixth empirical objective. Section 4.9 offers a conclusion to the discussion of the empirical findings.

4.2 DATA GATHERING PROCESS

The data gathering process was a crucial step in the overall study formation. In Step 1 of the study, 65 questionnaires were distributed to a sample of participants who were selected according to the definition of the target population. This Step 1 questionnaire consisted of two sections. Section A made use of a free association task where the respondents were asked to write down the first brand that comes to mind when they think of a luxury sedan motor vehicle, while Section B gathered data regarding their demographics. All of the 65 questionnaires were usable and included in the study.

In Step 2 of the study, 500 questionnaires were distributed at the two HEI campuses selected for the study, in order to cover the target population as stipulated in Chapter 1. The questionnaire consisted of 56 items divided into three sections. Section A consisted of seven items designed to gather data regarding the demographics of the participants, while Section B comprised Aaker's (1997) 42 traits designed to measure the brand personality perceptions of the participants. Section C consisted of seven items designed to gather information on the purchasing intentions of the participants and made use of an adapted scale developed and validated by Zeithaml *et al.* (1996). The purchasing intentions scale indicated the relevance of purchasing intentions with relevance to the different luxury sedan brand. The scale items probed respondent to rate the

descriptiveness of the items in relation to their purchasing intention (1 not at all descriptive and 5 extremely descriptive). (See Also, Appendix)

Only 420 of the 500 questionnaires were useable. The other 80 questionnaires were unusable, as 45 were international students. These were discarded because the extent of the study was limited to the South African Generation Y cohort. The other 35 were not fully completed and, therefore, were also discarded. Despite the 80 questionnaires discarded, the remaining 420 questionnaires were deemed sufficient to conduct the factor analysis.

4.3 PRELIMINARY DATA ANALYSIS

Analysing the data set requires one to make use of coding and tabulation. The following sections discuss the tabulation and the coding of the data.

4.3.1 Coding

Malhotra (2010:454) defines coding as simply associating a code or usually a number to a relative response or question. Coding allows the data to be easily captured. The data set makes more sense when it has been coded with meaning attached to the data (Welman *et al.*, 2005:342). Step 1 of the study did not make use of coding since a topof-the-mind-awareness task was utilised. Step 2 of the study consisted of three sections; Section A, collecting data regarding participants' demographics, Section B gather data regarding brand personality perception of luxury sedan motor vehicles and Section C, which gather data regarding participants purchasing intentions. Various codes were assigned to different variables and participants. The coding of the questionnaire is reflected in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Coding information (Step 2)**Section A: Demographical information**

Question	Code	Construct measured	Value assigned to response
Question 1	A1	Country of origin	(1) South Africa, (2) Other
Question 2	A2	Province of origin	(1) Eastern Cape, (2) Free State, (3) KwaZulu-Natal, (4) Limpopo, (5) Mpumalanga, (6) Northern Cape, (7) North West, (8) Western Cape
Question 3	A3	Current year of study	(1) 1 st year, (2) 2 nd year, (3) 3 rd year, (4) 4 th year, (5) postgrad
Question 4	A4	Gender	(1) Male, (2) Female
Question 5	A5	Ethnic group	(1) African/Black, (2) Asian/Indian, (3) Coloured, (4) White
Question 6	A6	Mother tongue	(1) Afrikaans, (2) English, (3) isiNdebele, (4) IsiXhosa, (5) isiZulu, (6) Sesotho, (7) Sepedi, (8) Setswana, (9) SiSwati, (10) Tshivenda, (11) Xitsonga
Question 7	A7	Age	(1)<18, (2) 18, (3) 19, (4) 20, (5) 21, (6) 22, (7) 23, (8) 24, (9) 25, (10) 25>

Table 4.1: Coding information (continued...)

Section B: Brand personality trait rating

Mercedes-Benz	B1_1 to B1_42	Mercedes-Benz Personality trait rating	(1) Not descriptive, (2) Slightly descriptive, (3) Neutral, (4) Descriptive, (5) Extremely descriptive
BMW	B2_1 to B2_42	BMW personality trait rating	(1) Not descriptive, (2) Slightly descriptive, (3) Neutral, (4) Descriptive, (5) Extremely descriptive
Audi	B3_1 to B3_42	Audi personality trait rating	(1) Not Descriptive, (2) Slightly Descriptive, (3) Neutral, (4) Descriptive, (5) Extremely descriptive

Section C: Purchasing intentions

Question	Code	Construct measured	Value assigned to response
Int1	MB_1, BMW_1, Audi_1	Purchasing intention	(1) Not descriptive, (2) Slightly descriptive, (3) Neutral, (4) Descriptive, (5) Extremely descriptive
Int2	MB_2, BMW_2, Audi_2	Purchasing intention	(1) Not Descriptive, (2) Slightly descriptive, (3) Neutral, (4) Descriptive, (5) Extremely descriptive
Int3	MB_3, BMW_3, Audi_3	Purchasing intention	(1) Not Descriptive, (2) Slightly descriptive, (3) Neutral, (4) Descriptive, (5) Extremely descriptive

Table 4.1: Coding information (continued...)

Question	Code	Construct measured	Value assigned to response
Int4	MB_4, BMW_4, Audi_4	Purchasing intention	(1) Not descriptive, (2) Slightly descriptive, (3) Neutral, (4) Descriptive, (5) Extremely descriptive
Int5	MB_5, BMW_5, Audi_5	Purchasing intention	(1) Not descriptive, (2) Slightly descriptive, (3) Neutral, (4) Descriptive, (5) Extremely descriptive
Int6	MB_6, BMW_6, Audi_6	Purchasing intention	(1) Not Descriptive, (2) Slightly descriptive, (3) Neutral, (4) Descriptive, (5) Extremely descriptive
Int7	MB_7, BMW_7, Audi_7	Purchasing intention	(1) Not Descriptive, (2) Slightly descriptive, (3) Neutral, (4) Descriptive, (5) Extremely descriptive

4.3.2 Tabulation

The tabulation of the data allows it to be viewed according to different categories and data sets. Varalakshmi *et al.* (2005:28) emphasise that the data collected are always initially disorganised which means that it has to be organised to allow for statistical analysis. Appendix B reflects the tabulation of the gathered data.

The following section describes the demographics of the participants.

4.4 DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

The following section provides a detailed description of the demographic profile of the respondents of Step 1 and Step 2 of the study.

4.4.1 Step 1 – Brand identification

This step collected data from 65 respondents. This section outlines the statistical data retrieved regarding the gender and race distribution of the respondents.

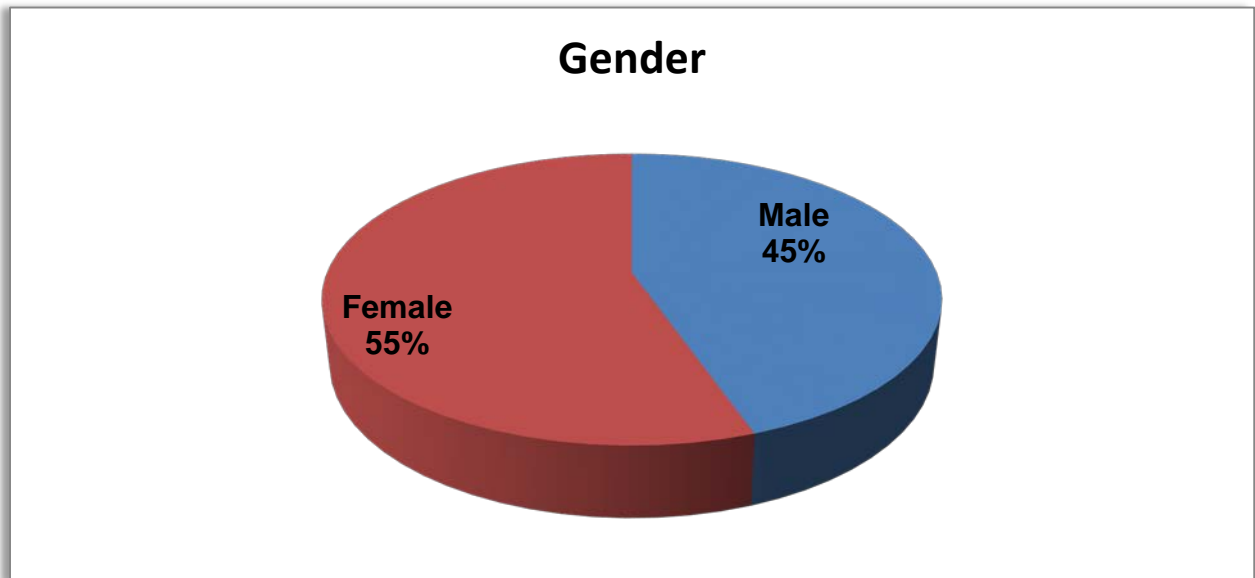


Figure 4.1: Gender distribution (Step 1)

As evident from figure 4.1, the sample group consisted of more females than males. According to the data there were 29 males and 36 females.

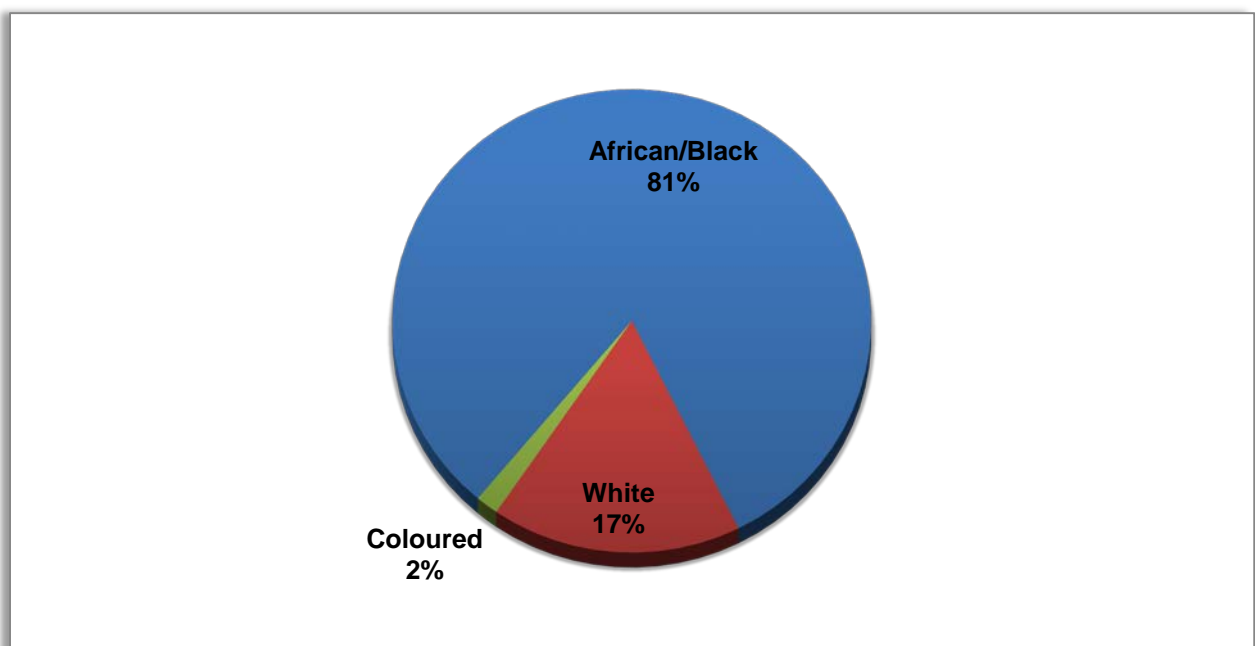


Figure 4.2: Race distribution (Step 1)

Figure 4.2 indicates that 81 per cent of the participants indicated their ethnic group to be African/Black, while 17 per cent of the participants were White and only 2 per cent were Coloured. This distribution is representative of the South African population (StatsSA, 2011).

4.4.2 Step 1 – Brand personality perceptions

Step 2 of the study included a section consisting of seven questions regarding the demographics of the participants. The focus of these questions was based on the respondent’s country of origin, province, and year of study, gender, ethnic group, mother tongue, and age. The section aimed to profile the group of participants.

The first question of the questionnaire was about the country of origin. The study was only based on the South African population. However, participants from outside the African borders administered some of the questionnaires. These questionnaires were discarded and all 420 participants included indicated South Africa as their country of origin. The second question probed participants about their province of origin.

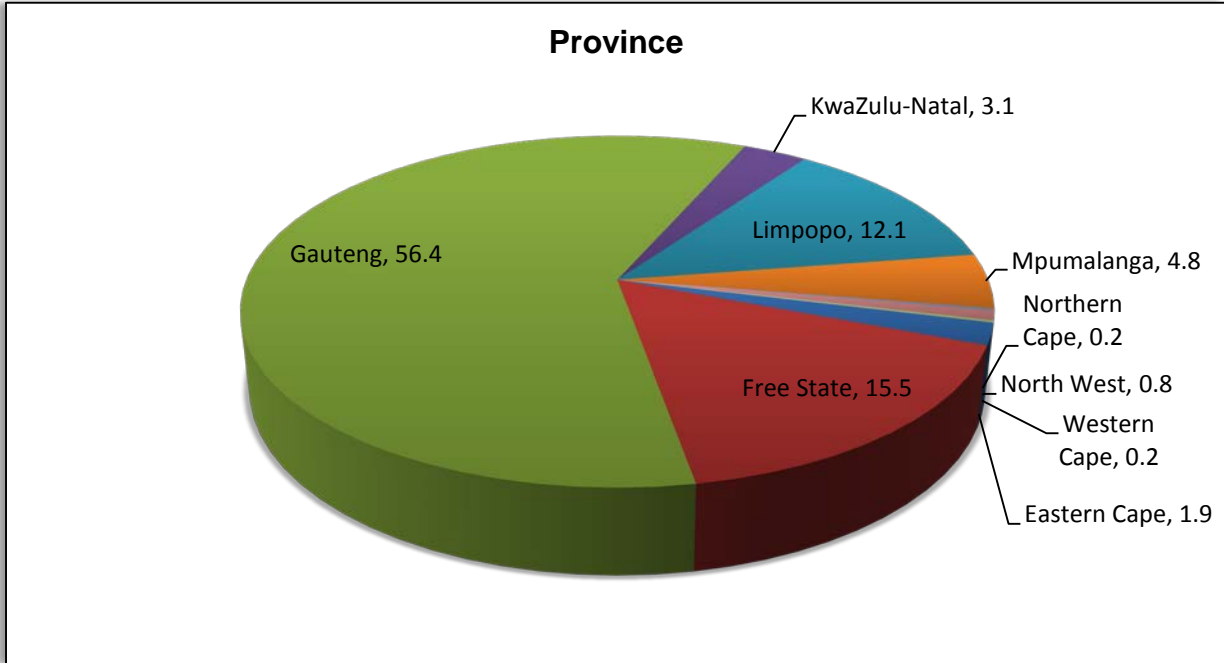


Figure 4.3: Province of origin distribution (Step 2)

Evident from Figure 4.3 above, the sample group was dominated by the population from Gauteng (56.9%). The reason for this may be because both of the HEIs accessed are located in Gauteng. Gauteng was successively followed by the Free State with 15.6 per

cent, Limpopo (12.2%), Mpumalanga (4.8%), North West (5%), KwaZulu-Natal (3.1%) and Eastern Cape (1.9%). In addition, Western Cape as well as Northern Cape only had one respondent each.

The third question of Section A, probed participants to indicate their year of study. This was included to indicate that the research is representative of students of various year levels. The next figure illustrates that the study is representative of undergraduate students and not postgraduates.

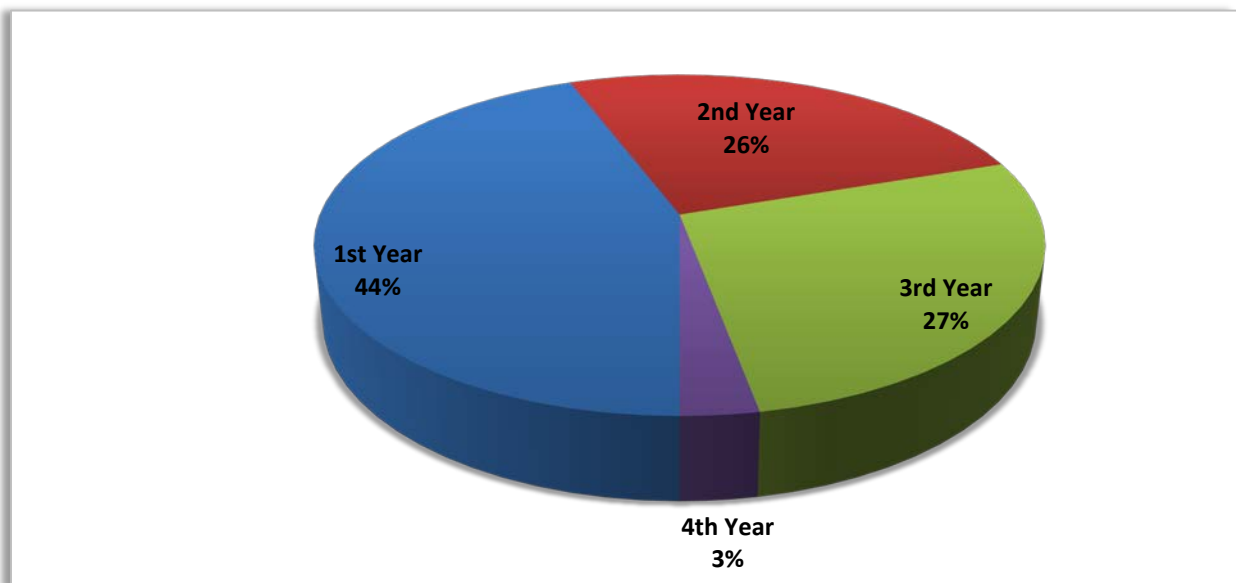


Figure 4.4: Year of Study distribution (Step 2)

Figure 4.4 above reflects the total percentage of students according to different university levels. Almost half of the sample (44%) was first year students registered at two HEIs located in the Gauteng province of South Africa. Participants in their second year level of study accounted for 25 per cent of the sample while the other 31 per cent of the sample consisted out of students at their 3rd year level of study and upwards.

The next figure illustrates the gender distribution of participants.

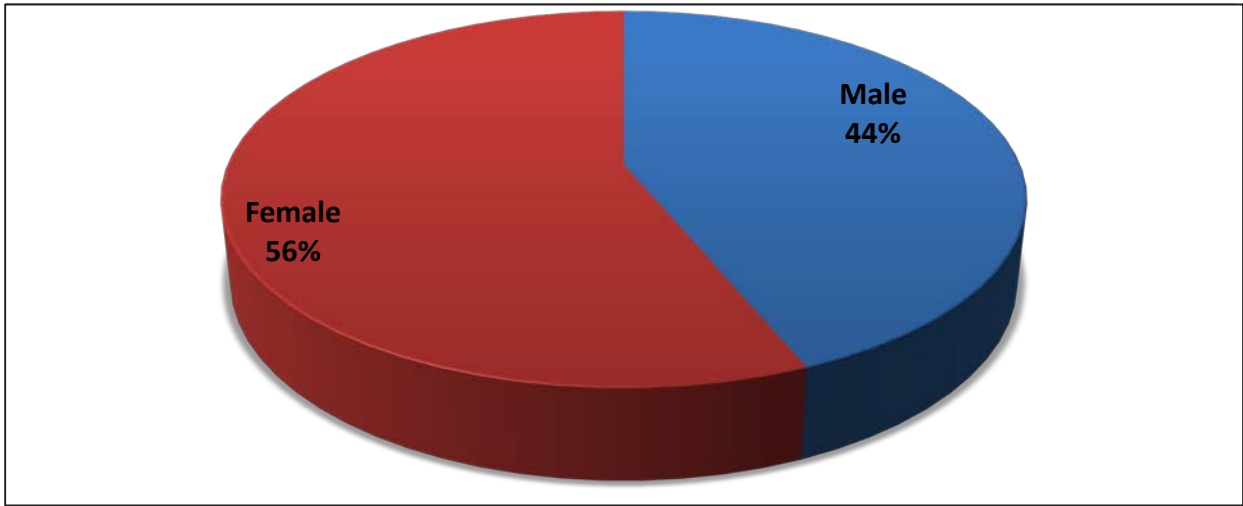


Figure 4.5: Gender distribution (Step 2)

The female students accounted for more than half of the sample, 56 per cent. The male counterpart accounted for 44 per cent of the sample participants. This gender distribution is sufficiently representative to draw comparisons between male and female participants. The ethnic group of the population is outlined in the next figure.

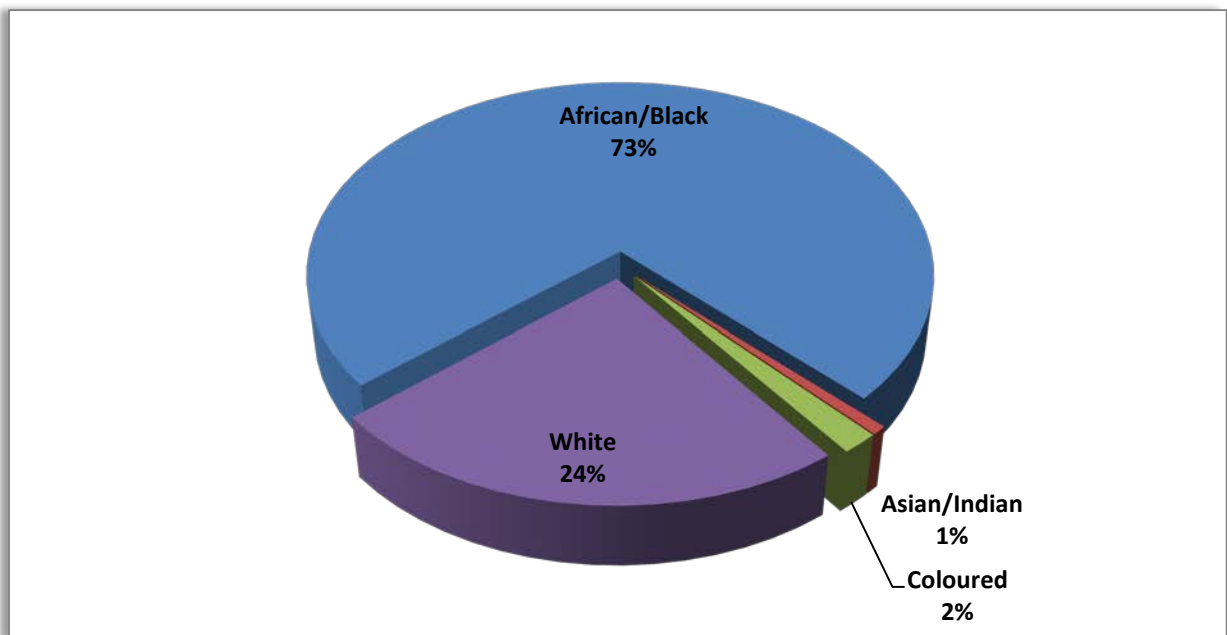


Figure 4.6: Ethnic group distribution (Step 2)

As evident from Figure 4.6, the African/Black ethnic group accounted for more than 70 per cent of the total target population. The following ethnic group was White participants that accounted for 24 per cent. The other 3 per cent constituted of Coloured and Asian/Indian participants. Figure 4.7 indicates the mother tongue of the participants.

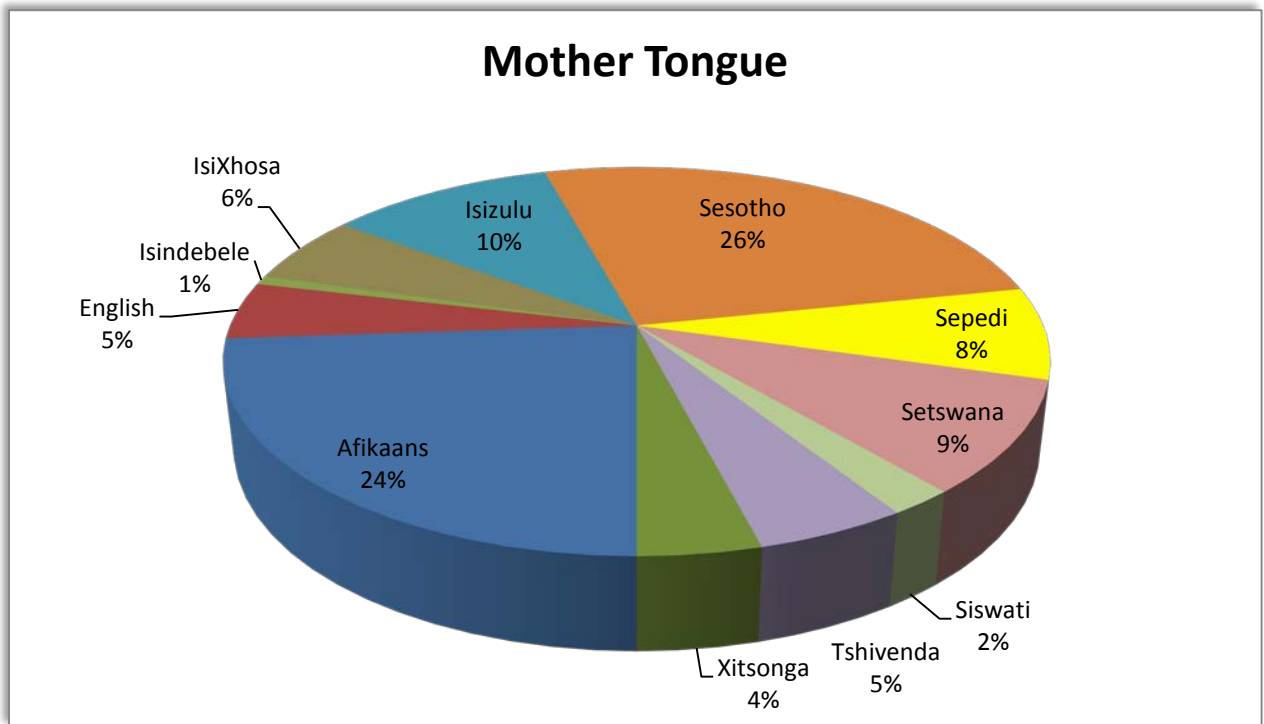


Figure 4.7: Mother tongue

The mother tongue of the participants was also taken into account. The largest group of the population sample was Sotho speaking (26%). Afrikaans was another popular language among the participants and accounted for 24 per cent. IsiZulu also prevailed as a one of the dominant languages among the participants, accounting for 10 per cent of the population sample. The other 40 per cent was consisting of Sepedi, Setswana, Tshivenda, IsiXhosa, English, isiNdebele, SiSwati and Xitsonga. This language distribution reflects an input from all the 11 official languages of South Africa.

There were age gaps and differences between participants that are illustrated in Figure 4.8.

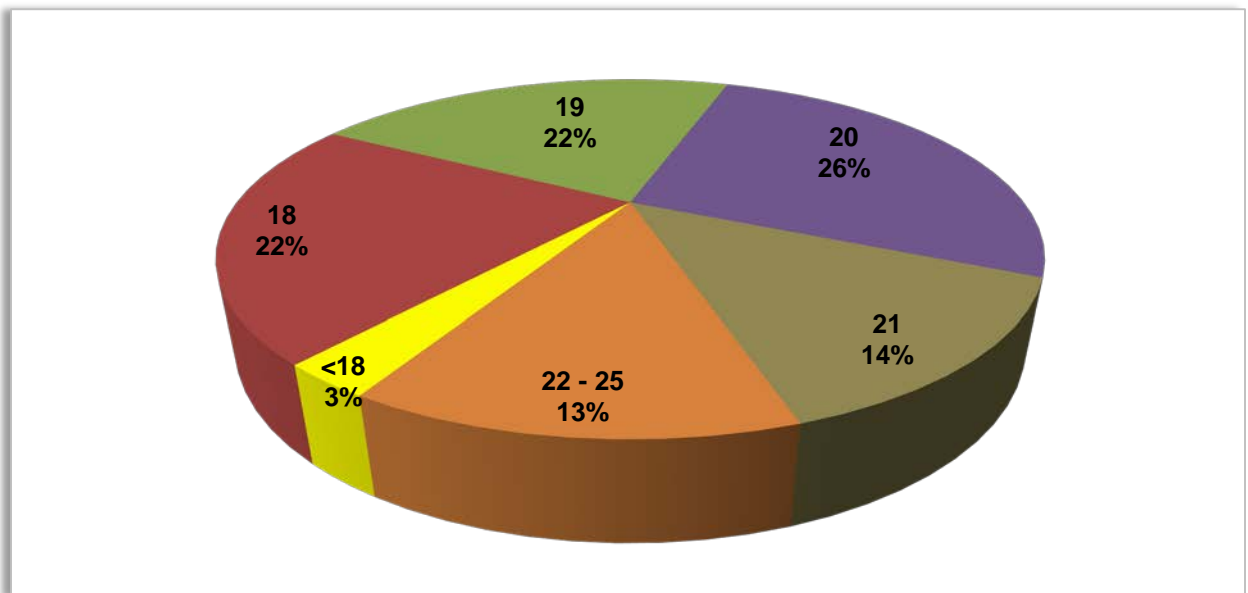


Figure 4.8: Age population distribution (Step 2)

Age distribution of participants as depicted in Figure 4.8 reflects that 22 per cent of the sample was students aged 18 years. Of the total sample, 22 per cent of the participants were aged 19 years. Participants aged 20 years accounted for 20 per cent, while 14 per cent were aged 21 years. The participants ranging between 22 and 25 years of age accounted for 13 per cent of the sample. This distribution indicated a good representation of the Generation Y cohort.

The next section discusses the exploratory factor analysis.

4.5 EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS

The exploratory factor analysis was conducted using the 42 traits from Aaker (1997) to establish a factor structure within the South African luxury sedan context.

The first step in the analysis was the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity to ensure the factorability of the data. Values above 0.5 for the KMO test and a significant Bartlett's Test of Sphericity value are advised (Malhotra, 2010:641). The results of the tests were as follows:

- KMO=0.955
- Chi-square Bartlett's Test=16465.194 (df=561) p=0.000<0.05

These values were satisfactory. A principal component analysis using a varimax rotation was performed on the 42 brand personality traits. Based on Aaker's (1997) scale, 5 factors were extracted. All of the 5 factors had an eigenvalue above 1 and explained 51.51 per cent of the variance.

Some of the items were not construct-related and were therefore excluded from the factor structure. Costello and Osborne (2005:4) suggest if an item has a communality of less than 0.40 it may not relate to the other items and the researcher should consider excluding it from the study. Therefore, the items with a communality below 0.4 ('Smalltown', 'Sentimental', 'Contemporary', 'Feminine' and 'Western') were excluded. Moreover, items that cross-loaded on more than one factor were excluded from the study. These items were: 'Cheerful', 'Unique' and 'Independent'. Table 4.2 indicates the rotated factors.

Table 4.2: Rotated factors

	Factor				
	1	2	3	4	5
Down-to-earth		.587			
Family-oriented		.609			
Honest		.658			
Sincere		.632			
Real		.537			
Wholesome		.532			
Friendly		.536			
Original	.491				
Reliable	.512				
Hard-working	.571				
Secure	.549				
Intelligent	.532				
Technical	.650				
Corporate	.688				

Successful	.712				
Leader	.648				
Confident	.652				
Daring				.562	
Trendy				.564	
Exciting				.629	
Spirited				.547	
Cool				.571	
Young				.732	
Imaginative				.540	
Up-to-date			.475		
Upper-class			.668		
Glamorous			.656		
Good-looking			.728		
Charming			.652		
Smooth			.471		
Outdoorsy					.677
Masculine					.570
Tough					.682
Rugged					.749

**Coefficients below 0.45 were suppressed.*

As evident from Table 4.2, the factors, as presented by Aaker (1997), were considered relevant and analysed using the principal component analysis. The results indicate that the items group into the various factors very similar compared to Aaker's (1997) model. The results were used to establish a factor structure for Aaker's (1997) brand personality scale applicable to luxury sedan motor vehicles.

The second empirical objective of the study was:

Establish a factor structure for Aaker’s (1997) 42 brand personality traits applicable for luxury sedan brands.

Aaker’s (1997) brand personality trait scale was adapted using the results from the rotated matrix. Figure 4.9 illustrates the brand personality trait factor structure applicable for luxury sedans.



Figure 4.9: Luxury sedan brand personality trait dimensions (adapted from Aaker, 1997)

The luxury sedan brand personality trait dimensions (Figure 4.9) are very similar to Aaker’s (1997) brand personality trait scale. Both have 5 dimensions namely: ‘Sincerity’, ‘Excitement’, ‘Competence’, ‘Sophistication’ and ‘Ruggedness’. Aaker’s dimensions consist of 42 traits (See, Figure 2.2), from the factor analysis results, there were only 36 traits for the luxury sedan brand personality trait dimensions that were devised (See, Table 4.2). All of the traits, except ‘Original’, were grouped in the same dimensions as Aaker’s (1997) model. ‘Original’ had moved from the ‘Sincerity’ to the ‘Competence’ dimension in the luxury sedan brand personality trait dimensions as evident from figure 4.9.

The following section reports on the reliability of the results.

4.6 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

As stipulated in Chapter 3, the reliability was measured using the Cronbach's alpha value. Malhotra (2010:319) indicates that a Cronbach's alpha value of above 0.6 indicates sufficient internal consistency reliability.

The table below indicates Cronbach's alpha values larger than 0.6 for each of the 5 brand personality dimensions as well as the purchasing intention scale. This indicates a good internal reliability.

The average inter-item correlations were calculated to measure the validity. Clark and Watson (1995:16) recommend an inter-item correlation value between 0.15 and 0.50. All the brand personality dimensions depict an inter-item correlation value below 0.50. Whilst the purchasing intention scale's value exceeds the 0.50 level. This simply indicates a strong relationship between the items (Pallant, 2010:100).

Table 4.3: Reliability and average inter-item correlation values

	Number of items	Cronbach alpha	Average inter-item correlation
Sincerity	7	.784	.342
Competence	9	.881	.427
Excitement	8	.831	.395
Sophistication	5	.813	.469
Ruggedness	4	.707	.375
Purchasing intentions	7	.907	.581

The results of the study are presented in the following sections according to the empirical objectives stipulated in Chapter 1.

4.7 TOP-OF-THE-MIND AWARENESS CONCERNING LUXURY SEDAN MOTOR VEHICLE BRANDS

The first empirical objective of the study was:

Identify Generation Y students' top-of-the-mind awareness concerning luxury sedan motor vehicle brands.

The first questionnaire made use of a top-of-the-mind-awareness task to identify the top luxury sedan brands. Respondents were asked to indicate the first brand that comes to mind when thinking of a luxury sedan. The responses were then recorded and the results are represented in Figure 4.10.

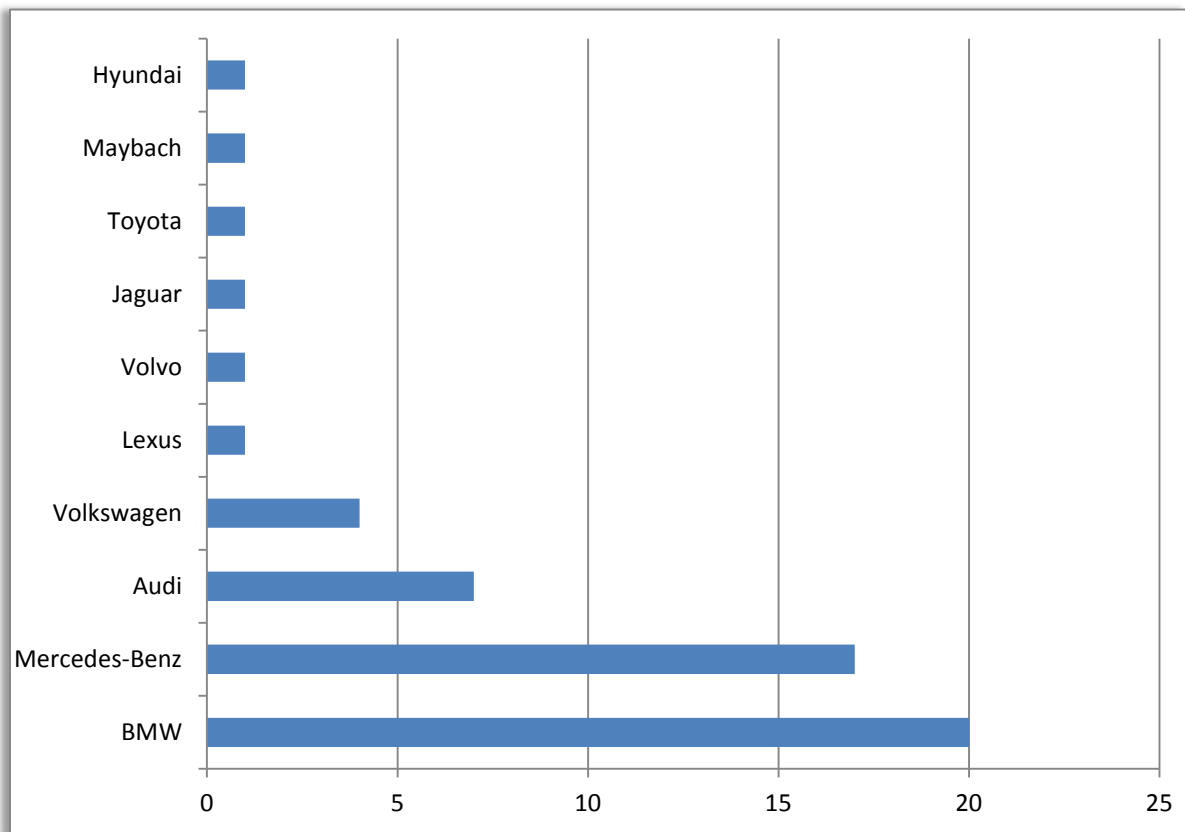


Figure 4.10: Graphical illustration of brands selected by respondents.

As evident from Figure 4.10, the top three luxury brands preferred by Generation Y were BMW, Mercedes-Benz, and Audi. This result is in line with the luxury sedan motor vehicle sales as presented in Section 2.7. Other brands also mentioned by participants include: Volkswagen, Lexus, Volvo, Jaguar, Toyota, Maybach and Hyundai. This study, however, only focused on the top 3 brands being BMW, Mercedes-Benz and Audi. These three brands were used in the Step 2 of the study to determine the brand personality traits associated with luxury sedans.

4.8 ASSESSMENT OF BRAND PERSONALITY PERCEPTIONS OF LUXURY SEDAN MOTOR VEHICLES

The third empirical objective of the study was:

Investigate the brand personality perception of luxury sedan motor vehicles amongst Generation Y by means of Aaker's (1997) brand personality trait scale.

The second questionnaire (Section B) made use of the luxury sedan brand personality trait dimensions adapted from Aaker (1997) to determine the brand personality perceptions of the selected luxury sedan brands among the respondents.

4.8.1 Brand personality traits association with luxury sedans

The mean value for each of the traits was computed to determine the brand personality traits most associated with all three of the brands. Table 4.4 list the top 10 brand personality traits associated with luxury sedan brands.

Table 4.4: Top 10 Luxury sedan brand personality traits

Personality traits	n	\bar{x}	Standard deviation
Successful	420	4.373	1.3491
Good-looking	420	4.343	1.3058
Confident	420	4.318	1.2824
Intelligent	420	4.304	1.2338
Up-to-date	420	4.299	1.2217
Original	420	4.27	1.1874
Upper-class	420	4.254	1.1768
Charming	420	4.232	1.1435
Reliable	420	4.228	1.0933

As evident from Table 4.6, Generation Y student participants of the study indicated the brand personality traits that they associated most with the luxury sedan brands as: 'Successful', 'Good-looking' and 'Confident'. Other popular traits include: 'Intelligent',

'Up-to-date', 'Original', 'Upper-class', 'Charming', 'Independent' and 'Reliable. The following section assessed how the personality trait rated for each of the luxury sedan brands.

4.8.2 Brand personality traits association with each brand

The mean value for each of the traits was computed to determine the brand personality traits most associated with each of the luxury sedan brands. Table 4.5 lists the top 10 brand personality traits associated with Mercedes-Benz, BMW and Audi.

Table 4.5: Top 10 brand personality traits association with Mercedes-Benz, BMW, and Audi

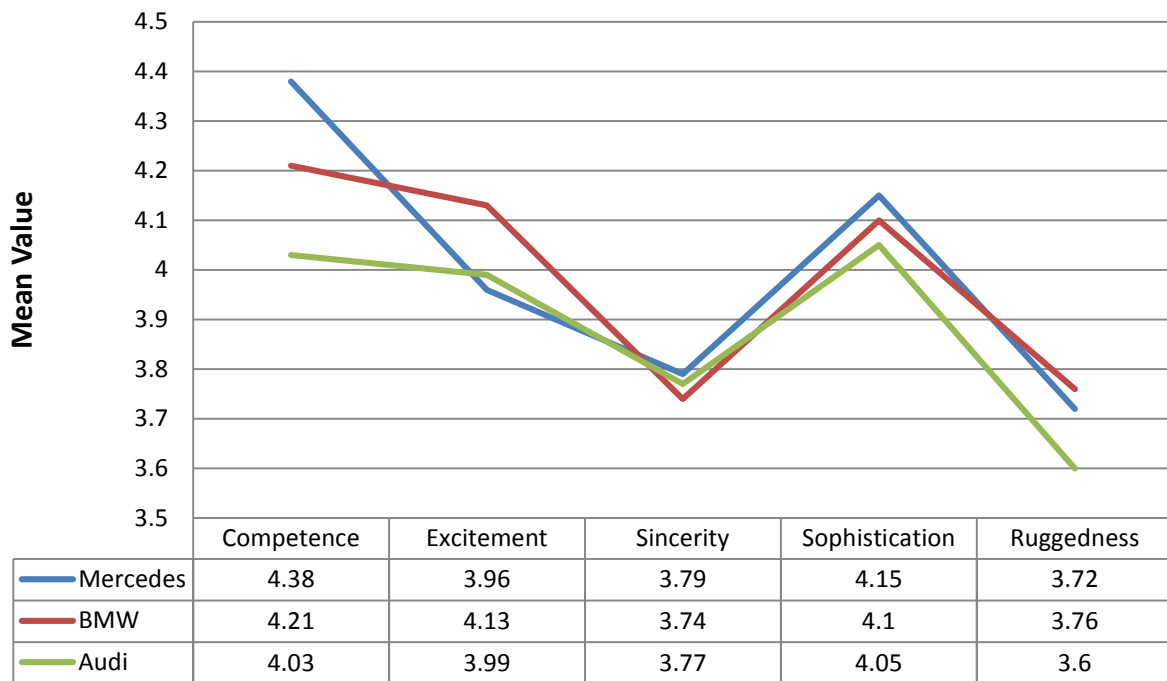
Mercedes-Benz			BMW			Audi		
Personality trait	\bar{x}	S	Personality trait	\bar{x}	s	Personality trait	\bar{x}	S
Successful	4.564	0.7987	Exciting	4.376	0.9078	Good-looking	4.28	0.88
Upper-class	4.56	0.8138	Successful	4.362	0.8839	Successful	4.188	0.9492
Confident	4.51	0.8447	Good-looking	4.362	0.9321	Up-to-date	4.185	0.9433
Intelligent	4.445	0.8817	Confident	4.337	0.9515	Charming	4.178	0.979
Up-to-date	4.39	0.8461	Up-to-date	4.318	0.9167	Cool	4.173	1.038
Original	4.386	1.0006	Cool	4.299	1.0064	Intelligent	4.156	0.9434
Good-looking	4.386	0.8814	Charming	4.286	0.9818	Reliable	4.115	0.9506
Reliable	4.383	0.8865	Original	4.252	1.0106	Confident	4.102	1.013
Secure	4.383	0.8508	Trendy	4.243	0.9038	Exciting	4.102	0.9935
Successful	4.564	0.7987	Exciting	4.376	0.9078	Good-looking	4.28	0.88

Generation Y students perceive the Mercedes-Benz brand as ‘Successful’, ‘Upper-class’ and ‘Confident’ while BMW is regarded as: ‘Exciting’, ‘Successful’ and ‘Good-looking’. Audi is also perceived as ‘Good-looking’ and ‘Successful’ as well as ‘Up-to-date’.

The mean value for each of the brand personality dimensions was also computed to determine the perceptions of the respondents’ relating to the brand personality dimensions for each of the luxury sedan brands. Table 4.6 below illustrates these results while Figure 4.11 presents the results more visually.

Table 4.6: Brand personality dimensions according to different brands

Constructs	Brands					
	Mercedes-Benz		BMW		Audi	
	\bar{x}	s	\bar{x}	s	\bar{x}	s
Sincerity	3.79091	.678475	3.73985	.663862	3.77339	.593881
Excitement	3.95584	.691273	4.12754	.664680	3.99712	.642802
Competence	4.38333	.620375	4.20901	.663124	4.03279	.655602
Sophistication	4.15159	.652726	4.09506	.707821	4.05163	.689979
Ruggedness	3.712	.8285	3.762	.7758	3.599	.7645



*.Please note the range of the graph mean value: 3.5 – 4.5

Figure 4.11: Brand personality dimension distribution of the luxury sedan brands

Figure 4.11 illustrates the mean differences between the three brands (BMW, Mercedes-Benz and Audi) in relation to the five brand personality dimensions. All three brands appear to be perceived more ‘Competent’, ‘Exciting’ and ‘Sophisticated’ compared to ‘Sincerity’ and ‘Ruggedness’. There seem to be differences between the brands in relation with these dimensions. The next section investigates whether any significant differences do exist among the three luxury sedan brands.

4.8.3 Significance testing: Brand personality dimensions

An ANOVA regarding the brand personality dimensions was undertaken. This was done to assess the differences that existed between the brands in regard with the brand personality trait dimensions and to determine if any of these differences were statistically significant. Table 4.7 indicates the analysis of variance between the mean ratings of brand personality trait dimensions.

Table 4.7: Analysis of variance (Brand personality dimensions)

Construct		Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig
Sincerity	Between groups	.559	2	.279	.668	.513
	Within groups	518.263	1239	.418		
	Total	518.822	1241			
Competence	Between groups	25.494	2	12.747	30.502	.000
	Within groups	517.783	1239	.418		
	Total	543.277	1241			
Excitement	Between groups	6.657	2	3.328	7.487	.001
	Within groups	550.799	1239	.445		
	Total	557.455	1241			
Sophistication	Between groups	2.087	2	1.044	2.233	.108
	Within groups	579.144	1239	.467		
	Total	581.231	1241			
Ruggedness	Between groups	5.717	2	2.858	4.576	.010
	Within groups	773.969	1239	.625		
	Total	779.686	1241			

As indicated in the table above there was no significant difference ($p > 0.05$) for the 'Sincerity' and 'Sophistication' dimensions of brand personality. This indicates that all three brands were perceived very similar with regard to these two dimensions. However, the dimensions: 'Competence' ($F=30.502$, $p=0.000<0.05$), 'Excitement' ($F=7487$, $p=0.001<0.05$) and 'Ruggedness' ($F=4.567$, $p=0.010<0.05$) suggested statistical significant differences ($p<0.05$).

A Tukey's HSD (Honest Significant Difference) test was undertaken to determine where the differences for these three dimensions were located between the brands. The Cohen's D coefficient was also computed to determine if these differences had any practical significance. The table below illustrates the results of the post hoc Tukey's HSD test.

Table 4.8: Tukey's HSD results (Brand personality dimensions)

Dependent variable	(I) Brand code	(J) Brand code	Mean difference (I-J)	Std. error	Sig.	95% Confidence interval	
						Lower bound	upper Bound
Competence	Mercedes-Benz	BMW	.174326*	.044826	.000	.06914	.27951
		Audi	.350542*	.044881	.000	.24523	.45586
	BMW	Mercedes-Benz	-.174326*	.044826	.000	-.27951	-.06914
		Audi	.176216*	.045096	.000	.07040	.28203
	Audi	Mercedes-Benz	-.350542*	.044881	.000	-.45586	-.24523
		BMW	-.176216*	.045096	.000	-.28203	-.07040
Excitement	Mercedes-Benz	BMW	-.171693*	.046233	.001	-.28018	-.06321
		Audi	-.041273	.046290	.646	-.14989	.06735
	BMW	Mercedes-Benz	.171693*	.046233	.001	.06321	.28018
		Audi	.130420*	.046511	.014	.02128	.23956
	Audi	Mercedes-Benz	.041273	.046290	.646	-.06735	.14989
		BMW	-.130420*	.046511	.014	-.23956	-.02128
Ruggedness	Mercedes-Benz	BMW	-.0493	.0548	.641	-.178	.079
		Audi	.1134	.0549	.097	-.015	.242
	BMW	Mercedes-Benz	.0493	.0548	.641	-.079	.178
		Audi	.1626*	.0551	.009	.033	.292
	Audi	Mercedes-Benz	-.1134	.0549	.097	-.242	.015
		BMW	-.1626*	.0551	.009	-.292	-.033

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

As evident from Table 4.10, Mercedes-Benz is perceived more 'Competent' than BMW. This difference is a small practical significance ($D=0.271$). Mercedes-Benz was also perceived to be more competent than Audi. This difference between Mercedes-Benz and Audi is of medium effect moving towards practical significance ($D=0.549$). BMW is considered more 'Competent' than Audi. This difference in relation to 'Competence' has a small effect moving towards practical significance ($D=0.267$). This consequently indicates that Audi is perceived less 'Competent' than Mercedes-Benz and BMW.

Participants deemed BMW more 'Exciting' than Mercedes-Benz with a small effect, moving towards practically significant difference ($D=0.253$). BMW is also perceived more 'Exciting' than Audi but this difference is practically non-significant ($D=0.199$). BMW is also regarded to be more 'Rugged' than Audi, indicated by a difference with small effect moving towards practical significance ($D=0.212$).

The following section discusses the differences between male and female participants with regard to the perceptions of the individual brand personality traits.

4.8.4 Hypothesis testing: Comparing the male and female respondents' with regard to brand personality trait perceptions

The fourth empirical objective of the study was:

Determine whether gender differences exist regarding Generation Y students' brand personality perceptions of luxury sedan motor vehicles.

In order to determine the statistical differences between males and females in accordance with brand personality traits, a T-test was undertaken. The Cohen's D statistic was computed for traits that suggested statistical significance ($p < 0.05$), to determine if the difference was practically significant. The hypotheses are formulated as follows:

- H_01 : Brand personality perceptions of luxury sedans do not differ between males and females
- H_{a1} : Brand personality perceptions of luxury sedans differ between males and females

Six significant statistical differences were identified among the female and male respondents concerning the brand personality traits perception. These differences were statistically significant at $p < 0.05$ and they are presented in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9: Statistical and practically significant differences, comparing the male and female respondents' concerning brand personality perceptions

	<u>Male</u>			<u>Female</u>			t	p	D
	N	\bar{x}	s	n	\bar{x}	s			
<u>Personality traits</u>									
Honest	182	4.066	1.0700	234	3.846	.9815	2.178	0.030	0.214
Wholesome	182	3.923	1.0536	234	3.697	1.0180	2.217	0.027	0.218
Secure	182	4.489	0.9027	234	4.291	.8030	2.367	0.018	0.232
Intelligent	182	4.56	0.8171	234	4.359	.9215	2.323	0.021	0.231
Corporate	182	4.368	0.8288	234	4.171	.8621	2.354	0.019	0.233
Tough	182	4.033	1.2254	234	3.662	1.2157	3.074	0.002	0.304

As evident from the data above the null hypothesis, H_0 can be rejected for: 'Honest', 'Wholesome', 'Secure', 'Intelligent', 'Corporate' and 'Tough' and alternatively the H_a is accepted. Personality perceptions of males and females do differ for these six traits. Male participants do have different perceptions about the brand personalities compared to females. It can be concluded from the mean values that males regard all of the above-mentioned traits as more descriptive of luxury sedan brands than female participants. The null hypothesis for all the other traits was accepted because the p-value was greater than the standard value ($p > 0.05$). With the exception to: 'Honest', 'Wholesome', 'Secure', 'Intelligent', 'Corporate' and 'Tough', there were no significant statistical differences between the male and female participants. As such, the null hypothesis H_0 cannot be rejected for the remaining brand personality traits.

Cohen's D statistic was computed to determine if the differences were practically significant. There was a small effect, moving towards practical significance on the differences of the brand personality traits: 'Honesty' (D=0.214), 'Wholesome' (D=0.218), 'Secure' (D=0.232), 'Intelligent' (D=0.231), 'Corporate' (D=0.233), and 'Tough' (D=0.304).

The following section presents the findings in relation to the luxury sedan brand purchasing intentions of the participants.

4.9 ASSESSMENT OF PURCHASING INTENTIONS OF LUXURY SEDAN MOTOR VEHICLES

The fifth empirical objective of the study was:

Investigate Generation Y students' purchasing intentions of luxury sedan motor vehicles by making use of an adapted a scale by Zeithaml et al. (1996).

The second questionnaire (Section C) measured the purchasing intentions of participants regarding luxury sedan brands. The data were collected using an adapted purchasing intention scale by Zeithaml *et al.* (1996). (See, Section 2.8).

4.9.1 Purchasing intentions of luxury sedans

The mean value for each of the purchasing intention items was computed to determine the participants' purchasing intentions for all three of the luxury sedan brands. The table below illustrates these results.

Table 4.10: Luxury sedan brand purchasing intentions

Purchasing intentions	Mean	Standard deviation
	\bar{x}	s
Int1: 'I would like to buy this brand of luxury sedan'	3.807	1.2738
Int2: 'I plan on buying this brand of luxury sedan in the next few years'	3.495	1.4547
Int3: 'I consider this brand as my first choice of luxury sedan'	3.382	1.4644
Int4: 'I say positive things about this brand of luxury sedan to other people'	3.779	1.2661
Int5: 'I recommend this brand of luxury sedan to someone who seeks my advice'	3.732	1.2750
Int6: 'I encourage friends and relatives to do business with this brand of luxury sedan'	3.714	1.2523
Int7: 'I would not consider any other luxury sedan than this brand'	3.310	1.4747

As evident from Table 4.10, all of the purchasing intention items have a mean value above 3.3 (on a 5-point Likert scale), this indicates that purchasing intentions of luxury sedan

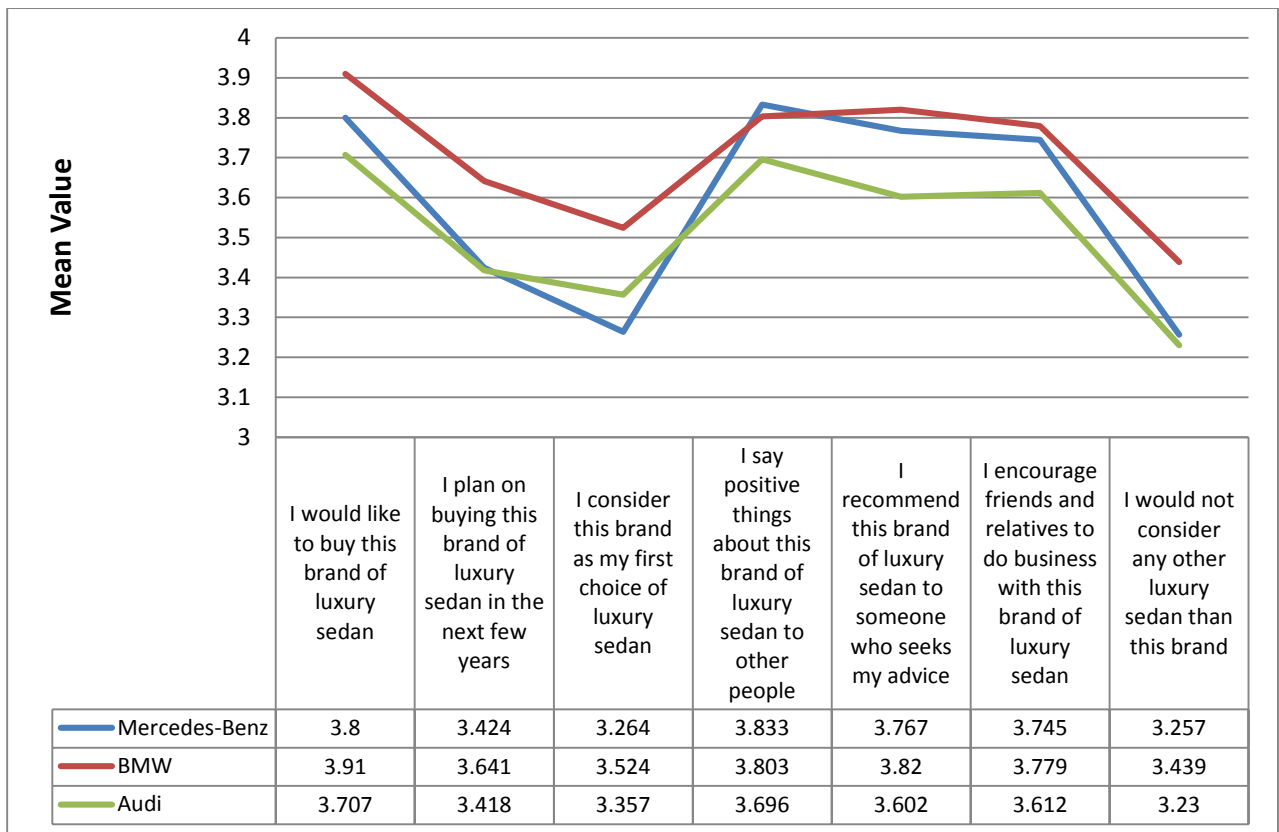
vehicles do exist among Generation Y students. Int1 showed the highest mean value (3.807) of the items indicating that the participants would like to purchase a luxury sedan. Other items with a high mean value includes: Int4 (3.779), Int5 (3.732) and Int6 (3.714) which all relate to positive word-of-mouth. This indicates that the Generation Y cohort tends to spread positive word-of-mouth communication regarding the luxury sedan brands.

4.9.2 Purchasing intentions of each of the brands

The mean value for each of the purchasing intention items was computed to determine the participants purchasing intentions for each of the brands. Table 4.11 illustrates these results while Figure 4.12 presents the results more visually.

Table 4.11: Purchasing intentions of Mercedes-Benz, BMW and Audi

Purchasing intentions	Brands					
	Mercedes-Benz		BMW		Audi	
	\bar{x}	s	\bar{x}	s	\bar{x}	s
Int1: 'I would like to buy this brand of luxury sedan'	3.800	1.3264	3.910	1.2279	3.707	1.2585
Int2: 'I plan on buying this brand of luxury sedan in the next few years'	3.424	1.5407	3.641	1.4028	3.418	1.4046
Int3: 'I consider this brand as my first choice of luxury sedan'	3.264	1.5353	3.524	1.4455	3.357	1.3960
Int4: 'I say positive things about this brand of luxury sedan to other people'	3.833	1.2761	3.803	1.2663	3.696	1.2540
Int5: 'I recommend this brand of luxury sedan to someone who seeks my advice'	3.767	1.2750	3.820	1.2388	3.602	1.3050
Int6: 'I encourage friends and relatives to do business with this brand of luxury sedan'	3.745	1.2793	3.779	1.2192	3.612	1.2542
Int7: 'I would not consider any other luxury sedan than this brand'	3.257	1.4916	3.439	1.4478	3.230	1.4790



*. Please note the graph range mean value: 3.0 – 4.0.

Figure 4.12: Intentions according to different brands

Figure 4.12 indicates the mean values of the purchasing intentions according to each luxury sedan brand. As evident from Figure 4.11, BMW indicates the highest mean value for all the purchasing intention statements except for Int4 ('I say positive things about this brand of luxury sedan') where Mercedes-Benz has the highest mean value. Audi seemed to have a lower purchasing intention mean for all the purchasing intentions except for Int3 ('I consider this brand as my first choice of luxury sedan') where Mercedes-Benz had the lower mean. The graph suggested differences among the brands in relation to purchasing intentions. The following section investigates if any of the differences are practically significant.

4.9.3 Significance testing: Purchasing intentions

An ANOVA regarding the purchasing intentions of respondents was undertaken. This was done to assess the differences that existed between the brands with regard to the purchasing intentions and to determine if any of the differences were statistically significant. Table 4.12 indicates the analysis of variance between the mean ratings of purchasing intentions for each brand.

Table 4.12: Analysis of variance (ANOVA)

		Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Int1: 'I would like to buy this brand of luxury sedan'	Between groups	8.357	2	4.178	2.582	.076
	Within groups	1976.140	1221	1.618		
	Total	1984.497	1223			
Int2 'I plan on buying this brand of luxury sedan in the next few years'	Between groups	13.186	2	6.593	3.126	.044
	Within groups	2574.785	1221	2.109		
	Total	2587.971	1223			
Int3: 'I consider this brand as my first choice of luxury sedan'	Between groups	14.401	2	7.201	3.371	.035
	Within groups	2608.422	1221	2.136		
	Total	2622.823	1223			
Int4: 'I say positive things about this brand of luxury sedan to other people'	Between groups	4.158	2	2.079	1.297	.274
	Within groups	1956.284	1221	1.602		
	Total	1960.441	1223			
Int5: 'I recommend this brand of luxury sedan to someone who seeks my advice'	Between groups	10.344	2	5.172	3.193	.041
	Within groups	1977.760	1221	1.620		
	Total	1988.105	1223			
Int6: 'I encourage friends and relative to do business with this brand of luxury sedan'	Between groups	6.216	2	3.108	1.985	.138
	Within groups	1911.702	1221	1.566		
	Total	1917.918	1223			
Int7: 'I would not consider any other luxury sedan than this brand'	Between groups	10.598	2	5.299	2.442	.087
	Within groups	2649.048	1221	2.170		
	Total	2659.646	1223			

As visible in Table 4.12, there is no significant difference between the brands in relation to purchasing intention items: Int1, Int4, Int6 and Int7 as $p > 0.05$ for all the items. This indicates that all three brands were perceived very similar with regard to these four purchasing intention items. However, the purchasing intention items: Int2 ($F = 3.126$, $p=0.044<0.05$), Int3 ($F=3.371$, $p=0.035<0.05$) and Int5 ($F=3.193$, $p=0.041<0.05$) suggested statistical significant differences.

A Tukey's HSD test was undertaken to determine where the differences for these three purchasing intention items are located between the brands. The Cohen's D coefficient was also computed to determine if these differences had any practical significance.

Table 4.13 illustrates the results on the post hoc Tukey's HSD test.

Table 4.13: Post hoc Tukey's HSD test results

Dependent variable	(I) Brand code	(J) Brand code	Mean difference (I-J)	Std. error	Sig.	95% Confidence interval	
						Lower bound	Upper bound
Int3: 'I consider this brand as my first choice of luxury sedan '	Mercedes-Benz	BMW	-.2600*	.1013	.028	-.498	-.022
		Audi	-.0929	.1026	.637	-.334	.148
	BMW	Mercedes-Benz	.2600*	.1013	.028	.022	.498
		Audi	.1671	.1031	.237	-.075	.409
	Audi	Mercedes-Benz	.0929	.1026	.637	-.148	.334
		BMW	-.1671	.1031	.237	-.409	.075
Int5: 'I recommend this brand of luxury sedan to someone who seeks my advice'	Mercedes-Benz	BMW	-.0537	.0883	.815	-.261	.153
		Audi	.1646	.0894	.156	-.045	.374
	BMW	Mercedes-Benz	.0537	.0883	.815	-.153	.261
		Audi	.2183*	.0898	.040	.008	.429
	Audi	Mercedes-Benz	-.1646	.0894	.156	-.374	.045
		BMW	-.2183*	.0898	.040	-.429	-.008

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

After further inspection of the post hoc Tukey's HSD results no practical significant difference was found for Int2 ('I plan on buying this brand of luxury sedans in the next few years'). Evident from Table 4.15, participants consider BMW as their first choice of luxury sedans more than they consider Mercedes-Benz as their first choice (Int3). This difference between BMW and Mercedes-Benz is, however, practically non-significant ($D=0.174$). Participants are also more likely to recommend BMW to someone who seeks their advice than they would recommend Audi (Int5). This difference is also practically non-significant ($D=0.171$).

The next section compared the male and female participants regarding the differences in their purchasing intentions of luxury sedan brands.

4.9.4 Hypothesis testing: Comparing the male and female respondents' with regard to purchasing intentions.

The sixth empirical objective of the study was:

Determine whether gender differences exist regarding Generation Y students' purchasing intentions of luxury sedan motor vehicles.

A T-test was undertaken to determine if a statistical difference of $p < 0,05$ was present. Cohen's D statistic was then calculated to determine if the differences are practically significant. The hypotheses thereof were formulated as follows:

H₀₂ : Purchasing intentions of luxury sedans do not differ between males and females

H_{a2} : Purchasing intentions of luxury sedans differ between males and females

Four significant statistical differences were computed among the female and male respondents concerning their purchasing intentions. These differences were statistically significant at $p < 0.05$ and they are presented in Table 4.14.

Table 4.14: Statistical and practical significant difference between males and females purchasing intentions

	Male			Female			t	p	D
	n	\bar{x}	s	n	\bar{x}	S			
<u>Purchasing intentions</u>									
Int1: 'I would like to buy this brand of luxury sedan motor vehicle'	182	4.071	1.3004	234	3.590	1.3113	3.730	0.000	0.368
Int3: 'I consider this brand as my first choice of luxury sedan'	182	3.462	1.5719	234	3.111	1.4869	2.326	0.021	0.229
Int4: 'I say positive things about this brand of luxury sedan'	182	4.044	1.2867	234	3.675	1.2384	2.962	0.003	0.292
Int7: 'I would not consider any other luxury sedan than this brand'	182	3.467	1.5257	234	3.090	1.4429	2.580	0.010	0.254

As evident from the data above the null hypothesis, H_{02} can be rejected for: Int1, Int3, Int4 and Int7 and alternatively the H_{a2} is accepted. Purchasing intentions of males and females do differ. From the mean values, one can conclude that males rated all of the four purchasing intention items higher than females. One can thus assume that the male participants are more likely to purchase a luxury sedan motor vehicle than their female counterparts. The null hypothesis for Int2, Int5 and Int6 was accepted because the p-value was greater than standard value ($p > 0.05$). With the exception to: Int1, Int3, Int4 and Int7, there were no significant statistical differences between the male and female participants. As such, the null hypothesis H_{02} cannot be rejected for the remaining purchasing intentions.

The Cohen D's statistic was computed to determine if the differences were practically significant. The difference between males and females for Int1 ($D=0.386$) has a medium effect moving towards practical significance while the differences for Int3 ($D=0.229$), Int4 ($D=0.292$) and Int7 ($D=0.254$) have a small effect moving towards practical significance.

4.10 CONCLUSION

The chapter reported and interpreted the empirical findings of the study. All of the six empirical objectives were addressed. Section 4.2 provided an analysis of the demographic profile of the participants. It was then followed by Section 4.3, which discussed the exploratory factor analysis of Aaker's (1997) brand personality trait scale in the luxury sedan motor vehicle industry. Section 4.5 addressed the reliability of the data using the Cronbach's alpha value. Section 4.6 addressed empirical objective 1: 'Brand identification', while Section 4.7 outlined the results regarding empirical objective 3: 'Investigating the brand personality perception of luxury sedan motor vehicles amongst Generation Y by means of Aaker's (1997) brand personality trait scale'. Section 4.8 discussed empirical objective 5: 'Investigate Generation Y's purchasing intentions of different motor vehicles by making use of an adapted scale by Zeithaml *et al.* (1996)'.

Section 4.7 and 4.8 made use of significance tests to determine whether there were any statistical differences that existed between the brands and among male and female participants. Cohen's D statistic was computed to determine if significant practical differences existed between brands as well as males and females.

The following chapter provides further interpretations of the findings and discusses recommendations and conclusions for the study.

CHAPTER 5: RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

As highlighted in Chapter 1, the Generation Y cohort is a very lucrative market for businesses. This cohort is more brand image conscious than any preceding generation. It is therefore important to understand how Generation Y perceives brand personality as it is a contributing factor to brand image perception. The study examined how Generation Y perceived selected luxury sedan brands according to different brand personality traits and measured their purchasing intentions.

The previous chapter presented the results of the study. This chapter starts with an overview of the study (Section 5.2) and thereafter the main findings (Section 5.3) are presented to determine if all the objectives were met. Section 5.4 outlines the contributions of the study, while Section 5.5 presents some recommendations. The chapter concludes with future opportunities for research (Section 5.6) and some concluding remarks (Section 5.7).

5.2 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

The study consisted of different chapters that played an important role in the execution of the overall objectives of the study. Chapter 1 introduced the topic by providing a background to the topic. The problem statement (Section 1.2) highlighted the importance of the Generation Y cohort in the marketplace and indicated the lack of brand personality related research in South Africa. The primary, theoretical and empirical objectives of the study were outlined in Section 1.3. The chapter also mentioned the hypotheses (Section 1.4) and methodological approach used in the study and how data were collected (Section 1.5). Moreover, also discussed the methods through which data would be collected and further gave detailed description of the classification of chapters (Section 1.6).

Chapter 2 of the study was a literature review guided by the theoretical objectives. Section 2.2 of the chapter defined branding, the origin of the term brand and explored the various aspects that form part of branding. Section 2.2.9 defined the concept brand personality. Successively, Section 2.3 gave a detailed description of Aaker's Brand Personality trait scale. Section 2.4 discussed the various marketing strategy elements influenced by brand personality, while the influence of brand personality on consumer behaviour was

discussed in Section 2.5. Section 2.6 discussed luxury sedan motor vehicles. Furthermore, Section 2.7 elaborated more on the luxury sedan motor vehicles by focusing on the position in the South African market. Factors influencing the buying decision of luxury sedans were described in Section 2.8. The chapter concluded with a section giving a detailed discussion about the Generation Y cohort, allowing the reader to understand why the study focuses on this generation.

After the theoretical research, the empirical research followed. Chapter 3 analysed the research methodology that was undertaken in the research study. This was followed by a discussion of the research design to be used as a guideline for the research (Section 3.2). Section 3.3 outlined the research approach used in the study, while Section 3.4 discussed the sampling strategy. Section 3.5 reviewed the data collection method used for the study. How the questionnaire was administered was discussed in Section 3.6, and Section 3.7 explained the pilot testing of the questionnaire. Section 3.8 further outlined the data preparation method used for the study. Section 3.9 discussed the statistical analysis techniques used in the study, describing relevant statistical methods used in the study. Exploratory factor analysis (Section 3.10) Reliability (Section 3.11), validity (Section 3.12), and tests of significance (Section 3.13) were also discussed.

Chapter 4 reported on the results and findings guided by the empirical objectives formulated for the study.

5.3 MAIN FINDINGS

This section discusses the main findings of this study, in accordance with the empirical objectives formulated in Chapter 1.

- Identify Generation Y students' top-of-the-mind awareness concerning luxury sedan motor vehicle brands.
- Establish a factor structure for Aaker's (1997) 42 brand personality traits applicable for luxury sedan brands.
- Investigate the brand personality perceptions of luxury sedan motor vehicles amongst Generation Y students by means of Aaker's (1997) brand personality trait scale.
- Determine whether gender differences exist regarding Generation Y students' brand personality perceptions of luxury sedan motor vehicles.

- Investigate Generation Y students' purchasing intentions of luxury sedan motor vehicles by making use of an adapted a scale by Zeithaml *et al.* (1996).
- Determine whether gender differences exist regarding Generation Y students' purchasing intentions of luxury sedan motor vehicles.

The first empirical objective was to identify Generation Y students' top-of-the-mind awareness concerning luxury sedan motor vehicle brands. Generation Y students identified their top three luxury sedan brands as BMW, Mercedes-Benz and Audi. In the second objective the brand personality factor structure adapted from Aaker (1997) revealed five dimensions with 36 brand personality traits. This factor structure is very similar to Aaker's as both consist of five similar dimensions.

The third objective was to investigate the brand personality perceptions of luxury sedan motor vehicles amongst Generation Y students. Figure 5.1 represents the brand personality dimensions and brand personality traits associated with each of the three luxury sedan brands.

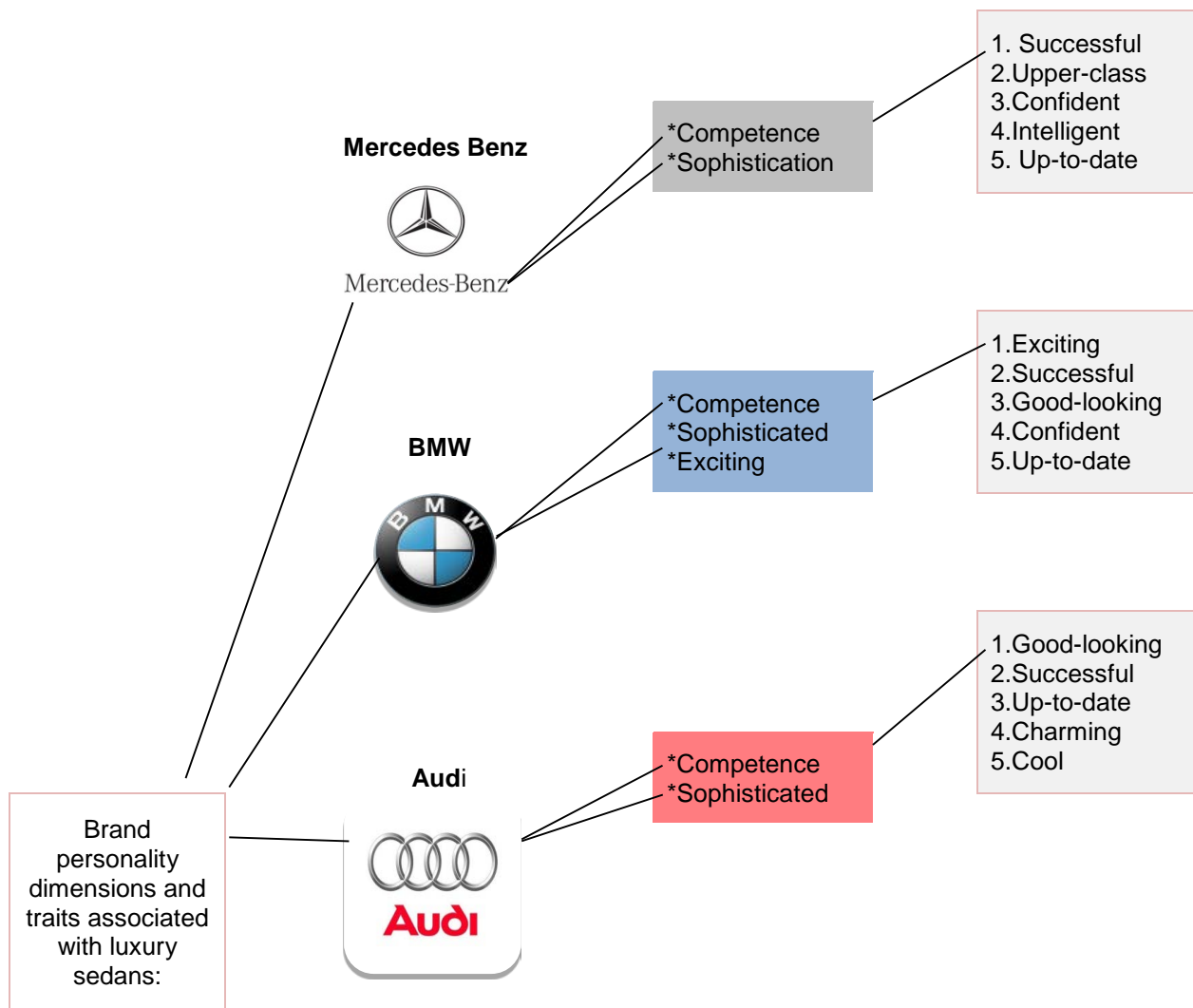


Figure 5.1: Brand personality perceptions

The findings revealed that all three brands are associated with the 'Competence' and 'Sophisticated' brand personality dimensions, with BMW also being associated with the 'Exciting' brand personality dimension.

The fifth empirical objective aimed to determine the luxury sedan purchasing intentions. When calculating the average of all the mean values for each of the purchasing intention items combined one can suggest that Generation Y students do have a positive purchasing intention towards luxury sedan motor vehicles (mean=3.6).

Generation Y students' brand personality perceptions and purchasing intentions of luxury sedan motor vehicles do exist. However, the differences are limited with a small effect of practical significance.

Some gender differences regarding Generation Y students' brand personality perceptions and purchasing intentions of luxury sedan motor vehicles do exist. However, the differences are limited with a small effect of practical significance.

5.4 CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY

The focus of the study was on the brand personality perceptions of luxury sedan motor vehicles and purchasing intentions among South African Generation Y cohort. Generation Y have unique perceptions regarding different brands and it is therefore important to gain insight regarding their perceptions. The results presented in this study can aid the marketers of the selected luxury sedan motor vehicle brands in identifying the personality traits associated with their brand.

This information can be compared with their current marketing strategy to determine if any differences exist between the desired and perceived brand personality. This information can help the marketers to tailor the marketing strategy accordingly to achieve the desired brand personality. The study also offers insight into the brand personality perceptions in the South African market. There is a paucity of published research on this topic, specifically on the Generation Y cohort.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

In accordance with the findings of this study, this section outlines some recommendations regarding the use of brand personality in the luxury sedan motor vehicle industry.

Marketers of the luxury sedan brands that did not form part of the top three brands (Mercedes-Benz, BMW and Audi) should consider increasing their marketing efforts aimed at the Generation Y cohort to improve the brand awareness of their brand. These marketers could alter their marketing efforts according to the top brand personality traits identified by this study. The top ten traits for luxury sedans as indicated by Generation Y student were: 'Successful', 'Good looking', 'Confident', 'Intelligent', 'Up-to-date', 'Original', 'Upper-class', 'Charming', 'Independent' and 'Reliable'. It is recommended that when branding luxury sedans, these traits should be prioritised as part of the branding strategy.

All of the luxury sedan brands were perceived as part of the 'Competent' and 'Sophisticated' brand personality dimensions. In order to avoid brand parity the marketers of luxury sedan brands could also consider focussing their marketing towards the other

brand personality dimensions such as 'Excitement', 'Sincerity' and even some aspects of 'Ruggedness' as well. This will lead to a more unique brand image that might increase brand awareness and influence sales.

Long term purchasing intentions of luxury sedans do exist among the Generation Y cohort (Int1: 'I would like to buy this brand of luxury sedan', mean=3.8). The Generation Y participants however depicted a lower intention over the short term (Int2: 'I plan on buying this brand of luxury sedan in the next few years', mean=3.42). Marketers should therefore consider direct marketing to convince the Generation Y cohort to purchase the luxury sedan rather sooner than later.

5.6 FUTURE RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

Future research opportunities for this particular study are broad. The study focused on brand personality perceptions of Generation Y students. Future studies on Generation Y could focus on other portions of the Generation Y cohort. Future studies could also consider targeting other generational cohorts like: Generation X and the Baby Boomers.

The personality traits used in this study were then devised from Aaker's personality trait scale. Future research studies should consider using other personality traits as from psychology.

Only three brands formed part of the study. Future research should include other motor vehicle brands from the luxury sedan motor vehicle segment. The participants identified other brands such as Volkswagen, Lexus, Jaguar, Toyota and Hyundai that could also be included. Future research could also consider focussing on specific model vehicles (BMW 3-series, BMW 5-series etc.) instead of focussing on a brand as a whole (BMW). Future research should also consider other motor vehicle categories like 'Hatchbacks', 'SUV's', 'Convertibles' etc.

The purchasing intention scale was limited to a few probing questions that did not provide a clear insight into Generation Y's intentions. Future research should focus on including additional purchasing intention items.

The following section provides conclusion to summarise the study and conclude the findings.

5.7 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Personality traits are intangible human features that prevail in each individual. These traits define a person's character. People tend to associate themselves with others who have similar characteristics. This is also applicable to how they form relationships with brands. Consumers tend to assess themselves before they can pursue what they really want. A listed number of factors influence their buying decision.

Brand personality was one of the factors that prevailed. Marketers can play a role in how consumers perceive their brand by tailoring marketing activities according to the identified target market. This can be done by positioning the brand according to a specific brand personality that will allow consumers to form a relationship with the brand. A well-positioned brand appeals to a certain segment, creating a community of people with similar interests. This can be done ensuring the brand image portrays personality characteristics that consumers relate to.

Marketers should be aware that information related to brand personality perceptions is vital. If a business can identify how consumers view their brand, the information can be used to their advantage. This study shed some light on the brand personality perceptions of luxury sedan motor vehicles and purchasing intentions of the Generation Y cohort.

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APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRES

QUESTIONNAIRE 1

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

(Step 1)

‘Brand personality perceptions of luxury sedan motor vehicles amongst the South African Generation Y cohort’

The research study aims to:

- ✓ Determine the brand personality perceptions of luxury sedan motor vehicles amongst the South African Generation Y cohort.

Researcher:

Mr P. Sokhela

North West University (Vaal)

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SECTION A: BRAND IDENTIFICATION

A sedan motor vehicle is a car for four or more people.

Write down the first brand that comes to mind when you think of a luxury sedan motor vehicle?

Brand:	
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SECTION B: DEMOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Pleas circle your relevant response

1. Gender	Male	Female
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2. Designated group	African	White	Coloured	Indian	Asian	Other (Please specify):
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Thank you for your time!

QUESTIONNAIRE 2
RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE
(Step 2)

‘Brand personality perception of luxury sedan motor vehicles amongst South African Generation Y cohort’

This research study aims to:

- ✓ Determine perceptions of luxury sedan motor vehicles amongst the South African generation Y cohort.

Researcher:

*Mr. P. Sokhela
North West University (Vaal)
Hendrik van Eck Blvd. , Vanderbijlpark
Building 4, Office G14.
Tel: 0783863169
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SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Please mark the appropriate box with a cross (X) or write down your answer.

1.	Country of origin:	South Africa	Other (please specify):
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2.	Province of origin:	Eastern Cape	Free State	Gauteng	KwaZulu-Natal	
		Limpopo	Mpumalanga	Northern Cape	North West	Western Cape
	Other (Please specify):					

3.	Current year of study:	1 st year	2 nd year	3 rd year	4 th year	Post graduate
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4.	Gender:	Male	Female
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5.	Ethnic group:			
	African Black	Asian/Indian	Coloured	White
	Other (Please specify):			

6.	Please indicate your mother tongue language:				Afrikaans
	English	IsiNdebele	IsiXhosa	IsiZulu	Sesotho
	Sepedi	Setswana	SiSwati	Tshivenda	Xitsonga
	Other (Please specify):				

7.	Age:	<18	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	25>
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SECTION B: BRAND PERSONALITY TRAIT RATING

Brand personality is a set of human characteristics assigned to a brand.

Rate how descriptive each of the following personality traits are of: Mercedes-Benz, BMW & Audi luxury sedans.

Please circle your relevant response.

(1 = not at all descriptive, 5 = extremely descriptive)

FOR EXAMPLE:	Mercedes-Benz					BMW					Audi				
caring	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5



Mercedes-Benz



	Mercedes-Benz					BMW					Audi				
Down-to-earth	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Family-oriented	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Small-town	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Honest	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Sincere	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

Real	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Wholesome	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Cheerful	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Sentimental	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Friendly	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

Original	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Reliable	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Hard-working	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Secure	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Intelligent	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

Technical	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Corporate	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Successful	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Leader	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Confident	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

Please circle your relevant response.

(1 = not at all descriptive, 5 = extremely descriptive)



Mercedes-Benz



	Mercedes-Benz					BMW					Audi				
Daring	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Trendy	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Exciting	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Spirited	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Cool	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

Young	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Imaginative	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Unique	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Up-to-date	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Independent	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

Contemporary	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Upper class	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Glamorous	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Good looking	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Charming	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

Feminine	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Smooth	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Outdoorsy	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Masculine	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Western	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

Tough	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Rugged	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION C: BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS

Please circle your relevant response.

(1 = not at all descriptive, 5 = extremely descriptive)

FOR EXAMPLE:	Mercedes-Benz					BMW					Audi				
Statement	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5



Mercedes-Benz



	Mercedes-Benz					BMW					Audi				
I would like to buy this brand of luxury sedan.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
I plan on buying this brand of luxury sedan in the next few years.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
I consider this brand as my first choice of luxury sedan.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
I say positive things about this brand of luxury sedan to other people.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
I recommend this brand of luxury sedan to someone who seeks my advice.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
I encourage friends and relatives to do business with this brand of luxury sedan.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
I would not consider any other luxury sedan than this brand.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

Thank you for your time!

APPENDIX B
FREQUENCIES ON EACH ITEM

Mercedes Benz

Attribute	Not descriptive	Slightly descriptive	Neutral	Descriptive	Extremely descriptive
Down-to-earth	51	46	108	103	112
Family-oriented	10	30	72	129	179
Small-town	127	101	105	51	36
Honest	9	29	90	139	153
Sincere	16	32	92	129	151
Real	8	21	61	101	229
Wholesome	13	30	108	147	122
Cheerful	15	43	91	132	139
Sentimental	10	28	96	136	150
Friendly	19	33	106	112	150
Original	11	16	46	74	273
Reliable	5	11	52	102	250
Hard-working	7	16	57	120	220
Secure	4	9	51	114	242
Intelligent	5	10	51	81	273
Technical	7	15	50	123	225
Corporate	3	8	70	136	203
Successful	4	10	28	81	297
Leader	6	15	48	108	243
Confident	6	6	43	78	287
daring	18	29	96	141	136
trendy	9	20	73	137	181

Attribute	Not descriptive	Slightly descriptive	Neutral	Descriptive	Extremely descriptive
Exciting	16	22	72	115	192
Spirited	10	16	100	146	148
Cool	21	30	76	103	190
Young	102	61	114	75	68
Imaginative	11	36	87	142	144
Unique	9	23	73	106	209
Up-to-date	3	11	49	113	244
Independent	6	14	43	104	253
Contemporary	13	19	103	149	136
Upper class	3	12	33	71	301
Glamorous	3	14	68	98	237
Good looking	5	13	44	111	247
Charming	11	16	63	105	225
Feminine	58	43	113	106	100
Smooth	13	20	69	141	177
Outdoorsy	40	54	107	116	103
Masculine	18	25	103	117	157
Western	28	26	77	105	187
Tough	30	29	91	102	168
Rugged	31	49	116	139	85
Purchasing intentions					
Like to buy	1	34	40	85	73
Plan on buying	1	78	49	63	72
First choice brand	3	83	51	81	67

Attribute	Not descriptive	Slightly descriptive	Neutral	Descriptive	Extremely descriptive
Positive things	1	29	39	81	90
Recommend	1	31	41	82	102
Encourage friends	0	36	36	86	103
Only this brand	5	74	52	88	79

BMW

Attribute	Not descriptive	Slightly descriptive	Neutral	Descriptive	Extremely descriptive
Down-to-earth	48	58	101	113	92
Family-oriented	18	41	108	132	113
Small-town	86	79	114	77	56
Honest	21	34	96	132	129
Sincere	23	28	125	119	117
Real	10	20	64	125	193
Wholesome	9	35	112	147	109
Cheerful	14	24	81	118	175
Sentimental	12	33	115	138	114
Friendly	17	26	95	114	160
Original	9	18	63	92	230
Reliable	7	18	66	123	198
Hard-working	10	17	67	131	187
Secure	7	16	60	140	189
Intelligent	5	12	56	118	221
Technical	4	12	74	120	202
Corporate	4	11	93	152	152

Attribute	Not descriptive	Slightly descriptive	Neutral	Descriptive	Extremely descriptive
Successful	4	11	56	102	239
Leader	10	25	64	132	181
Confident	8	15	47	102	240
daring	8	21	89	125	169
trendy	5	10	70	122	205
Exciting	5	12	55	91	249
Spirited	9	21	71	152	159
Cool	11	15	54	92	240
Young	25	29	71	105	182
Imaginative	6	21	74	146	165
Unique	9	24	86	117	176
Up-to-date	8	10	50	119	225
Independent	11	12	58	123	208
Contemporary	14	21	113	148	116
Upper class	9	16	55	126	206
Glamorous	4	17	76	111	204
Good looking	7	14	47	99	245
Charming	11	13	51	109	228
Feminine	37	37	117	120	101
Smooth	8	21	93	136	154
Outdoorsy	29	51	101	122	109
Masculine	12	17	94	133	156
Western	28	23	92	116	153
Tough	21	27	86	121	157

Attribute	Not descriptive	Slightly descriptive	Neutral	Descriptive	Extremely descriptive
Rugged	25	47	104	150	86
Purchasing intentions					
Like to buy	26	34	72	99	181
Plan on buying	52	38	79	80	163
First choice brand	58	47	75	80	151
Positive things	33	30	90	91	168
Recommend	33	25	86	107	161
Encourage friends	25	38	97	95	157
Only this brand	60	48	77	90	134

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Attribute	Not descriptive	Slightly descriptive	Neutral	Descriptive	Extremely descriptive
Down-to-earth	31	45	95	116	123
Family-oriented	12	47	115	123	113
Small-town	55	86	118	87	64
Honest	10	33	96	157	114
Sincere	11	35	107	136	121
Real	5	28	86	125	166
Wholesome	10	28	121	153	98
Cheerful	13	24	110	122	141
Sentimental	9	29	113	146	113
Friendly	10	24	96	111	169
Original	7	13	80	114	196

Attribute	Not descriptive	Slightly descriptive	Neutral	Descriptive	Extremely descriptive
Reliable	5	17	83	126	179
Hard-working	4	16	110	139	141
Secure	3	24	84	146	153
Intelligent	6	13	80	123	188
Technical	10	19	75	138	168
Corporate	6	19	107	159	119
Successful	6	15	72	120	197
Leader	14	29	107	142	118
Confident	9	21	74	121	185
daring	10	31	94	154	121
trendy	2	24	97	135	152
Exciting	7	22	75	124	182
Spirited	8	33	84	153	132
Cool	9	23	68	98	212
Young	16	35	71	113	175
Imaginative	7	25	96	134	148
Unique	8	24	95	113	170
Up-to-date	7	14	67	130	192
Independent	7	19	87	123	174
Contemporary	9	33	107	155	106
Upper class	7	27	88	137	151
Glamorous	5	16	76	157	156
Good looking	2	15	60	122	211
Charming	7	20	64	121	198

Attribute	Not descriptive	Slightly descriptive	Neutral	Descriptive	Extremely descriptive
Feminine	20	33	112	114	131
Smooth	6	15	89	138	162
Outdoorsy	33	44	113	116	104
Masculine	15	32	118	128	117
Western	25	25	92	119	149
Tough	22	48	123	121	96
Rugged	32	58	115	137	68
Purchasing intentions					
Like to buy	31	39	81	104	137
Plan on buying	53	48	94	71	125
First choice brand	51	58	88	80	113
Positive things	29	41	78	111	132
Recommend	32	40	80	115	120
Encourage friends	30	38	89	117	115
Only this brand	74	48	87	70	111

Total group

Attribute	Not descriptive	Slightly descriptive	Neutral	Descriptive	Extremely descriptive
Down-to-earth	130	149	304	332	327
Family-oriented	40	118	295	384	405
Small-town	268	266	337	215	156
Honest	40	96	282	428	396
Sincere	50	95	324	384	389

Attribute	Not descriptive	Slightly descriptive	Neutral	Descriptive	Extremely descriptive
Real	23	69	211	351	588
Wholesome	32	93	341	447	329
Cheerful	42	91	282	372	455
Sentimental	31	90	324	420	377
Friendly	46	83	297	337	479
Original	27	47	189	280	699
Reliable	17	46	201	351	627
Hard-working	21	49	234	390	548
Secure	14	49	195	400	584
Intelligent	16	35	187	322	682
Technical	21	46	199	381	595
Corporate	13	38	270	447	474
Successful	14	36	156	303	733
Leader	30	69	219	382	542
Confident	23	42	164	301	712
daring	36	81	279	420	426
trendy	16	54	240	394	538
Exciting	28	56	205	330	623
Spirited	27	70	255	451	439
Cool	41	68	198	293	642
Young	143	125	256	296	425
Imaginative	24	82	257	422	457
Unique	26	71	254	336	555
Up-to-date	18	35	166	362	661

Attribute	Not descriptive	Slightly descriptive	Neutral	Descriptive	Extremely descriptive
Independent	24	45	188	350	635
Contemporary	36	73	323	452	358
Upper class	19	55	176	334	658
Glamorous	12	47	220	366	597
Good looking	14	42	151	332	703
Charming	29	49	178	335	651
Feminine	115	113	342	340	332
Smooth	27	56	251	415	493
Outdoorsy	102	149	321	354	316
Masculine	45	74	315	378	430
Western	81	74	261	340	486
Tough	73	104	300	344	421
Rugged	88	154	335	426	239
Purchasing intentions					
Like to buy	1	91	113	238	276
Plan on buying	2	183	135	236	223
First choice brand	6	192	156	244	227
Positive things	2	91	110	249	292
Recommend	6	96	106	248	324
Encourage friends	3	91	112	272	315
Only this brand	10	208	148	252	239