

**THE IMPACT OF BRANDING MARKETING STRATEGIES ON CONSUMERS
BUYING BEHAVIOUR AT UD TRUCKS AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY IN GAUTENG
PROVINCE OF SOUTH AFRICA.**

by

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ABSTRACT

Branding marketing strategies are widely used as one of the best strategies which add value to brand awareness. Branding marketing strategies are based on a long-term plan to increase the brands' position and create a positive perception in the market. Organizations that implemented a branding marketing strategy successfully have the potential to stay in the market for a longer period of time as they satisfy their customers as well as strengthen the organizations' image in the minds of the customers.

The research study analysed the impact of branding marketing strategies on consumers buying behaviour at UD Trucks' automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa.

The research methodology used for the study was a mixed method approach, which includes exploratory (qualitative) and descriptive (quantitative) measures with a descriptive researcher beginning the primary research method. This approach allows for combining qualitative and quantitative testing which leverages exploratory and descriptive research.

Analysing the results revealed that branding marketing strategies have an influence on consumers buying behaviour. As a result, truck OEMs had to shift their marketing strategy to incorporate branding marketing strategies. Further research has proven that branding marketing methods influence consumer choice-making, with a stronger influence on purchase and post-purchase behaviour.

Due to these shifts in branding marketing strategies and consumer behaviour truck OEMs need to develop brand marketing strategies that reach out to consumers at moments that most influence their decisions.

DECLARATION OF ORIGINAL WORK

I, Annika Botha declare that this research report is my own, unaided work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Master of Business Administration degree at Regenesys Business School, Sandton, South Africa. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other university or educational institution.

.....
Student's signature

.....
Date

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1 CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This study aims to determine the impact of branding marketing strategies on consumers' buying behaviour at UD Trucks' automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa. From a practical and theoretical perspective, the findings of the study are expected to resolve challenges associated with brand extension strategy, product extension strategy and Co-Branding strategy. Although many researchers have focused more on engaging customers in the development of the marketing mix this study will focus on the effect that branding marketing strategies have on consumers' buying behaviour with particular reference to the truck industry within Gauteng South Africa (Aulia & Briliana, 2017). To put this study into context, the background of the study is going to be highlighted followed by the statement of the research problem, research objectives, research questions, research design, significance to the study and chapter Division.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The first automobile was introduced, over 100 years ago and it symbolised power and wealth (Carlberg & Kjellberg, 2018). It was a luxurious item that only a few were able to afford, and this remained for quite some time. The car has evolved into a tool that is increasingly important for a comfortable lifestyle, but it has only really become a status symbol in the last 30 years or so.

As per Aghdaie & Honari (2014:264) brand has an involvement in the consumer's behaviour towards a product or service. Although Akkucuk & Esmaeili (2016:4) argued that both quality and brand have very low or negative parameter estimates, therefore the outcome indicated that quality and brand do not have a direct remarkable impact on brand equity.

According to Barbu (2016) corporate identity and customer perspective have a significant relationship with each other. The findings made by Nduku (2018:40) confirm that consumers have a strong connection to brands and brand names.

Wani and Agawal (2017:2) argued that brand plays an important role in the consumer's purchasing decision-making process.

To implement successful branding marketing strategies the organization needs to create clear communication of how and to what extent the brand will be changed Östberg Et al, (2017).

Branding has been around for many years and can distinguish brands from one another. According to Zabochnik (2018) To distinguish the products and services of one seller or group of sellers and to set them apart from those of the competitors, a brand is defined as a "name, phrase, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them" (Keller, 2013:2).

According to Whitney (2021), 95% of car sales are made within the dealership, but the consumer's buying journey starts on the internet. Having an established brand marketing strategy online is the key to bringing in new leads. Currently one of the biggest challenges within the automotive industry is gaining the trust of their leads. The main job of the marketer is to help bring in leads that are tuned into a sales transaction.

According to Karami and Aldi (2016), logos and symbols have several benefits, which included logos and symbols that are easily recognisable to help consumers identify a brand easily.

According to Gonu et al, (2022) marketing strategies have a strong effect on consumers' purchasing behaviour in Ghana in Africa. Sales promotions have significant positive and moderate influences on the purchasing behaviour of consumers.

In the past few years, several investigations have been done concerning marketing strategy in particular in the passenger vehicle industry. The commercial vehicle industry consists more of a B2B business model, with customers being logistics fleet operators or company distribution networks

operators, therefore fewer studies have been done concerning marketing strategies within this field of study (Sharma & Aggarwal, 2019).

According to Black et al. (2017), there has been rapid growth on the African continent for cars and commercial vehicles, but it is supplied by importers and used vehicles.

In the case of UD Trucks Southern Africa, different truck brands are available therefore it should be easy for the consumers to identify different brands. The best marketing tactics must be used by marketers to draw customers to the business. As a result, branding and brand components have a big part in how consumers decide what to buy.

The first dimension of the study investigates the marketing strategies that are currently implemented within the automotive industry in South Africa. This will include the 5 P's of marketing which are – product, price, promotions, place, and people (Varadarajan, 2009). As well as how effective the product extension strategy is and the impact it has on consumers' buying behaviour. This includes the launching of new products within the automotive industry (G, 2021).

The second dimension of the study examines the impact of brand extension strategies and the effect it has on consumers' buying behaviour. This will include horizontal, and vertical of both ways strategies that have the same brand name as well as their own identity (Kazmi & Rashidi, 2015). As well as the Co-branding strategy and the impact it has on consumers' buying behaviour. This will include 4 different types of co-branding forms that are ingredient co-branding, joint venture co-branding, same-company co-branding, and multiple sponsor form of co-branding (Shoeb, 2016).

The third dimension of the study focuses on different theoretical and practical brand marketing strategies that will be effective enough to help resolve challenges that are associated with consumers' buying behaviour in UD Trucks' automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa.

A consumer can be defined as a person who identifies a specific need or desire and based on that makes a purchase and then dispose of the product through the consumption process. The utility of a typical consumer depends on their use

of services, items from the agricultural and industrial sectors, housing, and wealth. Since everyone is influenced by various internal and external elements no two consumers are alike and this forms consumers' behaviour. The consumer's decision-making process consists of constant searching, purchasing, using, evaluating and disposing of a product or service. According to Flatters and Willmott, (2009) are consumers coastally trying to maximise their utility, satisfaction and joy by purchasing consumer goods.

Branding is the identity, character, and values of an organization. The branding should reflect in everything that the organization does, this includes product development, marketing strategies, employee relations and office design (Kloot, 2022).

Based on that, the theoretical framework for this study will be to cover the literature concerning branding marketing strategies as well as the buyer's behaviour theory to understand the importance of this relationship.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Based on the introduction and background of the study highlighted above, UD Trucks which is part of the automotive industry in South Africa tries to identify challenges that are associated with consumer buying behaviour. This form of behaviour is evidenced by psychological factors that consist of motivation, perception, learning, attitudes, and beliefs.

The same form of behaviour in the context of this study is associated with branding marketing strategies comprising brand extension strategy, product extension strategy and Co-Branding strategy. That needs investigation in terms of their impact on consumer buying behaviour.

In South Africa, only a few studies have been conducted on the influences of brand marketing strategies on consumers' buying behaviour in the automotive industry (Raghu, 2013).

This study will also identify manager theoretical gaps when it comes to managing consumer behaviours hence this study investigates the impact of branding marketing strategies on consumers buying behaviour at UD Trucks automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa to fill the identified gaps. According to Wildfeuer (2018) the brand platform, where the creative approach is formed, is the most crucial stage in the branding process. The brand's creative strategy aids in the execution and communication of its brand identity. The utilization of brand components and consumer evaluation standards in consumer decision-making is another critical step in branding and marketing.

This study is intended to fill the knowledge gap. Furthermore, the study focuses on product extension strategies and how it impacts consumers buying behaviours at UD Trucks' automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa. Consumers have different needs and want; therefore, the study looks at the different marketing strategies that affect consumers' buying behaviour.

1.4 PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

The purpose of the research is to create a better theoretical framework that will enable me to draw a conclusion that is in line with the purpose of the study. The collection of personal data forms a vital part of consumers' buying behaviour and how this is implemented by the organization's branding marketing strategies. The literature on consumer perception explains how branding marketing strategies are seen by consumers and how marketing strategies are perceived by consumers. Different factors could influence consumers' perceptions due to past experiences. Past experiences illustrate the relationship between the customer and the organization and how this may affect branding marketing strategies.

Many studies have been carried out in several industries regarding consumer buying behaviour within the automotive industry (Rapp et al., 2015). While these studies have enriched our understanding, their limitation must be noted. Such limited research has been conducted with these variables towards branding marketing strategies on consumers' buying behaviour towards the trucking industry in South Africa.

This research is based on branding marketing strategies that were identified by Kotler and Keller (2016) which consists of an explanation of how different branding marketing strategies impact consumers' buying behaviour towards product line extension, brand extension and co-branding of the product.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Questions underpinning the study are as follows:

1. What are the brand marketing strategies that are currently implemented at UD Trucks' automotive industry?
2. What is the impact of product line extension on consumers' buying behaviour at UD Trucks automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa?
3. What is the impact of Brand Extension on consumers' buying behaviour at UD Trucks' automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa?
4. What is the impact of Co-Branding on consumers' buying behaviour at UD Trucks automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa?
5. What are the theoretical and practical brand marketing strategies that can be implemented in the automotive industry at UD Trucks in the Gauteng province of South Africa to resolve consumer buying behaviour challenges?

1.5.1 Research objectives

The research objectives are as follows:

1. Identifying brand marketing strategies currently implemented at UD Trucks automotive industry.
2. Investigate the impact of product extension strategy on consumers' buying behaviour at UD Trucks automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa
3. Examining the impact of brand extension strategy on consumers' buying behaviour at UD Trucks automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa
4. Establish the impact of the Co-Branding strategy on consumers' buying behaviour at UD Trucks automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa

5. Exploring theoretical and practical brand marketing strategies effective enough to resolve challenges associated with consumers' buying behaviour at UD Trucks automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa

1.5.2 Research Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between product line extension strategy and consumer buying behaviour at UD Trucks automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa.
2. There is no significant relationship between brand extension strategy and consumer buying behaviour at UD Trucks automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa.
3. There is no significant relationship between co-branding and consumer buying behaviour at UD Trucks' automotive industry in the Gauteng province of South Africa.

1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design can be defined as the research design's blueprint on how the information will be collected, measured, and analysed to answer the research questions. The research study will follow a cross-sectional approach (Bosman, 2019). The research design can be classified into the following three types: exploratory, descriptive and explanatory. Leavy, (2017) explains that the exploratory is aimed at defining the questions and hypothesis from previous studies. The descriptive design presents a phenomenon fully described in the context of the study, and the explanatory design bears on the cause-effect relationship, explaining which causes produced which effect. Based on these assumptions the design for this study was a mix method approach, which includes exploratory (qualitative) and descriptive (quantitative) measures seeing as the process of branding marketing strategies and consumers' buying behaviour perceived by the organization chosen is exploratory and described in the research problem.

1.7 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

It is important to note that the scope of this study will only focus on the relationship between branding marketing strategies and consumers' buying behaviour. This research project will only go in-depth on the organizational branding marketing strategies, which emerges as one of the essential aspects to comprehend the process of consumers' buying behaviour, even though many factors, such as culture, can be taken into consideration to better understand consumers' buying behaviour. This study is limited to the symmetry perception of sampled customers and employees only. However, the study does not rule out other potential associations between certain traits or sets of attributes and consumer behaviour. For example:

- Customers may prefer some attributes more than others when buying a product.
- A specific branding marketing strategy may be more appealing to new customers

1.8 OUTLINE OF THE MINI DISSERTATION

Chapter One: Introduction

This chapter explains the study's introduction, background, research topic, aims, and research questions. It goes on to describe the problem's history, the study's goal, its definition of words, its boundaries, and its significance.

Chapter two: Literature Review

The conceptual and theoretical underpinnings of the investigation are presented in this chapter. It provides an overview of the main management theories and, using both recent and old academic work, generally provides a review of the key literature on the study issue in keeping with the stated objectives.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

In this chapter, the research design is discussed concerning the research philosophy, approach, tactics, methodologies, population and sample of the study, the measuring instrument utilized, and data collecting and analysis.

Chapter Four: Presentation of the Results and Findings

The findings of the study are discussed in this chapter. According to the objectives of the study.

Chapter Five: Analysis and Discussion of the Results

Chapter Six: Conclusion and Recommendation

This chapter outlines the study's Summary, Conclusion, and recommendations.

1.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter focused on the background of the study, the focus of the study, the problem statement, and motivation for the study. The research's goals, questions, hypotheses, and constraints were all described in the following section. The chapter's conclusion included a summary of each chapter's contents. The Literature Review is the subject of the second chapter, Chapter 2.

2 CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The literature review explained in detail the impact of branding marketing strategies on consumers buying behaviour. The first section covered the aspects of the brand marketing strategies concerning its pillars of brand marketing strategies and thereafter the impact on consumers. The next section is a description of the branding marketing strategies for building a brand image as well as the benefits of having a strong brand and brand elements. In the third section, the consumer behaviour model is discussed followed by the consumer decision-making process illustration and discussion. Thereafter the fourth section discusses consumers within South Africa, and the last section integrates information regarding UD Trucks' retail organization within South Africa.

2.2 LITERATURE REVIEW METHODOLOGY

The literature search was mainly conducted by accessing academic textbooks and research databases that included EbscoHost, Google Scholar and Research Gate. The journal articles were obtained via research databases and the focus was placed on peer-reviewed journal articles that have been published in the last five years. This literature review search focused on various aspects of marketing strategies regarding brand management. In this regard, marketing strategies, brand image, consumer behaviour models and consumer decision-making processes, in South Africa, specifically within the UD Trucks retail organization in South Africa, were discussed.

At first, searches on these topics were restricted to South Africa, but little information was discovered. As a result, the search was expanded to include the entire world, and journal articles from highly regarded publishing institutions, including the Journal of Marketing and the Journal of Market Research, were used as sources.

2.3 BRANDING MARKETING STRATEGIES AND CONSUMERS

Because of a very competitive market, and organizations trying to improve their position in the market, companies have adopted a more customer-oriented approach. As competitors are increasing organizations need to have competitive brand marketing strategies and a well-established distribution channel to ensure that the organization has a competitive advantage by offering a superior product that has more benefits for the customer (Kloot, 2022).

The goal of a brand marketing strategy is to strengthen the brand's position and create a positive perception in the market over the long term. The strategy must include several brand marketing pillars which consist of a product extension-, a brand extension- and a co-branding strategy (Esau & Harris, 2022).

Implementing brand marketing strategies can assist an organization to gather momentum and build on past results to increase market share among the target audience (Haralayya, 2021).

2.3.1 The pillars of brand marketing strategies

2.3.1.1 Product Extension Strategy

In a product extension strategy, a range of products under the existing brand from entry-level to premium products can be included. Product extension implies coexistence within the brands' category of multiple branded offers, and the differentiation is according to price and service as perceived by the consumer.

The product extension strategy must be developed alongside the existing product. The new strategy usually consists of a new colour, size, style, build and increase or decrease in size. Because the customers are already familiar with the existing product, by extending the product line the organisation might decrease the risk of launching a new product which is unfamiliar and therefore runs the risk to lose customer satisfaction. (Finkle, 2021).

The main difference between product extension and brand extension is the category of the product. When a product is classified into a new category and is new to the brand it is considered a brand extension strategy. The overall risk in implementing the product extension strategy is much lower as consumers are already aware of the brand and trust the name and services or quality that they are delivering.

2.3.1.2 Brand Extension Strategy

Brand extension occurs when an organization introduces a new item that is categorised into a completely different category. This strategy provides the organization with the opportunity to expand the brand while giving recognition to the existing product (Odjick, 2021). By extending the name of a well-established brand in the market, the potential exists that the new product will have an as strong influence in the market.

According to Hong (2020) the implementation of a well-achieved brand extension will build the organization's brand equity for new and existing brands. Although brand extension can also result in diluting the brand and degrading the original brand by creating a negative association, it is running the risk of alienating loyal brand followers.

According to Hong, (2020), the automotive industry limits the use of a brand extension strategy to modifications in trimmings, engines or face lifting a vehicle. Every manufacturer has conservation types of extensions in their product line. In the instance of an automotive brand, expanding a product, compared to a completely new product line that pushes the bounds of the original brand, is very rare. Overall, the automotive industry approaches brand extension with caution, as it can be a complex process and run the risk of flooding the market and causing confusion among consumers.

2.3.1.3 Co-Branding Strategy

The co-branding strategy focuses on combining two brands that provide the opportunity to share technology and resources (Ueltschy & Laroche, 2011).

This strategy has the potential to strengthen both brands that are working together rather than independently. Attracting potential customers from each brand helps to increase market share, recognition, and revenue potential. The main focus of the co-branding strategy is to communicate and create a strategic alliance. The organizations will strive to align their message to capture the attention of the target audience.

Organizations that implement co-branding focus on improving their position within the marketplace, as well as what resources are required to implement this strategy.

In the automotive industry, many have strongly associated with specific approaches towards design. In this regard, it becomes frequent to use design cues such as colour composition schemes to inspire specific auto branding that combines different design projects (Kalvapalle, 2014).

2.3.2 Branding marketing strategies in building the brand image of UD Trucks

UD Trucks started in October 1935 under the name Nihon Diesel Industrial, Ltd, and was established to manufacture and sell diesel engines, vehicles, and aircraft parts. AB Volvo became the majority shareholder (100%) in 2006 of the company, and in 2011, the company was renamed UD Trucks. The abbreviation UD stands for Ultimate Dependability and forms the bases for the company vision. All operational policies, including all interactions between clients, shareholders, related businesses, employees, and local and internal communities, are guided by the vision.

Since 2021 UD Trucks formed part of Isuzu Motors. As part of the completion of the strategic alliance between the Volvo Group and Isuzu Motors, Isuzu Motors bought UD Trucks from the Volvo Group. UD Trucks is in a strong position to have a long-lasting partnership with Isuzu Motors. These benefits include:

- Combining forces and leveraging on each other's strengths and economic advances, particularly in the market for heavy-duty vehicles in Japan and internationally
- Examining ways to work together on planning, purchasing, utilizing shared technology, and complementing geographical footprints
- Establishing a solid foundation on which to continue to make investments in technological advancements and innovations for top-tier goods and services

Since the founding of UD Trucks, the company has risen to the occasion with the mission of offering the services and trucks that the modern world demands. UD Trucks strive to go beyond customer expectations. They do this by following the principles of ultimate dependability, providing smart and modern technology, and continuously improving the performances of products to excel in the essentials. The organization operates as one UD team with the Gemba spirit.

According to UD Trucks (2022) the brand images for UD Trucks states; "Our brand promises to always go the extra mile for every customer. UD products go the extra distance, giving our customers extra fuel mileage and uptime. UD people always make the extra effort, to support our partners and satisfy our customers."

2.3.3 The benefit of strong brand images

According to Opatha (2015), brand image can be defined as the observation consumers have about a brand, coming from the brand association that is held in the consumers' memory. The consumer's overall opinion and sentiment about a brand, which drives consumer behaviour, is a key component of brand equity. According to Senecal and Nantel (2004), word-of-mouth and celebrity endorsements are just two examples of social influence that have a significant impact on brand image. Social influence has an impact on prospective customers' opinions and perceptions of a brand.

Organizations use images to position their brand within the market to enable consumers to distinguish their brand from a competitor. A company's overall

brand image either develops, changes, or stabilizes depending on the specific conditions of the business.

2.3.4 Brand elements

Trademarkable components that help to distinguish and identify a brand are known as brand elements (Farhana, 2012). Marketers should select brand components that raise customer awareness of the brand, create strong and distinctive brand associations, and result in favourable brand perceptions and feelings. When choosing brand elements, certain criteria are applicable, as displayed in figure 1.

Figure 1: Criteria for choosing brand elements



1. Memorable	Easily recognized Easily recalled
2. Meaningful	Descriptive Persuasive
3. Likable	Fun and interesting Rich visual and verbal imagery Aesthetically pleasing
4. Transferable	Within and across product categories Across geographic boundaries and cultures
5. Adaptable	Flexible Updatable
6. Protectable	Legally Competitively

Source: Kotler & Keller (2015:331)

According to Kotler and Keller (2015:331), the selection of brand components is based on six factors. The first three—memorable, significant, and likeable—are crucial for brand development. The latter three—transferable, adaptable, and protectable—are defensive and aid in leveraging and preserving brand equity in the face of obstacles.

2.3.4.1 Brand names

One of the brand components that aids consumers in recognizing and distinguishing one product from another is the brand name. It should be chosen very carefully as it effectively and economically conveys the main topic of a product. It is simple to detect the brand name and its significance may be

quickly stored and recalled from memory (Bulle, 2020). The brand name connections must be strong, exclusive, and good. Many consumers see a brand as the best option while others see a brand as something consumers know and interact with. The purpose of a brand is necessary to create a product image. The product images will affect the perceived value of the product and increase the value of the brand for customers, which in return will ensure brand loyalty (Aulia & Briliana, 2017).

Brands are developed by organizations to attract and retain customers by increasing the value, images, respectability, or lifestyle the brand might bring. The customer can upload a favourable image for a certain brand. Branding is a technology that offers a dependable and distinct advantage and is likely to reduce the risks that buyers take when selecting products. Because people can only attach meaning and emotion to tangible objects and accumulate symbols for their own sake, brand attraction is not only based on logic (Assali, 2016).

2.3.4.2 Brand Awareness

According to Sivaram et al. (2022), brand awareness refers to consumers' ability to recall and identify a brand that is connected to a brand name, logo, and symbol. The breadth and depth of brand awareness as well as the organising of product categories are the two key components of brand cognisance.

- Breadth and depth of brand awareness: Chierici et al. (2018) refers to brand awareness on how consumers can recall or recognise a specific brand by linking specific elements to a product or service. Consumers must be exposed to the product through marketing, communication or personal experience to form good brand associations.
- Product categories: This examines a consumer's perception of a product. Product category class, product category information, product type information, and brand information are the categories that consumers use to organize products.

Brand awareness relates to the capacity of a brand to be recognized by a consumer in various situations, or the power of the brand to be recollected in

memory. It also indicates the potential customer's capacity to recognize or remember that a brand is a part of a certain product category. There are numerous stages at which brand awareness in the consumer's consciousness can be assessed (Patil, 2017). Anything that prompts customers to interact with a brand aspect increases brand familiarity and recognition. According to Chierici et al. (2018) the more elements used to describe a brand the more well-known that specific brand is.

Social media provides organizations with the ability to effectively enhance brand awareness as they expose a larger number of consumers to the brand (Chierici et al., 2018). Social media enables brands to not only increase marketing communication but also extend their links with consumer interaction which help the brand to establish, consolidate and maintain brand awareness (Chierici et al., 2018:217).

According to research by Patil (2017) advertising increases brand awareness. As a result, the consumer develops a stronger brand image in their minds, which has a favourable impact on them and becomes a part of their purchasing behaviour when brand awareness is combined with positive brand perception and loyalty. Organizations should develop their brand marketing strategy to drive brand awareness.

2.3.4.3 Benefits of Brand names

Building a strong brand takes time and ongoing work, yet a strong brand boosts a company's worth. It gives workers a sense of direction, inspiration, and community. It enables you to increase pricing and attract more clients without exerting any effort on your part. Brand names are beneficial when consumers try to convince themselves that they have made the proper choice even when purchasing pricey items like cars and pricey electronic devices (Keller et al., 1998).

- The benefits of brand names include the following:
- Positive word-of-mouth marketing
- Improved customer loyalty
- Higher advertising efficacy on consumers
- Less price sensitivity

- More engaged staff

2.3.4.4 The usage of Logos and Symbols when branding

A brand represents a certain product, and therefore having a logo for this brand is extremely important in the eyes of the consumer. Brands compete for the attention of consumers rather than in the product market. Once a brand is established in the customer's mind, they will always associate themselves with that specific brand. With the aid of logos, businesses may use visual cues to communicate their distinct identities and draw in customers (Kim & Lim, 2019).

Symbols representing brands can be a tagline, character, visual, logo, package, or program. The symbol forms part of the brand and functions as a tool to maintain the brand. The extensive history and usage of logos and symbols demonstrate the company's ability to be recognized by its brand. As opposed to company names or trademarks, logos come in a variety of forms. Straightforward ways to identify a product include logos and symbols which represent the brand.

Greater success can be achieved if brand names, and logos are associated in the mind with the appropriate products and symbols. Customers might quickly recognize specific symbols, but they might not be able to associate as easily with a specific brand or item. Increased brand identification and brand loyalty are two ways that logos assist businesses in building brand equity. Businesses invest a lot of time and money promoting their brand logos and symbols because logos are such valuable assets.

According to Karami and Aidi (2016b), the function of logos include:

- Reveals the organization's identity
- Creates a strong first impression
- Forms the foundation of the brand identity
- It is memorable
- It enables consumers to distinguish between brands
- Creates brand loyalty

The logo is an essential component in creating a successful company and brand. The audience will look for the logo as soon as they see any

communications from a brand. As highlighted by (Karami & Aidi, 2016b) the function of a logo is quite significant and needs to be taken into consideration when designing a logo that will in the end help to establish the brand image.

2.4 CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR

Branding marketing strategies are designed to impact consumers' decision-making which can lead to profitable changes (Assali, 2016). The elements of the marketing mix affect consumers in different ways. Within this context (Bulle, 2020) evaluated how the marketing mix affects consumer behaviour. Figure 2 highlights the marketing mix (Sethna & Blythe, 2019).

Figure 2: The marketing mix



Source: Sethna & Blythe (2019:115)

- Product

The brand name, quality, innovation, and sophistication of an organization's products, among other factors, can influence consumer behaviour. Consumers' perceptions, reactions, and purchases of products at stores can be influenced by the product's material, packaging, and labelling.

- Price

The cost of goods and services, and what the market offer, has a significant impact on whether people buy the product. Although

consumers might support retailers with the lowest price changes, sometimes, higher prices might not deter customers from buying because they think the goods or services are more prestigious or of higher quality. However, many consumers nowadays who are looking for value can only purchase things based on price in comparison to other qualities.

- Promotion

Advertising, promotions, and sales staff are all likely to have an impact on what customers believe about things, how they feel about using and purchasing them, and how they act, including where they shop and which brands, they choose to purchase. Marketing communication is essential for educating consumers about products and services, including where to buy them, and for fostering brand awareness and goodwill.

- Place

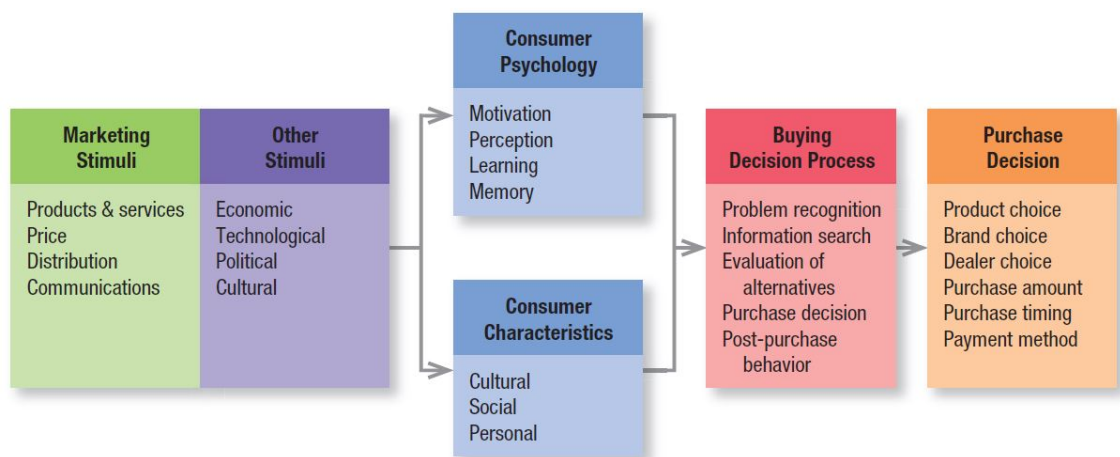
Consumers can be impacted by a marketer's product distribution strategy in a variety of ways. Products that can be found at various locations have a higher chance of being discovered and purchased. Consumers are unlikely to conduct an in-depth investigation when shopping for low-participation products. Usability thus becomes crucial, and secondly, customers may perceive goods purchased at independent retailers as being of greater quality. Although selling products only at premium locations is one of the ways marketers build brand value, online or in catalogues shopping might give consumers the impression that the products are unique, special, or made for a particular target market.

There has been a change in consumer behaviour regarding activists, habits, and interactions because of the surge in social media user engagement and brand awareness. Due to this increase in interaction and awareness of consumers, organizations must embrace brand marketing strategies as a channel to engage with consumers (Kumar et al., 2016). In brand marketing strategy, it is key to

understand consumers' behaviour to ensure the strategy is implemented correctly and successfully.

According to (Kotler & Keller, 2015) Consumer behaviour can be defined as a study of how people, groups, and organizations choose, purchase, and use goods, experiences and ideas to fulfil their needs and desires. The Nicosia Model, Howard-Sheth Model, Engel-Kollat-Blackwell Model, Stimulus-Response Model, and Foxall's Behaviour Perspective Model of Purchase and Consumption are only a few examples of models on consumer behaviour that have been extensively researched and developed. The Black Box Consumer Behaviour Model by Kotler and Keller (2012) was selected for this research project.

Figure 3: Consumers Behaviour Model



Source: Kotler & Keller (2016)

As shown in Figure 3, the buyer's black box, consumer psychology and traits have an impact on their purchasing behaviour. Organizations must comprehend both the theory and reality of customer behaviour since marketing and other stimuli have a significant impact on consumer behaviour.

2.4.1 Consumer Characterises

Consumer purchasing behaviour is influenced by cultural, societal, and personal factors. The three components that make up cultural factors consist of social class, subculture, and culture. Culture gets formed by values and perspectives acquired from family members or the society to which a consumer is exposed. Companies must take cultural differences into account when

designing branding and marketing strategies because that will affect how consumers respond to the content.

Culture can be broken down into smaller subcultures that give a detailed account of how consumers are socialized. The elements of the subculture consist of geographic region, religion, nationalities, and racial groups (Kotler & Keller, 2012). The branding and marketing strategies need to be designed to target a specific market as consumers relate to branding marketing strategies differently.

Social classes are divisions within society that are hierarchically arranged and consist of people that exhibit similar behaviours, interests, and values. Customers' social status serves as an example of a social divide, and consumers' media use, lifestyle choices, and consumption habits are all influenced by their social class.

Social aspects include families, roles, and status as well as peer groups. Reference groups, which include family, friends, co-workers, and professional or religious organizations, have an indirect or direct impact on customers' attitudes and behaviours. Through the knowledge gained from encounters and affiliation with reference groups, a consumer might alter their lifestyle. The group leader, or the consumer who provides advice and information on a product, seems to be the most influential member of the group. When creating a brand marketing plan, organizations need to be aware of opinions and group leaders. The family is considered to be the most significant buying group in society and has the greatest impact on consumer behaviour. Although spouses typically enjoy making decisions together, they may react differently to a brand's marketing plan.

The brand marketing plan must interact with the consumer who has the greatest influence and decision-making power over purchasing the brand and product.

These customer attributes might influence behaviour regarding buying a certain brand or not. Therefore, organizations are advised to modify their branding and marketing tactics to appeal to various consumer categories to raise awareness and influence their purchasing decisions.

2.4.2 Consumer psychology

Organizations need to be aware of five key psychological processes that affect customers to link marketing stimuli to consumer purchasing decisions. These include motivation, memories, emotions, learning and perception learning (Haugtvedt et al., 2018).

Consumers have needs, which turn into motivations to act to satisfy those needs when there is a sufficient level of intensity for action to be considered. Once a consumer is motivated, they are ready to act, and their actions are influenced by their perceptions. Perception is an illustration created by a consumer through the process of information selection, organization, and interpretation.

Consumer exposure to branding marketing strategies has increased rapidly over the years, and this has led to consumers being more selective about engaging with brands. Therefore, organizations need to increase their branding and marketing strategies activities to attract consumers towards their brand.

The buying experience of the consumers takes place by learning, and through learning, their behaviour changes and they gain information and then take action. It is however not a guarantee that a purchase will be made from the first action, but brand awareness will be created and can lead to a future purchase. Organizations should develop their branding and marketing strategies to increase brand awareness.

It is key that organizations understand these five key psychological processes and ensure that their branding marketing strategies are linked to these processes.

2.5 CONSUMER DECISION MAKING

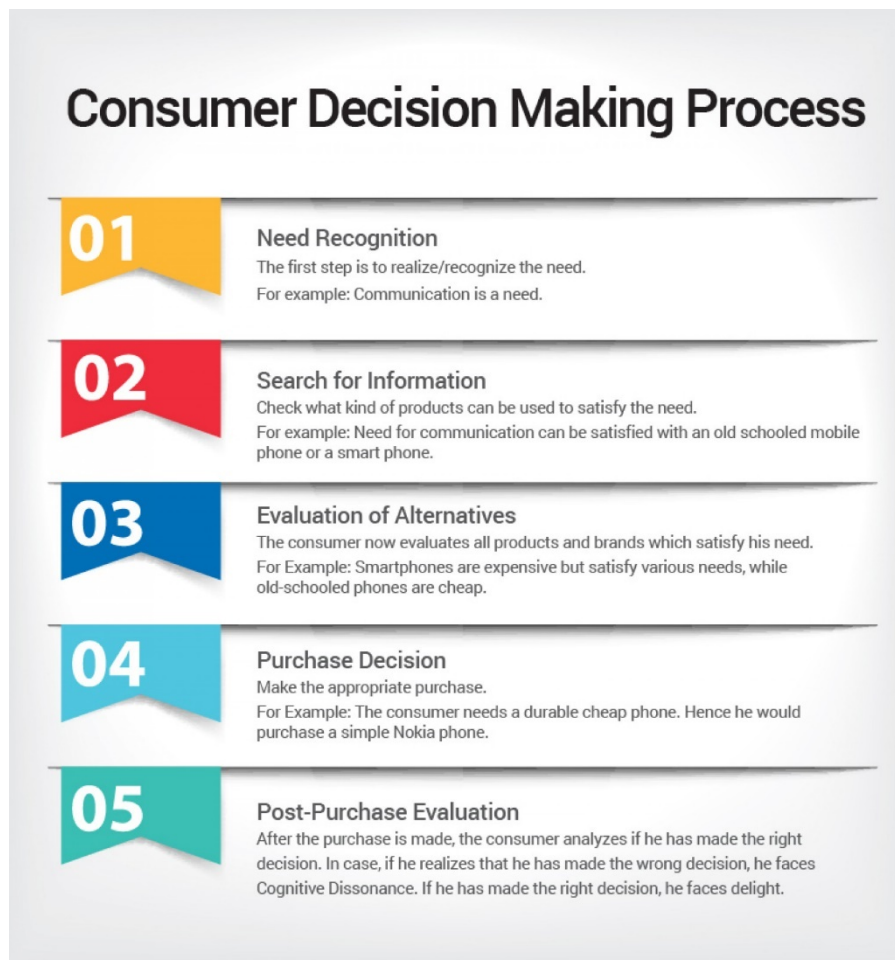
Consumers have changed, and they no longer make decisions based on a linear process; instead, they now enter the decision-making process at various stages, depending on their first interactions with the brand, their product research, or recommendations from friends, family, or social media.

A key aspect of human behaviour is decision-making. Every day, we all make choices that affect a variety of things, including our health, happiness, wealth, and hopes for the future. Marketing decision-making involves knowing what consumers buy, when, where, and how they buy; as well as, how much they are willing to spend. It is crucial to consider why customers purchase. Knowing the social and cognitive processes involved in that decision is necessary to comprehend why people buy what they buy. Since this is a challenging task, businesses spend a lot of money on research and development related to their products.

Every stage of the customer decision-making process is critical when determining how to affect consumer behaviour. Businesses must carefully consider each step of the purchasing process if they want to optimize their profits. Customers do not simply choose to purchase, as indicated previously, various aspects influence purchasing behaviour.

The consumer decision-making process is how customers become aware of and identify their needs, get knowledge about the best ways to address those needs, assess various available options, decide what to buy, and then assess their purchase (Millwood, 2021).

Figure 4: Consumer decision-making process



Source: Kotler & Keller (2012)

The consumer decision-making process, as shown above, is a crucial component of the research study since it is the next stage in the consumer behaviour model.

John Dewey initially described the five stages of the consumer decision-making process in 1910 (Bruner, 1988). These steps are need recognition, information search, alternative evaluation, purchase choice, and post-purchase evaluation.

Stage 1: Need recognition

Consumer decision-making begins with the identification of a problem, which in turn generates a need or desire that must be met. As marketers, it is our responsibility to identify the needs that our clients have and inform them of the solution. Knowing what our audience segments' needs or wants, can help us determine the best times or occasions to market products to them.

In today's digital era, preferences are quickly formed in "micro-moments," which are brief periods when consumers are influenced. These situations typically arise when people instinctively go for a connected device, such as a cell phone, to conduct additional research and acquire information. Throughout all phases of the decision-making process, these micro-moments are crucial.

Stage 2: Search for information

The consumer will conduct some research at this stage, although the amount will depend on whether the desired purchase is a high- or low-involvement product. When purchasing high-involvement goods, such as a truck, consumers are more likely to engage their minds and do more pre-purchase research. A product with low involvement might be bought easier and more frequently. This stage is constantly changing and includes everything from going into a store and speaking with a salesperson or doing research online and finding reviews regarding a product. To make the best decision and reduce risk along the way, many aspects are taken into account.

Social media and internet reviews have a significant impact on this stage of the process of making decisions. Customers are not bound to only ask their friends for recommendations; instead, they ask on social media and use unrestricted crowdsourcing replies from friends, relatives, and strangers. The following observations were made in 2017 utilizing a range of academic studies (DeGruttola, 2017). Although not typical of all South Africans they do highlight how social media and networking are becoming increasingly important in the consumer market. Decision-making is influenced by media content:

- Social media influences 81% of customers' purchases decisions.
- Facebook is responsible for 64% of all social revenue and 50% of all social referrals.
- 31% of consumers claim to search for new products to buy on social media platforms.
- When mobile customers read positive evaluations before making a purchase, the conversion rate from interest to purchase rises by 133%.

Social considerations have always influenced consumer purchasing decisions, but the widespread use of smartphones and social media has elevated word-of-mouth recommendations to new heights.

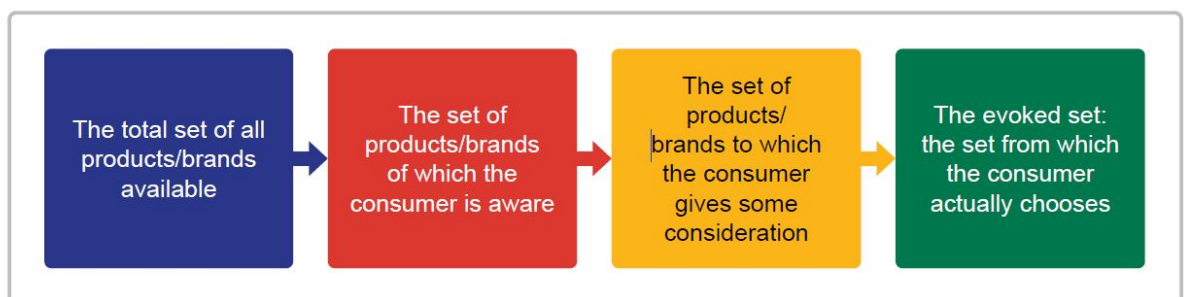
It's important to remember that recollection plays a part in the search process. A consumer will frequently recall past interactions with the brand, memories of past interactions with the brand, and even prior promotions for the brand because the mind stores a lot of information. Additionally, this helps the search process. These memory structures are aided by brand identification building over time, which makes the brand more prominent in consumers' minds.

Stage 3: Evaluations of alternatives

At this point, the customer starts to wonder if the product is the proper choice or if they require an alternative solution to their identified issue. Before moving on to the following step, the consumer may switch back and forth between stages 2 and 3 several times. Consumers will study multiple evaluations comparing features, costs, and the best or most convenient places to buy the product while comparing alternatives.

The consumer starts looking for the best offer after deciding what they need, based on all the important internal and external characteristics to meet their requirements. Elimination is a component of this stage of the decision-making process. It is extremely difficult and expensive to re-enter the consumer's decision-making process once your brand has been rejected so that your goods can be taken into consideration.

Figure 4.1 demonstrates a method of removing options till the final evoked set and a potential decision is reached.



Source: Bruner (1988)

This procedure reduces the set of all brands or items to those that the consumer is aware of. The set is then further condensed to include only those that the consumer is seriously contemplating, and only the evoked set remains from which they might make decisions.

Stage 4: Purchasing decisions

The consumer chooses what and where to buy the desired product based on Stages 2 and 3. At this point, a customer has carefully considered all the available information and reached a fair judgment based on a combination of practical and emotional experiences, as well as the influence of advertising at some point (whether it be a television commercial, or a webpage discovered through an online search).

However, when the consumer pays for the product, whether in person or online and his/her experience falls short of their expectations, the entire sale could still be cancelled. When it is a positive experience, the chances are good that it can lead to reinforcing the customer's choice to buy, building brand loyalty for repeat purchases, and helping to advertise the product to new potential customers.

Stage 5: Post-purchase behaviour

Certain results are anticipated once the consumer makes a purchase. How many of the consumer's expectations are met determines how satisfied they are to a considerable extent. This phase is referred to as cognitive dissonance. As it relates to behaviour choices and attitude changes, cognitive dissonance is defined as the "condition of having conflicting thoughts, beliefs, or attitudes." This means, in marketing terms, that customers try to defend their decisions after making them and may even keep watching commercials for the product to do so (Hackley & Hackley, 2021). This is particularly true when people try to convince themselves that they are making the proper choice while making high-involvement purchases of pricey commodities like cars and expensive technology devices.

2.6 FACTORS AFFECTING CONSUMER/BRAND LOYALTY

Brand loyalty refers to consumers' preferences to purchase a specific brand; consumers believe that a brand provides enjoyable features, quality, images, or standards at the right prices. This belief forms the bases of the consumers' buying habits. Consumers will purchase a brand for a trial, and after being satisfied, they will keep on buying that specific brand. Brand loyalty is a supportive attitude toward a brand that eventually leads to frequent purchases of the brand (Esau & Harris, 2022).

According to Sethna & Blythe, (2019), Brand loyalty is the act of regularly and purposefully purchasing the same product. Brand loyalty measures the proportion of loyal customers to those who are satisfied with the product. Marketing a brand to existing consumers that are already loyal towards the brand will cost less money and effort. Loyal customers will not rapidly switch to other brand products. Consumers buy the same trusted brand to save time and reduce perceived risk.

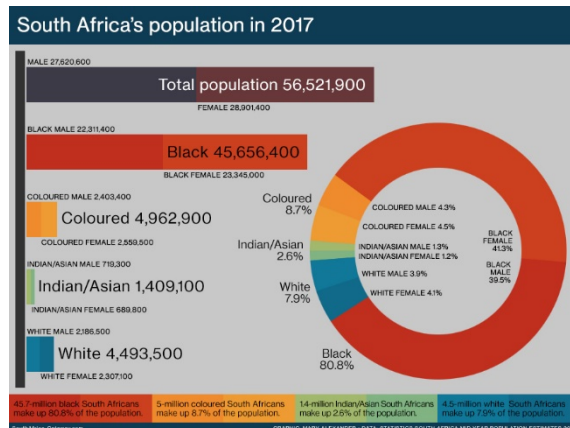
Brand equity describes a brand's value, and the value is determined by the perception consumers have of the brand. When consumers think highly of a specific brand the brand has positive brand equity. If a brand is consistently underdelivering or consumers are dissatisfied with the brand to the point, where they will not recommend the brand, the brand will have negative brand equity. On the other hand, if consumers continue with the brand despite competitors offering better features, prices, and conveniences, then the brand, and perhaps the logo and slogan, has significant value (Solomon, 2019).

Factors affecting brand loyalty

According to Khadka & Maharjan, (2017:12), factors affecting brand loyalty can be classified into two types namely: behavioural loyalty and emotional loyalty. Behavioural loyalty can be seen as the frequent shopper in a specific retailer and emotional loyalty is the consumer that is more conscious towards a specific retailer based on past buying experience and attitude. The four major variables that influence customer loyalty consist of service quality, price strategy, store attributes and product quality.

2.7 CONSUMER IN SOUTH AFRICA

Table 2. 1 South African population in 2017 statistics by population group



Source: Stats SA (2022)

The person who uses any goods or services is the consumer. Consumers are those who buy products for their own needs and use or consume it. Although a customer cannot resell the good, product, or service, he or she may use it to support himself or herself and engage in self-employment. The history, culture, and heritage of South Africa are diverse and extensive. As per the table above, the population in South Africa is made up of four main racial groups namely, Black, White, Coloured, and Indian, whereby Black is the predominant racial population. Because different racial groups adhere to various cultures, lifestyles, religions, beliefs, and values, South Africa's consumer environment is very diverse.

According to a study done by NielsenIQ (2022), 58% of South African consumers are buying more variety of brands than before COVID-19. When choosing a brand to purchase, consumers place a high priority on availability (96%), good value for money (97%), and customer service (95%). Affordability is a major factor supporting this trend in functional purchasing as costs continue to climb across all categories.

As a result of the pandemic, South Africa has had a record-breaking trade surplus. The key commodity and products consist of agriculture commodities, manufactures goods which include machinery and equipment as well as motor vehicles and mining outputs. Within South Africa, 85% of all exports are transported by road to different ports and airports to export goods out of the

country. Due to rail's inability to handle increased export volumes, particularly of mined commodities, an increase in exports has a substantial impact on the volume of goods moved by road.

Less than ten companies dominate more than 40% of the regional road-based logistics market, indicating a significant degree of concentration among the top competitors. More than 80% of the domestic market is under the hands of the two biggest operators, who also possess a sizeable market share. Unitrans and Fuel Group are the major commercial vehicle rental providers (Felton, 2022).

Due to the strong link between the economy and freight transport, any efforts to grow and enhance the economy will benefit the freight transportation industry and vice versa. The number of commodities requiring transportation will expand because of government programs to support manufacturing, agriculture, the automobile industry, and infrastructure projects.

Table 2. 2: Freight transportation income from April 2021 to June 2022

Type of commodity	Apr – Jun 2021 (R million)	Weight	Apr – Jun 2022 (R million)	% change between Apr – Jun 2021 and Apr – Jun 2022	Contribution (% points) to the total % change
Agriculture and forestry primary products	3 281	7,9	4 323	31,8	2,5
Primary mining and quarrying products	15 473	37,0	15 916	2,9	1,1
Manufactured food, beverages and tobacco products	3 654	8,7	4 081	11,7	1,0
Textiles, clothing and leather goods	784	1,9	867	10,6	0,2
Chemicals, coke, petroleum, rubber, plastic and other mineral products	3 515	8,4	3 938	12,0	1,0
Basic metals and fabricated metal products	808	1,9	686	-15,1	-0,3
Non-metallic products	490	1,2	398	-18,8	-0,2
Electrical machinery, transport machinery and equipment	438	1,0	463	5,7	0,1
Motor vehicles, parts and accessories	825	2,0	947	14,8	0,3
Paper and paper products	184	0,4	228	23,9	0,1
Commercial products	633	1,5	734	16,0	0,2
Used household and office products	730	1,7	1 046	43,3	0,7
Containers	1 824	4,4	1 689	-7,4	-0,3
Parcels	725	1,7	959	32,3	0,5
Other freight	8 396	20,1	10 861	29,4	5,9
Total income	41 763	100,0	47 135	12,9	12,9

Source: Stats SA (2022)

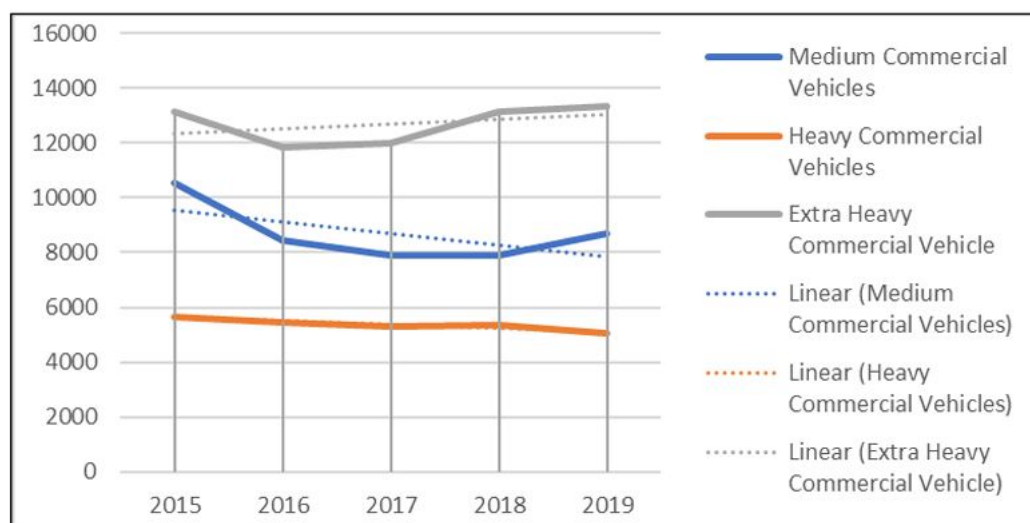
A rise in revenue of 12.4% between May 2022 and May 2021 has been recorded for South Africa's freight transportation sector. Despite the numerous protests and disturbances, the freight business experienced during the year, the number of products moved for the same period increased by 9.2%. The revenue from freight transportation increased by 8,5% from March to May 2022 compared to the same period last year.

In 2022, sales of heavy trucks and buses climbed by 11.7% to 21 835 units, while sales of medium commercial vehicles increased by 11.3% year-on-year to 8 370 units (Cokayne, 2023).

2.8 COMMERCIAL VEHICLES IN SOUTH AFRICA

The demand for trucks is influenced by business confidence (Lamprecht, 2020). The sales of commercial vehicles have a mixed trajectory from 2017 to 2021 as per the table below. The expansion of online shopping and hub deliveries drove the growth of medium commercial vehicles from 2017 to 2019, while the movement of large goods and commodities has continued to fuel the growth of extra-heavy commercial vehicles.

Table 2. 3: Sales of commercial vehicles



Source: Lamprecht (2020)

In South Africa, the truck market comprises 5.8% of the total market and has seen an increase year-on-year by 19% in 2021. The economy relies heavily on

medium- and heavy-duty commercial trucks as productive assets and capital inputs. Logistics expenses and a nation's productivity, competitiveness, and long-term economic growth are closely linked. In South Africa delivering goods and services to communities across the country requires reliable and high-quality transportation. Therefore, a truck is used as a tool for integrated solutions in meeting the operator's specific requirements. The South African commercial vehicle industry is increasingly shifting from being a provider of trucks to a business that can provide the finest logistics solutions to satisfy customer needs.

In South Africa right now, the heavy commercial vehicle market is characterized by a larger number of payers in an environment with a relatively low volume. In 2021, there were 18 brands in the medium commercial vehicle market with 198 model derivatives to choose from, 13 brands in the heavy commercial vehicle segment with 105 model derivatives, and 18 brands in the extra-heavy commercial vehicle segment with 374 model derivatives.

The nation's road transportation system is essential to the South African economy. Road networks transport around 80% of the nation's commodities, both incoming and outward, making road transportation a crucial component of the national supply chain. The tenth-longest road network in the world, in South Africa, is 754 600 km long. By 2030, African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) projects will need 248 000 trucks for container transport and 1,84 million trucks for bulk cargo, according to research conclusions. If the proposed infrastructural projects are also completed, these numbers would rise to 1,95 million and 268 000 trucks, respectively. This might create considerable prospects for the domestic commercial vehicle industry.

Vehicles for road transport are also produced by South African manufacturers. Isuzu Motors South Africa manufactured the majority of the country's medium-sized and heavy commercial vehicles in 2019, while Volvo Group South Africa was the main manufacturer of extra-heavy commercial vehicles.

In South Africa, the automotive manufacturing clusters can be found in Gauteng, Eastern Cape, and KwaZulu-Natal with tiers of connected supplier firms and OEMs at the centre. These OEMs include seven light vehicles, several medium

and heavy-duty vehicles and over 400 automotive component organizations (DTI, 2017).

Table 2. 4: Key automotive features

Key automotive features	Gauteng	KZN	EC
Number of OEMs (manufacturing plants)	BMW SA Nissan SA Ford Motor Company of Southern Africa	Toyota SA Motors	Volkswagen Group SA Mercedes-Benz SA Isuzu Motors SA Ford Motor Company of Southern Africa engine plant
Medium, heavy, extra-heavy commercial vehicle and bus companies	Babcock, Ford, Hyundai Automotive, Iveco, JMC, MAN Truck & Bus, MarcoPolo, Powerstar SA, Scania, Stellantis, Tata Trucks, UD Trucks, VECH South Africa, and Volvo Group Southern Africa	Bell Equipment, MAN and Toyota	FAW Trucks, Isuzu Motors, Daimler Trucks and Buses Southern Africa and Volkswagen Group SA
Number of automotive component suppliers	200	80	150
Motor vehicle parc as % of South Africa's total vehicle parc of 12,96 million vehicles	38,3%	13,4%	6,7%
Passenger car sales as % of total 2021 passenger car sales of 304 340 units	35,1%	14,5%	4,4%
LCV sales as % of total 2021 LCV sales of 133 078 units	31,7%	13,7%	5,3%
MCV/HCV sales as % of total 2021 MCV/HCV sales of 27 075 units	36,7%	13,1%	3,8%
Light vehicle production by OEMs in the province as % of total 2021 light vehicle production of 471 433 units	33,8%	28,1%	38,1%
Light vehicle exports by OEMs in the province as % of total 2021 light vehicle exports of 297 441 units	39,1%	19,7%	41,2%

Source: NAACAM, [naamsa](#)/Lightstone Auto

Source: Lamprecht (2020)

The automotive cluster is a significant industrial sector in South Africa, and the country's future industrial and economic landscape depends on its continued existence (Davies & Vincent, 2022).

In research from Felton (2023) the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats have been identified in the table below for freight transportation by road in South Africa.

Figure 5: SWOT analysis based on freight transportation by road in South Africa

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ 88% of goods moved in South Africa are transported by road. ◆ Road freight, despite increasing costs, is still more efficient than rail freight. ◆ The road freight industry is flexible and able to deliver goods door-to-door. ◆ Well supported by information technology for all aspects of logistics management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Road freight industry is negatively affected by global and local economic conditions. ◆ Critical shortage of skilled professional drivers. ◆ Poor co-ordination of and collaboration between road, rail, air and sea transport modes leads to inefficiencies in the supply chain process. ◆ High accident rate caused by human error, unroadworthy vehicles, traffic violations and overloading. ◆ High carbon emissions from vehicles.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ If implemented, government economic development projects will increase mining, manufacturing and agricultural outputs requiring transportation. ◆ Government investment in infrastructure projects should strengthen the logistics and road transport corridors and improve access to ports. ◆ Trend towards intermodal transport offers opportunities for collaboration with rail sector. ◆ Infrastructure projects and agreements to facilitate inter-regional integration and co-operation between African countries will increase trade in goods requiring transportation, harmonise customs regulations, reduce border post delays and improve road infrastructure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Further deterioration in the global and local economies. ◆ Further weakening of the rand which will lead to an increase in the cost of fuel, imported vehicles, parts and IT systems. ◆ Increase in the already high operational costs associated with the transportation of goods. ◆ Competition from Road-to Rail programme. ◆ Impact of proposed restrictive legislation.

Source: Felton (2023)

The above SWOT analysis shows that South Africa Road freight sector has the potential to grow significantly. The International Transport Forum has estimated that international freight transport volumes can quadruple by 2050. Therefore, the industry should embrace technology and become part of a future integrated and intermodal freight system.

As already stated, the truck market in South Africa grew its sales year-on-year by 19% in 2021. The trucking industry aims to expand vehicle availability as well as offer uptime solutions and innovative services to all customers. The research study is primarily concerned with the business-to-business component of UD

Trucks Southern Africa, which wholesales its products to dealerships, who then resell them to customers.

2.9 SUMMARY

The research problem in this study concerns the impact of branding marketing strategies on consumers' buying behaviour at UD Trucks' automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa. In the literature review, each research problem was described as well as the research methodology, which included branding marketing strategies and consumers, consumer behaviour, consumer decision-making, factors affecting consumers, consumers in South Africa and commercial vehicles in South Africa. From the literature review, it is clear that due to an increase in demand for goods and services, the truck segment in the automotive industry has grown year-on-year. Organizations need to understand the increase in demand for trucks and align their brand marketing strategies accordingly.

3 CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The literature review that has been presented in Chapter 2 has illustrated the need for organizations to understand the impact that brand marketing strategies have on consumers buying behaviour. According to Carlberg and Kjellberg (2018), there is a need to understand branding marketing strategies and consumer behaviour from an organizational view. This chapter will focus on the research methodology that was used in this regard. A research methodology can be referred to as an organised and systematic approach to enable the researcher to find a solution to a specific problem that has been identified. This approach will include the identification of the problem, focussing on relevant components which influence the problem, collecting data and information, analysing the data, and making suggestions for interventions. The aim is to rectify and improve the identified problem.

The problem statement, study objectives, research design, and research approach or paradigm are all outlined in this chapter. The study site, target demographic, sample, sampling method, and sample size are the next factors that are examined. Data collection and analysis are the final two elements mentioned

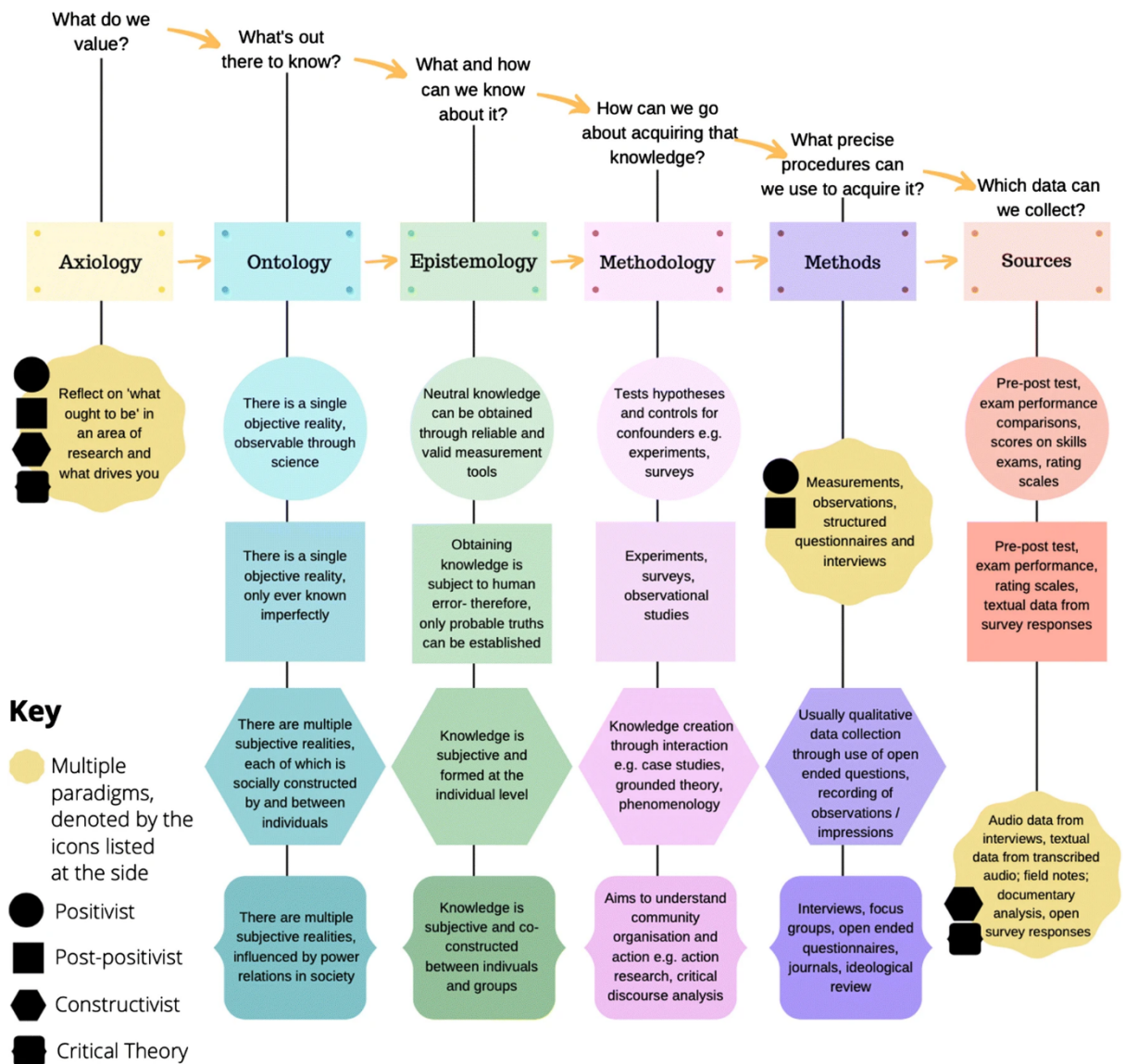
3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM AND ORIENTATION

According to Chen et al. (2022), the consumer is the king of the market and without them, no business can exist. All business activists are ultimately focused on customers. Consumer buying behaviour has become an important role player in integrating and developing the marketing strategy. To build a framework for studying consumer behaviour, it is useful to start by looking at how consumer research has developed and how the various paradigms of thought have shaped the profession.

To fully comprehend what a research paradigm means, it is necessary to analyse leading experts' thoughts about this topic. According to Kuhn (1962), the term paradigm was first used to describe a philosophical way of thinking. A paradigm can be classified into four elements namely: epistemology, ontology, methodology and axiology.

In the below figure, the building blocks within the four main paradigms elements are summarized.

Figure 6: Research Paradigm



Source: Brown (2019)

Each colour in the figure above refers to an element of a piece of the research's paradigm. The keys on the left side of the figure are to help with the interpretation. This figure gives a more detailed overview of each paradigm.

According to Bulle (2020), consumer behaviour can be characterized by two broad paradigms, the positive and the non-positive. The positivist paradigm, which continues to be the dominant paradigm, emphasizes the primacy of human

reason and the idea that science can only ever discover one single, objective truth. The opposing, non-positivist paradigm includes interpretive and postmodern perspectives, which have just recently arisen in the years following 1980. The goal of non-positivist research is to better understand consumer behaviour without attempting to change customer behaviour in any way. The objective of this research is to identify different streams of thought that could guide future research regarding consumer behaviour.

Figure 7: Paradigm

Paradigm	Ontology <i>What is reality?</i>	Epistemology <i>How can I know reality?</i>	Theoretical Perspective <i>Which approach do you use to know something?</i>	Methodology <i>How do you go about finding out?</i>	Method <i>What techniques do you use to find out?</i>
Positivism	There is a single reality or truth (more realist).	Reality can be measured and hence the focus is on reliable and valid tools to obtain that.	Positivism Post-positivism	Experimental research Survey research	Usually quantitative, could include: Sampling Measurement and scaling Statistical analysis Questionnaire Focus group Interview
Constructivist / Interpretive	There is no single reality or truth. Reality is created by individuals in groups (less realist).	Therefore, reality needs to be interpreted. It is used to discover the underlying meaning of events and activities.	Interpretivism (reality needs to be interpreted) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phenomenology • Symbolic interactionism • Hermeneutics Critical Inquiry Feminism	Ethnography Grounded Theory Phenomenological research Heuristic inquiry Action Research Discourse Analysis Feminist Standpoint research etc	Usually qualitative, could include: Qualitative interview Observation Participant Non participant Case study Life history Narrative Theme identification etc
Pragmatism	Reality is constantly renegotiated, debated, interpreted in light of its usefulness in new unpredictable situations.	The best method is one that solves problems. Finding out is the means, change is the underlying aim.	Deweyan pragmatism <i>Research through design</i>	Mixed methods Design-based research Action research	Combination of any of the above and more, such as data mining expert review, usability testing, physical prototype
Subjectivism	Reality is what we perceive to be real	All knowledge is purely a matter of perspective.	Postmodernism Structuralism Post-structuralism	Discourse theory Archaeology Genealogy Deconstruction etc.	Autoethnography Semiotics Literary analysis Pastiche Intertextuality etc.
Critical	Realities are socially constructed entities that are under constant internal influence.	Reality and knowledge is both socially constructed and influenced by power relations from within society	Marxism Queer theory feminism	critical discourse analysis, critical ethnography action research ideology critique	Ideological review Civil actions open-ended interviews, focus groups, open-ended questionnaires, open-ended observations, and journals.

Source: Brown (2019)

The research paradigm implemented for this study is the pragmatic paradigm, and an explanatory sequential design followed. Seeing as that the pragmatic paradigm is positioned as an epistemological it has a unique appeal as it avoids getting bogged down into the philosophical questions about paradigms that includes trust and reality. Instead, the researcher is free to investigate what is personal and has stakeholder value in a way that helps to resolve the research problem. This researcher's design and analysis of the study show both positivist and interpretivism traits. It is positivist because of the logical assumption that there are reasons why customers behave as they do and that these reasons may be rationally attributed by customers to their behaviour. The researcher decided to use the positivist paradigm seeing as this research intention is to measure the impact of branding marketing strategies (independent factor) on consumers buying behaviour (dependent factor).

Based on the quantitative information consumers' behavioural patterns can be predicted. This study exhibits significant interpretivism characteristics because of the survey's content and the choice of literature to employ for the creation of the conceptual models. These are both based on the outcome of the subjective interoperation.

A quantitative survey was conducted to start the investigation. Consequently, the findings from the quantitative data guided the gathering and analysis of qualitative data. On the one hand, the linking, contrasting, and comparing of the conclusions drawn from the study's quantitative and qualitative findings served to advance and widen the understanding of the influence that brand marketing strategies have on customers' purchasing decisions. On the other side, it also gave the researcher a chance to talk about the historical, cultural, and local context factors that had an impact on the quantity and effectiveness of the collaboration between UD Trucks Southern Africa and their customers. This paves the way for more feasible and practical solutions for the research questions.

3.3 RESEARCH APPROACH

The research approach is a strategy and process that progresses from general hypotheses to specific techniques for gathering, analysing, and interpreting data.

Therefore, it is determined by the type of research problem being addressed. The research strategy can be broadly classified into two types:

Figure 8: Approach to data collection

Tend to or Typically	Qualitative Approaches	Quantitative Approaches	Mixed Methods Approaches	
Use these philosophical assumptions	Constructivist/transformative knowledge claims	Post-positivist knowledge claims	Pragmatic knowledge claims	
Employ these strategies of inquiry	Phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, case study, and narrative	Surveys and experiments	Sequential, concurrent, and transformative	
Employ these methods	Open-ended questions, emerging approaches, text or image data	Closed-ended questions, predetermined approaches, numeric data	Both open- and closed-ended questions, both emerging and predetermined approaches, and both quantitative and qualitative data and analysis	<i>Use these practices of research as the researcher</i>

Source: Creswell (2013), *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, Sage Publications

Source: Creswell (2013)

The approach of data analysis

The approaches for data analysis consist of two types namely, the inductive approach and the deductive approach. Analysing qualitative data calls for an inductive method. Quantitative data, on the other hand, use the deductive method. Both inductive and deductive methods of analysis are applied to mixed types of data. Nevertheless, there must be some uniformity in the analysis, approach, and procedures.

The chosen research approach for this study was a mixed method approach, which includes exploratory (qualitative) and descriptive (quantitative) measures. These methods were used in conjunction with each other to do the research, because of the limited consumer buying behaviour in the truck industry in South

Africa. This approach allows for combining qualitative and quantitative testing which leverages exploratory and descriptive research. This research was conducted in two phases, phase one will be exploratory and the second phase descriptive.

The research approach for phase one was exploratory, which was done to expand on the limited research that has been done on this topic. Primary and secondary data were obtained during the research process, primary data was unique to the research topic, and secondary data were extracted from data collected for other purposes.

The research approach for phase two was descriptive research. To provide a more accurate analysis, this research was undertaken to complement and expand on the exploratory research. The research's secondary data, as previously mentioned, came from data that was originally acquired for different reasons. The induction approach will be used for analysing the data.

3.3.1 Research approach to data collection

Data collection is the process of gathering and analysing information from various sources in a way that enables the researcher to learn new things that are not immediately obvious. For instance, an accurate evaluation of the collected data can assist the researcher in analysing current trends and even forecasting future trends. The two basic categories of data collection are primary data collection and secondary data collection.

Primary data collection is the process of acquiring unprocessed information for a particular research project. There are two other categories of primary data collection methods: Qualitative research method and quantitative method.

Qualitative research method

The qualitative research methodology primarily relies on non-calculable factors including feelings, opinions, and emotions. There are no computations or numbers used in this procedure. Open-ended feedback from a survey sent out to customers is a great example of a qualitative data collection technique.

Quantitative method

Quantitative methods of data collection rely on numbers and mathematical calculations to help the researcher reach a conclusion as opposed to qualitative methods. Any closed-ended questions requiring precise answers, such as those involving mean, median, mode, etc. Polls are a well-known instance of this kind of data collection. In this research, the researcher mostly cares about the statistics that can be generated, because this will be used to make judgments.

Secondary Data Collection

When data is gathered from a secondary source as opposed to the source, you are said to be using secondary data collecting. This type of information can be obtained via published books, periodicals, and online portals. When compared to gathering primary data, it is frequently the simpler and less expensive technique.

According to Sharma and Aggarwal (2019:121), the following 10 methods can be used to collect data.

1. Forms and Questionnaires

This method of data collecting is very popular since it is quick, flexible, and powerful, and it enables easy and secure data capture from a large user base. Because the data is "organized" by default, this type of data collection greatly enhances data accuracy. Closed-ended questions can be answered using this kind of data gathering quite effectively, and if it is properly planned, it can provide multiple data and leads.

2. Interview

Interviews are yet another important method by which data can be collected. It can be done in person, over the phone, or online through a team session. In interviews, open-ended questions are more frequently posed. The researcher must be aware of the questions to be asked, in this instance effectiveness or quality must not be sacrificed. Interviews can be an expensive way to gather data, therefore it shouldn't allow for mistakes.

3. Observation

There aren't many questions to be asked when observing. The researcher's knowledge may also be based on their evaluations of the observation; however, this evaluation need not always be biased. In contrast to other strategies, observation enables the researcher to take note of changes as they occur in real-time. For instance, you may watch in real-time as the tone of your audience changes.

4. Documents and Records

Data collection based on documents and records makes use of already-existing data to compile information. This is a secondary data-gathering strategy that saves the researcher time seeing as a significant portion of the research has already been documented.

5. Focus Groups

Focus groups are a type of qualitative data gathering. A group of people participate in this type of research and offer input and responses to the open-ended questions posed to them. Focus groups can be viewed as a synthesis of observations, surveys, and interviews. Such a data collection method's primary goal is to acquire group opinions rather than individual ones.

6. Oral Histories

Oral history is the process of gathering, preserving, and interpreting historical information based on the perspectives and experiences of those who participated in a particular event. The majority of oral histories centre on a particular phenomenon or event.

7. Combination Research

Combination research is a combination of focus groups and interviews that falls under the primary data collecting category. The major goal of this approach is to increase participation, making it easier to collect data on delicate subjects. Combination studies safeguard respondents' privacy,

enabling them to provide truthful, unbiased information that improves the data's richness.

8. Online Tracking

One of the best ways for website owners to obtain data is through internet tracking. The researcher can use the website hosting company or even analytics software as a data collection tool in this situation to gather details about clients and potential clients.

9. Online Marketing Analysis

Marketing campaigns can also be a great way to gather information. From marketing campaigns conducted through websites, social media, emails, and other channels, the researcher can get useful information. The data can be gathered by using the software that you use to post the adverts in numerous locations.

10. Social Media Monitoring

Social media networks are useful for gathering trustworthy customer data as well as brand building. Numerous social media features can provide the researcher with important information. For instance, the quantity of views, likes, shares, and comments can be used to gauge how engaged your audience is with your postings.

The chosen research approach for data collection for this study was a combination method approach, which includes qualitative and quantitative methods.

Primary data were collected for the qualitative part by self-administered questionnaires via online links or Google surveys. According to Adu (2019), the questionnaire is a method of collecting data which is completed by respondents via an online form. All questions in the questionnaires are standardized to ensure all respondents receive the same questions with identical wording. This instrument is a popular method as it yields high-quality data that can be used

to turn into quantifiable data. This method allows the researcher to gather data from the respondents regarding their attitudes, experiences, or opinions.

Closed-ended questions were used for the study's purposes to ensure that respondents could respond to the questions quickly and simply seeing as they had to choose from a predetermined list of possible answers. There are several advantages to utilizing closed-ended questions, including the fact that respondents can respond quickly and readily because they must select from a list of predetermined answers and the information is simpler to grasp.

The questionnaires were distributed and collected via Google survey.

To build on the qualitative research, secondary qualitative data was collected from google scholar relating to branding marketing strategies on consumers' buying behaviour in the automotive industry.

The quantitative secondary data was gathered from UD Trucks Southern Africa's marketing department on branding marketing strategies that have been implemented by UD Trucks in partnership with dealerships and customers.

3.3.2 Research approach in data analysis

The research approach to analysing the data consists of deductive, inductive, and abductive data analysis methods (Hair et al., 2015).

Deductive approach

By "creating a hypothesis (or hypotheses) based on existing theory, and then designing a research method to test the hypothesis," a deductive approach is involved. Deductive reasoning is defined as moving from the specific to the universal.

Inductive approach

The creation of hypotheses is not a component of the inductive process. It begins with the research questions and the goals and objectives that must be accomplished throughout the research process.

Abductive approach

When using an abductive technique, the research process is focused on explaining "incomplete observations," "surprising facts," or "puzzles" that were predetermined at the outset of the investigation.

In research from Gibbs (2018) analysing qualitative research consist of three steps namely: to define the data, categories and codes must first be created. Then, it must be determined which unit of data is best for the analysis and to which categories it should be assigned. Finally, the units of data must be assigned to the relevant categories.

According to Adu (2019), data analysis refers to the way data is interpreted. The primary data gathered through the qualitative questionnaires approach was analysed using software namely Ipsos, a tool that is used to analyse qualitative research.

The primary data gathered through the qualitative self-administered questionnaires approach were analysed by making use of Ipsos software. The questionnaire data was transferred to a Dataset which contains quantitative (numeric or categorized) fields and was set out on a spreadsheet. These datasets were uploaded into Ipsos software and Cases were created for each participant, with each person's responses coded into their Case and recoded as quantitative data. This case created by the software formed the basis of the analysis approach to the research questions.

In the coding process, an induction approach was used seeing as no codes were developed initially, however, later codes were developed after going through the data that was collected by the Ipsos software. The induction approach can be referred to as a bottom-up approach as the research starts with specific measurements and observations then look for patterns and regularities, generate some speculative hypotheses that can be tested, and ultimately develop some broad conclusions or theories (Streefkerk, 2023). As a result of the inductive approach, the research findings can develop from the themes that are present in raw data naturally without being constrained by organized methodology.

The secondary qualitative data was collected through external sources which included social media and journals. This data was analysed to understand the impact of branding marketing strategies on consumers' buying behaviour in the automotive industry. No specific software was used to analyse the data; however, journal articles were reviewed and link to the theme of the research questions that were established.

The secondary quantitative data was retrieved from UD Trucks Southern Africa's marketing department on branding marketing strategies that have been implemented by UD Trucks in partnership with dealerships and customers. This data was analysed by using statistical software called Microsoft Excel. The results from this data were used to further understand how branding marketing strategies impact consumers' buying behaviour in the automotive industry.

3.4 THE QUANTITATIVE OR QUALITATIVE STRAND IN RESEARCH APPROACH

According to Leavy (2017), there are three common approaches to conducting research namely, quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods.

Qualitative research can be defined as how people interpret a specific social condition around them. This research usually involves interviews or conversations which then produce non-numerical data.

Quantitative research is a research strategy that quantifies the data gathered and analysis is the main goal of this research technique. It is derived from a deductive method with a focus on the testing of theory, influenced by empiricist and positivist ideologies.

Primary and secondary data were obtained during the research process, primary data was unique to the research topic, and secondary data were extracted from data collected for other purposes. Overall, 232 participants were identified to take part in the questionnaire. Each participant in the process knew truck brands and as a result, the conclusions drawn from the data clarified the research question in the study.

For the qualitative exploratory researcher convenience sampling was applied. This non-probability technique is used where participants are chosen from the target population based on practical factors such as ease of access, proximity to the study site, availability at a specific time, or willingness to participate. It is also used to describe demographic study subjects that are simple for researchers to obtain.

3.4.1 Coverage of the study

In this research, the unit of analysis was the retail organisation within the Gauteng province of South Africa that relates to UD Trucks Southern Africa. Like the exploratory research, the retail organization in South Africa that is connected to UD Trucks Southern Africa served as the unit of analysis for the descriptive research.

3.4.2 Target population

Typically, the term "population" refers to the total number of people living in a particular area, be it a city or town, region, country, continent, or the entire world.

UD Trucks Southern Africa is the only manufacturer of UD Trucks in South Africa and distributes UD products to retailers in South Africa in the business-to-business segment.

There are no wholesale activities from retailer to retailer, therefore the population for exploratory and descriptive research was the active customers of UD Trucks in the Gauteng province of South Africa, which amounted to 232 customers. For the objectives of this study, clients from dealerships were the target population, which includes UD Trucks dealerships throughout the province of Gauteng. The truck dealerships were chosen due to their convenience and accessibility for the research. The participants identified for this study had to operate in the heavy-duty truck segment as well as own a heavy-duty truck. Each participant in the process knew truck brands as a result, the conclusions drawn from the data clarified the research question in the study.

3.4.3 Sample size calculation

Purposive sampling was used for the quantitative descriptive investigation. A method called Target weighting was used to look at the actual market shares for each brand and then compare them with the number of completed interviews (based on the Main make-in fleet). When looking at country total results the researcher needs to weigh the results to avoid over- or underrepresenting brands. The weighted sample is a virtual sample, calculated by multiplying the actual sample with its weighting factor. Using the weighted (virtual) sample is the correct way to show aggregated, country total results.

The figure below shows how the Weighted sample size was calculated for this study.

Figure 9: Weighted sample size

Make	Sample size	Aggregated market share 2017-2022	Weighted sample size
Hino	20	2,7%	7
Isuzu	20	2,9%	8
FAW	30	3,2%	8
MAN	30	12,6%	33
Mercedes	30	23,8%	63
Fuso	20	1,0%	3
UD Trucks	22	9,3%	25
Scania	30	14,4%	38
Volvo	30	18,1%	48
TOTAL	232	88,0%	232

In this research, 232 participants were selected, and the information. The only requirement for participants identified for this study was that had to operate in the heavy-duty trucks segment as well as own a heavy-duty truck.

3.4.4 Research design

There are three different types of research designs: exploratory, descriptive, and explanatory. According to Leavy (2017), the purpose of the exploratory is to clarify the issues and theories raised by earlier research. The explanatory design addresses the cause-and-effect relationship by describing which causes lead to which effects, while the descriptive design presents a phenomenon that is thoroughly defined within the context of the study.

The chosen research approach for this study was a mixed method approach, which includes exploratory (qualitative) and descriptive (quantitative), as the research that has been done on branding marketing strategies on consumers buying behaviour in the truck industry in South Africa was limited. This approach allows for mixing qualitative and quantitative testing which leverages exploratory and descriptive research. This research was conducted in two phases, phase one was exploratory and the second phase was descriptive.

3.4.5 Sampling methods

The sampling methods are categorised into two types of methods namely probability and non-probability. The probability sampling method consists of numerous techniques for selecting random participants from the entire population. In this instant, the researcher has access to the entire population and the selection probability of each participant in the population can be known. The non-probability sampling method entails different techniques for choosing a sample when the population is completely unknown. The researcher does not know the complete population; therefore, the random sample is not a viable option as the probability of each member being chosen is unknown.

Table 3. 1: Probability and non-probability sampling techniques

<i>Probability</i>	<i>Non-probability</i>
Simple random sampling	Quota sampling
Systematic random sampling	Purposive sampling
Stratified random sampling	Snowball sampling
	Self-selection sampling
	Convenience sampling

Source: Saunders & Lewis, (2012)

The above table indicates the different methods of probability and non-probability sampling methods. The population of the customer base of UD Trucks Southern Africa consist of strategic partners and independent customers.

Given the above, the researcher will use a non-probability convenience sampling method to select participants. According to Saunders and Lewis (2012), convenience sampling is a kind of nonprobability or non-random sampling where participants are chosen from the target population based on practical factors such as ease of access, proximity to the study site, availability at a specific time, or willingness to participate. It is also used to describe demographic study subjects that are simple for researchers to obtain.

According to Barrett and Twycross (2018), the sample size requirements for qualitative research are frequently lower than those for quantitative research. The sample size for qualitative research is smaller because in-depth information is gathered to understand the research problem.

For the quantitative primary data, 232 UD Trucks customers were identified to take part in the questionnaire. Each participant in the process knew truck brands well and the conclusions drawn from the data clarified the research question in the study.

The secondary qualitative data was collected from external sources which included social media and journals.

The quantitative secondary data was gathered from UD Trucks Southern Africa's marketing department on branding marketing strategies that have been implemented by UD Trucks in partnership with dealerships and customers.

3.4.6 Data collection methods

The process of collecting data can take place through primary or secondary sources. When a researcher collects information directly from a source for a particular study goal, they are referring to it as primary data. Primary data can be collected by using interviews, observations, focus groups or by administering questionnaires. Secondary data refers to re-analysing previous data that has

been collected for other purposes. Secondary data can be collected from external sources which included social media, journals, books, company websites and statistical bulletins.

Primary data were collected for the qualitative part by self-administered questionnaires via online links or Google surveys. According to Adu (2019), the questionnaire is a method of collecting data which is completed by respondents via an online form. All questions in the questionnaires are standardized to ensure all respondents receive the same questions with identical wording. This instrument is a popular method as it yields high-quality data that can be used to turn into quantifiable data. This method allows the researcher to gather data from the respondents regarding their attitudes, experiences, or opinions. Closed-ended questions were used for the study's purposes to ensure that respondents could respond to the questions quickly and simply seeing as they had to choose from a predetermined list of possible answers. There are several advantages to utilizing close-ended questions, including the fact that respondents can respond quickly and readily because they must select from a list of predetermined answers and the information is simpler to grasp.

The questionnaires were distributed and collected via a Google survey. The data collected was submitted electronically with the research study.

To build on the qualitative research, secondary qualitative data was collected from google scholar relating to branding marketing strategies on consumers' buying behaviour in the automotive industry.

The quantitative secondary data was gathered from UD Trucks Southern Africa's marketing department on branding marketing strategies that have been implemented by UD Trucks in partnership with dealerships and customers.

3.4.7 Instrument for data collection

In the research study, two measurement instruments were used for the exploratory research. The primary data were conducted via administering questionnaires which are included in Appendix D. The secondary data was collected from journals, websites, and statistical and case studies (Sekaran & Bougie, 2017).

The measurement instruments for the descriptive research were secondary quantitative numerical data collected from journals, websites, and statistical and case studies (Sekaran & Bougie, 2017). The quantitative secondary data was gathered from UD Trucks Southern Africa's marketing department on branding marketing strategies that have been implemented by UD Trucks in partnership with dealerships and customers.

3.4.8 Pilot study

A pilot test is a preliminary investigation that supports the researcher in determining whether the instrument contains any mistakes so that improvements can be made as necessary. To ensure the questionnaire could be understood, a pilot test with 25 participants was carried out to make sure there were no uncertainties. The pilot was done with 25 participants located in the Gauteng province of South Africa, and each participant in the pilot knew truck brands and operate in the heavy-duty trucks segment as well as own a heavy-duty truck. The pilot study was conducted by self-administered questionnaires that were sent to the 25 participants via an online link.

One advantage of conducting a pilot study is that it can provide new information for the research study. Additionally, it assists the researcher in identifying challenges early in the research process. These challenges might include unclear questions and guidelines on how to complete the questionnaire.

3.4.9 Validity and reliability

The ability of the instrument to measure variables is known as validity.

Factor analysis is used to assess validity. Validity comes in a variety of forms, including content, construct, and criteria validity. Content validity examines whether a test is representative of all aspects of the construct. To produce valid results, the tests, surveys, and measuring techniques must encompass all pertinent aspects of the issue they are intended to measure. Construct validity assesses if a measurement tool accurately captures the phenomenon that we

are trying to measure. Finally, criterion validity assesses how closely your test's results match those of another test's results (Middleton, 2020).

The use of the inductive approach in quantitative analysis provides the researcher with findings that are reliable and valid, as this approach is easy to use and has a systematic set of procedures. All questions in the questionnaires were standardized to ensure all respondents receive the same questions with identical wording. This instrument is a popular method as it yields high-quality data that can be used to turn into quantifiable data. This method allows the researcher to gather data from the respondents regarding their attitudes, experiences, or opinions.

According to Lawlor et al. (2017), Triangulation is the process of using several techniques or data sources in qualitative research to create a thorough understanding of a phenomenon. This can be seen as a qualitative research strategy that can be used to test the validity of the information received from different sources. The data received was from multiple sources which included the questionnaires, secondary qualitative data consisting of social media and journals and the secondary quantitative data received from UD Trucks Southern Africa's marketing department.

Research reflexivity is a method of ensuring validity in which the researcher discloses his presumptions, biases, and prejudices (Berger, 2013). According to Chen et al. (2022), revealing these details enables readers to comprehend the researcher's viewpoint and allows them to notice any bias that has been mentioned. Under limitations in Chapter 1, these biases were disclosed and discussed.

3.4.10 Administration of research instrument

In this section, the administration of the research instruments process will be illustrated, which happened in two phases. In this research project, the survey research method was used to collect the primary data. The first phase of data was collected from a target population which can be referred to as the sample size. This was done by emailing an online link to the identified participants to complete a self-administered questionnaire. The second phase combined secondary data that was retrieved from UD Trucks Southern Africa's marketing

department regarding branding marketing strategies that have been implemented by UD Trucks in partnership with dealerships and customers.

In this study, 232 participants were identified to take part in the research and the self-administered questionnaires were distributed to these participants. Ethical clearance was reserved for this research (see Appendix A) with the condition that all respondents' information will be kept confidential. All questions in the questionnaires are standardized to ensure all respondents receive the same questions with identical wording. The researchers ensured that the ethical process was followed by not requiring respondents to enter their names or any other kind of contact information on the survey. Additionally, the survey technology was created so that responses stay anonymous, and the researcher has no means to match results to email addresses.

The researcher explicitly stated that this study is for purely academic purposes and has no commercial intent in the cover letter that was delivered to responders, which confirmed the confidentiality of the material. This was communicated to the respondents on the consent form (see Appendix C) that was acknowledged by each participant.

The questionnaires were conducted over a period of 1 month. Links to the questionnaires were sent to customers of UD Trucks. The respondents to the questionnaires were either the manager of a fleet, the owner of a transportation company or the Maintenance/Service Manager.

The second data collecting process for phase one consists of retrieving secondary qualitative data from google scholar relating to branding marketing strategies on consumers' buying behaviour in the automotive industry. Each participant in the process knew truck brands as a result, the conclusions drawn from the data clarified the research question in the study.

The quantitative secondary data was gathered from UD Trucks Southern Africa's marketing department on branding marketing strategies that have been implemented by UD Trucks in partnership with dealerships and customers.

3.4.11 Ethical considerations

The confidentiality of research results, findings, and participant identities is a crucial ethical consideration. The researcher dealt with this issue by not requiring respondents to enter their names or any other kind of contact information on the survey. Additionally, the survey technology is created so that responses stay anonymous, and the researcher has no means to match results to email addresses. The researcher explicitly stated that this study is for purely academic purposes with no commercial intent in the cover letter and that it was delivered to respondents, which confirmed the confidentiality of the material. For instance, it would be unethical if the researcher sold this data to businesses without the participants' approval or consent.

To add a layer of protection, the survey data will be stored safely on a password-protected laptop, ensuring that even in the event of theft, no one else may access the data set.

Consent will be requested should this work be published or presented at a conference due to the researcher's professional involvement within the automotive industry. This will make sure there are no conflicts of interest between the study and the employer's corporate interests or confidentiality agreements.

Finally, the necessary validity checks and limits were stipulated before the study was done. This is crucial because it stops the researcher from immediately inferring conclusions and making suggestions that are not supported by the data. As a result, the sample that was used in the research can be rated as transparent.

3.4.12 Procedure for hypotheses testing

Analysing a population parameter assumption is known as hypothesis testing in statistics. Using statistics is used to predict appropriately about an assumption. To test a hypothesis, a sample of data must be used, and this data must be used to form an assumption about how true the assumption is for the entire population.

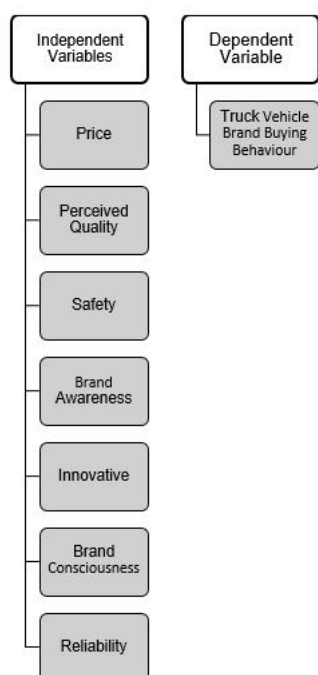
A certain concept can be demonstrated based on hypotheses. The fundamental goal of testing research is to show the causal connection, which is also mirrored

in the conceptual framework. The schematic model illustrates certain expectations regarding cause-and-effect linkages that one works with when conducting testing research.

This study exhibits significant interpretivism characteristics because the survey's content and the choice of which literature to employ for the creation of the conceptual models are both based on the outcome of the subjective interoperation.

We now deal with two different sorts of variables in the case of the cause-and-effect relationship: the independent variables and the dependent variable. Figure 10 illustrates the independent variables and the dependent variable for this study. The dependent variable is determined by the independent variables.

Figure 10: The relationship of seven product factors that influence consumer buying behaviour concerning truck brands.



The conceptual model indicates seven independent variables that could potentially influence truck vehicle brand buying behaviour, which is therefore the dependent variable.

In research by Chen et al. (2022), it was suggested that consumers' purchasing decisions are influenced by price. In addition, Aulia and Briliana (2017) indicated perceived quality as a determinant of consumer purchase decisions

while buying trucks. Felton (2023) reported that consumer purchasing decisions are influenced by safety, while Bosman (2019) showed that brand awareness affects consumers' purchase decisions when they buy trucks. In research form, Chierici et al. (2018) brand awareness is named as a factor that has an impact on consumer buying behaviour, while Finkle (2021) indicated that innovation in trucking is moving the industry forward. According to NielsenIQ (2022), consumers purchasing behaviour is influenced by different brands as well as the reliability of a brand when purchasing a truck.

3.4.13 Measurements

In a research setting, measurements include allocating numbers to empirical occurrences following a predetermined set of guidelines. A question that may arise from the statement, is: "what is being measured?" Chen et al. (2022) explain that the properties of objects are being measured. The terms "objects" and "properties" both refer to anything with distinct characteristics or traits that can be used to identify items, such as shoppers, adverts, and books.

Understanding scale features are crucial for investigating measurements and scaling since they affect the precision of measurements. Burns & Bush (1998:91) mentioned four scale characteristics: description, order, distance, and origin.

The term "description" refers to the application of a label or description to each designation on the scale, such as "yes" or "no" or "agree" and "disagree." According to DeVellis (2016), all scales included a description in the form of characteristic labels that identify what is being measured.

The relative size and position of the descriptor are indicated by the order. In this instance, the order is only connected to relative values and not absolute values. The rank is thus indicated by words like "Less than," "Greater than" and "Equal to."

When referring to distance, we mean that the descriptors on a scale have known absolute differences that may be stated in units. Order is also given to a scale if distance exists. Therefore, distance implies order, but not necessarily the other way around, i.e., the order does not always entail distance.

The origin demonstrated that the scale has a distinct, fixed starting point or actual zero point. The distance, order, and description are all included in a scale that has origin characteristics. Therefore, zero is the origin. Not all scales used in research are characterised by origin, for example, "do you agree or disagree with the following statement". As a result, the researcher is unable to claim that the respondent to the question has a true zero degree of agreement for that scale.

The information discussed above is adequate to comprehend the significance of measurements and scale features in the research process. While choosing the scales to utilize when creating the surveys, the scale features will be considered. Below is a discussion of the four measurement levels (measurement scale kinds).

Measurements scale types

The four measurement scale types consist of nominal scales, ordinal scales, interval scales and ratio scales.

When items are classified into mutually exclusive, labelled categories without a necessary relationship between the categories, nominal measurement scales are used. Therefore, nominal scales only use labels and include characteristics of description, such as race, gender, and responses with "yes/no" or "agree/disagree" possibilities.

Objects are ranked according to a shared variable to create ordinal measurement scales. The ordinal scales only show differences in relative sizes between items. This kind of scale has qualities of description and order but does not indicate the distance between the descriptors because it does not indicate distance or origin.

Scales are called interval scales to measure the separation between each descriptor. The distance attribute is often defined in terms of scale units. Using a scale of 1 to 5, rate your overall satisfaction with a product.

Ratio scales, a unique class of scale with a significant zero point, are the final form of measurement scaling.

Table 3. 2: Characteristics of Different measurement scales

Type of measurement scale	Allowed math operations	Examples	Allowed math transformations	Types of statistical calculations
NOMINAL	$= \neq$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zip Codes • Colors • Groups • Pass/Fail 	One-to-one transformations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequency • Proportion • Mode • Chi-square test • Binomial test
ORDINAL	$= \neq > <$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of customer satisfaction • Letter Grades 	Order-preserving transformations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Median • Nonparametric hypothesis tests
INTERVAL	$= \neq > <$ $+ - \times /$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temperature in degrees Fahrenheit • Distance from a reference point 	Linear transformations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mean • Standard Deviation • Most parametric tests
RATIO	$= \neq > <$ $+ - \times /$ $x/y = a/b$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temperature in Kelvin • Length • Width • Volume • Weight • Elapsed Time 	Multiplication by a constant	All of the above, plus Geometric Mean and Coefficient of Variation

Sources: DeVellis (2016)

When determining which scale types to consider when constructing the research questionnaire, the classification and traits of various measuring scales were employed as a guide. The rating scale that was utilized to create the study's questionnaire will be briefly described, even though several scale types can be employed when developing a questionnaire.

When a dichotomous response is sufficient, the simple category scale—also known as a dichotomous scale—is very helpful because it offers two mutually exclusive response options. There are two possible responses to a research question: "yes" or "no." Nominal data are produced by this scale type.

When more than one option is offered but only one response is required, the multiple-choice, single-response scale is utilized. For instance, when the options are "white," "black," and "coloured," respondents are asked to specify their population group. There are numerous possibilities, but only one solution is required. Nominal data are produced by this scale type.

An alternative to the above is the multiple choice, multiple answer scale, sometimes known as a checklist, where respondents can select one or more of the supplied alternatives. For instance, when many truck brands are mentioned, a reply is asked to specify which truck brand is preferred. Nominal data are generated by this scale.

The Likert scale, which is an adaptation of the summated rating scale, consists of statements that convey either a favourable or unfavourable opinion toward an object. A respondent is asked to rate the statements on a Likert scale by selecting one of two options: agree or disagree. The level of attitudinal favourability of each response is indicated by a numerical score. With the options of "totally dissatisfied," "very dissatisfied," "somewhat satisfied," "very satisfied," and "absolutely satisfied," respondents must indicate how much they agree or disagree with a single statement (or set of assertions). Data on intervals is produced using the Likert scale.

3.5 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

The chosen research methodology for this study was a mixed method approach, which includes exploratory (qualitative) and descriptive (quantitative) methods. These methods were used to do research on branding marketing strategies regarding consumer buying behaviour in the truck industry in South Africa. In South Africa, information on this topic is very scarce. The descriptive approach was used to supplement the exploratory approach. This approach allowed the combination of qualitative and quantitative testing which leverages exploratory and descriptive research. This research was conducted in two phases, phase one was exploratory and the second phase was descriptive methods. The combined method research approach provides the necessary data for analysis to provide answers to the research questions listed in Chapter 2. To select the appropriate type of sample procedures and data-gathering methods, it is crucial to comprehend the problem statements and study objectives. Understanding data analysis and statistical analysis of the data collection technique is also crucial. As stated above, pilot testing has several advantages that will enhance the entire research process and aid to produce better and more reliable data. The presentation and analysis of results are covered in Chapter 4.

4 CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF RESULTS/FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter 4, the results that has been collected from the questionnaire, as well as the secondary data that was collected form the internet and UD Trucks marketing team, will be analysed.

In the analysis approach, key points were identified which helped the researcher to better understand the research questions that was identified in Chapter 2 of this study. The key points identified will be discussed in this chapter.

In this chapter the data gathering processes will first be outlined, and then a description of the analysis approach will be provided. In the next step of the study the reliability as well as the validity will be discussed, and the detailed results collected from the five research questions will be illustrated. A summary of this chapter will conclude this discussion.

4.2 DATA GATHERING PROCESS

In this section the data gathering process will be illustrated as discussed in Chapter 3 of this study, which happened in two phases. The first phase was implemented during the self-administered questionnaires and derived from internet sources. The second phase combined the secondary data which was retrieved from UD Trucks Southern Africa`s marketing department regarding branding marketing strategies. This data was collected by UD Trucks in partnership with dealerships and customers.

In this study 232 participants were identified to take part in the research, which was conducted via self-administered questionnaires. Ethical clearance was reserved for this research (see Appendix A) with the condition that all respondent`s information would be kept confidential. This was also communicated to the respondents on the consent form (see Appendix C) that was acknowledge by each participant.

The questionnaires were conducted over a period of 1 month. Links to the questionnaires were sent to customers of UD Trucks. The respondents to the questionnaires were either the manager of a fleet, owner of a transportation company or Maintenance/Service Manager of a dealership.

The second data collecting process for phase one, consist of retrieving secondary qualitative data from google scholar relating to branding marketing strategies on consumers' buying behaviour in the automotive industry, as discussed in Chapter 3 of the study. Each participant in the process was familiar with truck brands, therefore the conclusions drawn from the data clarified the research question in the study.

The quantitative secondary data was gathered from UD Trucks Southern Africa's marketing department on branding marketing strategies that have been implemented by UD Trucks in partnership with dealerships and customers.

4.3 DESCRIPTION OF THE ANALYSIS APPROACH

As discussed in Chapter 3 of the study, the primary data gathered through the qualitative self-administered questionnaires approach were analysed by making use of Ipsos software. The questionnaire data was transferred to a Dataset which contains quantitative (numeric or categorized) fields and was set out on a spreadsheet. These datasets were uploaded into Ipsos software and Cases were created for each participant, with each person's responses coded into their Case and recoded as quantitative data. This Case created by the software formed the basis of the analysis approach regarding the research questions.

In the coding process an induction approach was used seeing as no codes were developed initially, however, later codes were created after going through the data that was collected by the Ipsos software. The induction approach can be referred to as a bottom-up approach as the research start with specific measurements and observations then look for patterns and regularities. Consequently, some speculative hypotheses could have been formulated which can be tested, and ultimately some broad conclusions or theories could be developed (Streefkerk, 2023). As a result of the inductive approach, the research

findings can develop from the themes that are present in raw data naturally without being constrained by an organized methodology.

The secondary qualitative data was collected through external sources which included social media and journals. This data was analysed to understand the impact of branding marketing strategies on consumers' buying behaviour in the automotive industry. No specific software was used to analyse the data; however, journal articles were reviewed and linked to the theme of the research questions.

As per Chapter 3, the secondary quantitative data was retrieved from UD Trucks Southern Africa's marketing department on branding marketing strategies that have been implemented by UD Trucks in partnership with dealerships and customers. This data was analysed by using statistical software called Microsoft Excel. The results from this data were used to further understand how branding marketing strategies impacts consumers' buying behaviour in the automotive industry.

4.4 QUESTIONNAIRES

The questionnaire used in the study was compiled after considering several factors that specifically influenced the design thereof. Some of the major concerns were the objectives and the hypotheses set for the study, the questionnaire method used, measurement scales selected for data collection, actual data capturing method and results obtained from the pre-test group. A copy of the questionnaire is attached (Appendix D). This section will provide details regarding the structure of the questionnaire, mapping of questions to address hypotheses set for the study, measurement scales used and the rationale for questions used.

4.4.1 Questionnaire structure

The questionnaire was divided into six different sections, namely:

Section A: Biographical Variables

Section B: Truck brand elements: effectiveness of brand elements in building brand awareness, Familiarity, Opinions, Consideration and Preferences.

Section C: Consumer buying behaviour: Overall satisfaction of truck brand, recommendation, repurchase and the consideration of other brands.

Section D: Brand Images: Brand image positioning: image index and Personality attributes of truck brands.

Section E: Customer satisfaction: Overall satisfaction with a truck brand and features.

Section F: Market evaluation in Gauteng South Africa

The six sections with the relevant questions for each section will be discussed briefly in graphics/tables/figures indicating the questions (without the options that the respondents could choose), the variable (V) number applicable to each question and the scale type used.

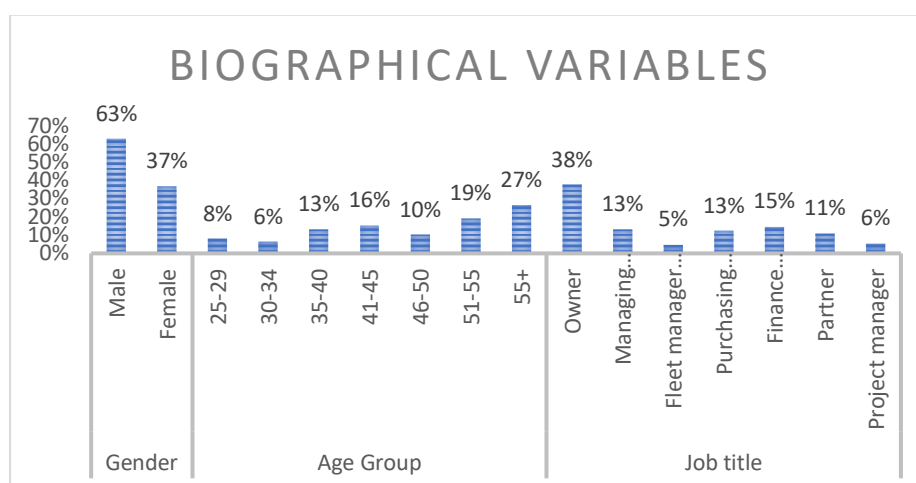
4.5 PRESENTATION OF DATA ANALYSIS

The sample size for this study was 232 participants and 232 participants took part in the research. The self-administered questionnaires were administered via online links. The biographical details of the 232 respondents are outlined in Table 4.1.

4.5.1 Section A: Biographical Variables

Section A will attempt to classify the respondents according to the biographical variables.

Table 4. 1: Descriptive Statistics: Key dimensions of the study: Biographical Variables: Gender, age, and job title.



Base: All (n=232). Weighted results. Questions A1 The gender of the respondents, A2 Age group of the respondents, A3 Job title of the respondents.

In terms of the structure of the sample respondents, there were more males (63%) than females (37%). The majority (27%) of the respondents were over the ages of 55, followed by the 51 to 55 age category (19%), thereby indicating that the sample comprises predominantly older customers. Most respondents (38%) were owners of the trucks, followed by Fleet managers (15%).

4.5.2 Section B: Truck brand elements

Section B: Truck brand elements: Key dimensions of the study: effectiveness brand elements in building brand Awareness, Familiarity, Opinion, Consideration and Preferences.

Objective 1: Identifying brand marketing strategies currently implemented at UD Trucks automotive industry.

Consumer awareness regarding different truck brands?

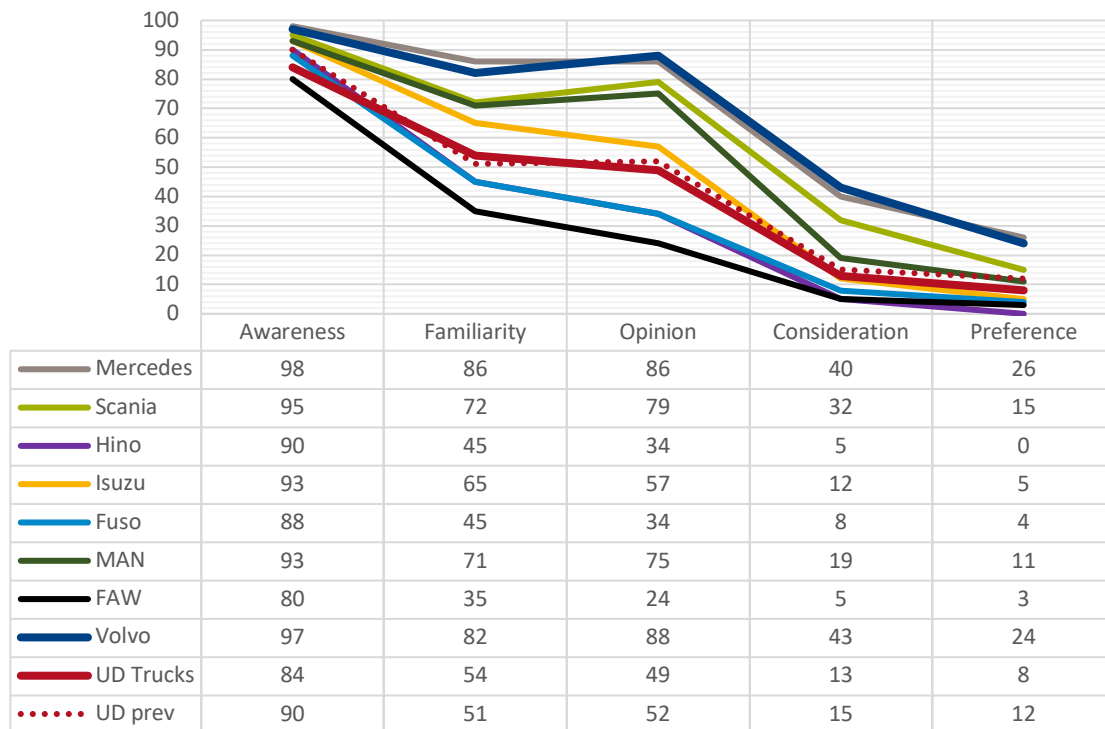
Familiarity of different truck brand?

Overall impression of the truck brands available in Gauteng South Africa?

Consideration of a truck brand for next purchase?

Which truck brand will be preferred for the next purchase?

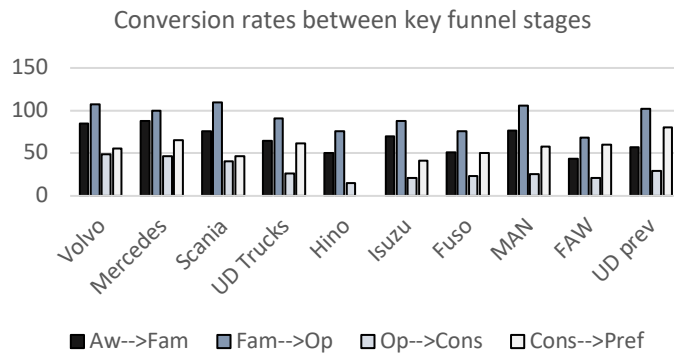
Table 4. 2: effectiveness brand elements in building brand Awareness, Familiarity, Opinion, Consideration and Preferences.



Base: All (n=232). Weighted results. Questions B1 Which brand of trucks are you aware of, B2 How well do you know these truck brand, B3 Overall impression of truck brand, B4 Which makes would you seriously consider, B5 Most likely choice for next purchase.

Table 4.2 indicates that Gauteng customers for trucks attach varying degrees of importance to the effectiveness of brand elements in building brand awareness, Familiarity, Opinion, Consideration and Preferences.

In the context of brand awareness, the results of the study reveal that the majority (90.8%) of the respondents were aware of the different types of trucks available in South Africa. Most of the respondents (61.6%) knew most of the truck brands in South Africa. In terms of the participants opinion regarding the overall impression of the tuck brand (58.4%) were overall impressed by the available truck brands. In the study (43%) seriously consider a Volvo truck for their next purchase. Finally, the vast majority of (26%) of the respondents would most likely prefer a Mercedes Trucks for their next purchase.



Conversion rates:

Aw-Fam: Familiarity score/Awareness score

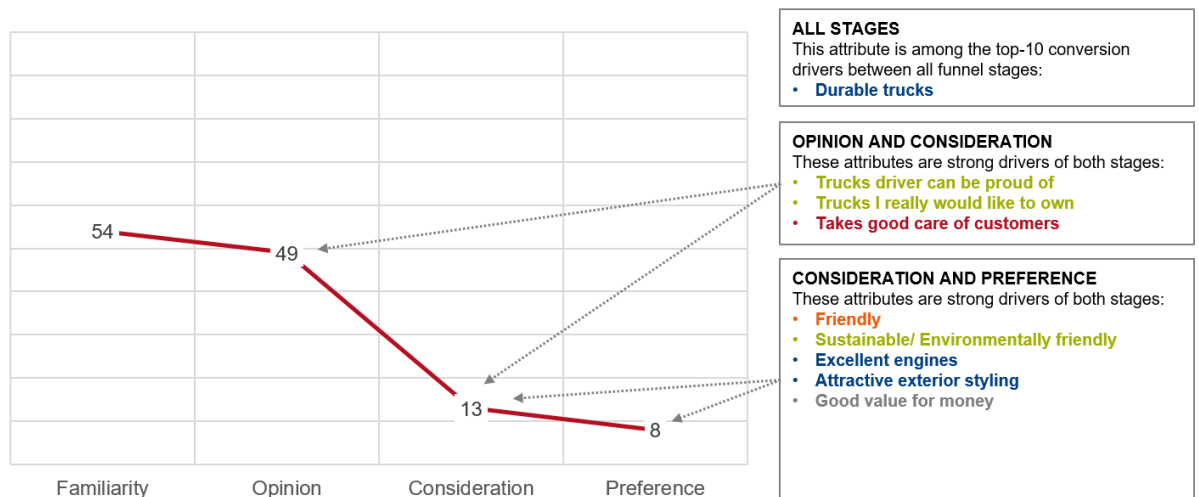
Fam-Op: Opinion score/Familiarity score

Op-Cons: Consideration score/Opinion score

Cons-Pref: Preference score/Consideration score

The conversion rates provided information regarding how large shares are converted from one funnel stage to the next. The conversion rate may be larger than 100, and is in fact rather common for premium brands between stages of familiarity and opinion. These rates tell us where we have the biggest risk of losing potential customers.

Table 4. 3: Conversion rate



In the Tabel 4.3 Familiarity increases but Opinion, Consideration and Preference have decreased. Opinion to Consideration is the key stage since this is where we find the lowest conversion rate for UD.

Colour codes:

Orange: Personality attributes

Green: Brand image attributes

Blue: Truck/Product attributes

Grey: Costs attributes

Red: Network attributes

4.5.3 Section C: Consumer buying behaviour

Section C: Consumer buying behaviour: Overall satisfaction with a truck brand, recommendation, repurchase and consider another brand.

Objective 2: Investigate the impact on product extension strategy on consumers buying behaviour at UD Trucks automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa

Overall satisfaction with a specific truck brand performance?

Recommending a specify truck brand to other?

Repurchase current truck brand?

Consider another brand when reinvesting?

Table 4.4: Descriptive Statistics: Key dimensions of the study: Consumer buying behaviour: Satisfaction with overall truck brand performances.

Table 4. 4: satisfied with the overall performance



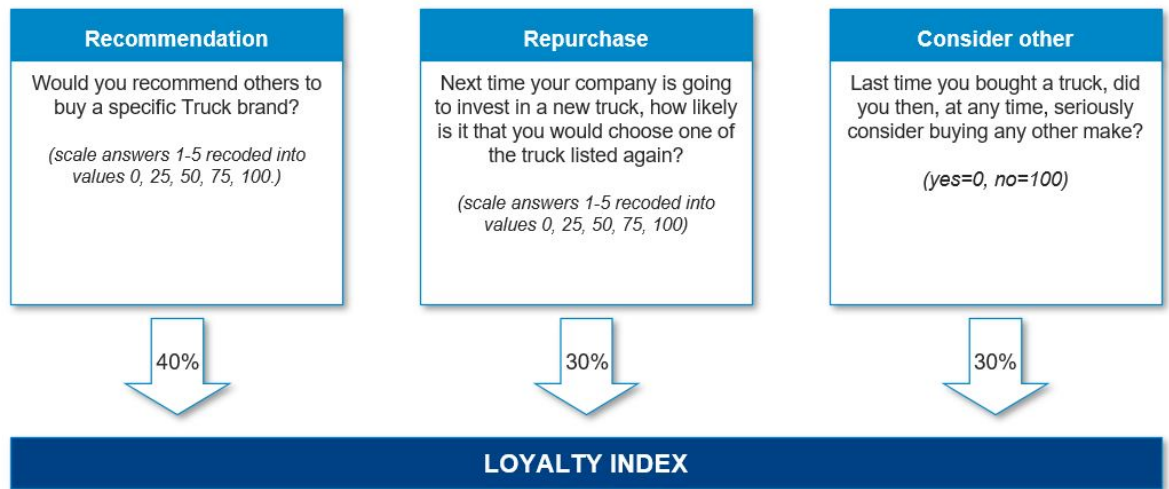
Base: Unweighted results. For the Market Consumer buying behaviour surveys we have stopped calculating based on 5 sub-indexes with different weights. The Consumer buying behaviour was calculate based on the overall satisfaction question and recode the answers to obtain an index between 0-100.

Question C1: Overall satisfaction with a specific truck brand performance? Scale answers 1-5 are recoded into 0/20/50/80/100 to create an index between 0-100.

Based on the tabel 4.4 above (88%) of the particpats were satisfied with the overall performance of UD Trucks. The lowes scoring brand was FAW with an overall satisfisfaction rate of (74%) and Mercedes with the higes score of (90%).

The Consumer buying behaviour: Concept - based on 3 questions, creating a loyalty index with a value between 0 and 100.

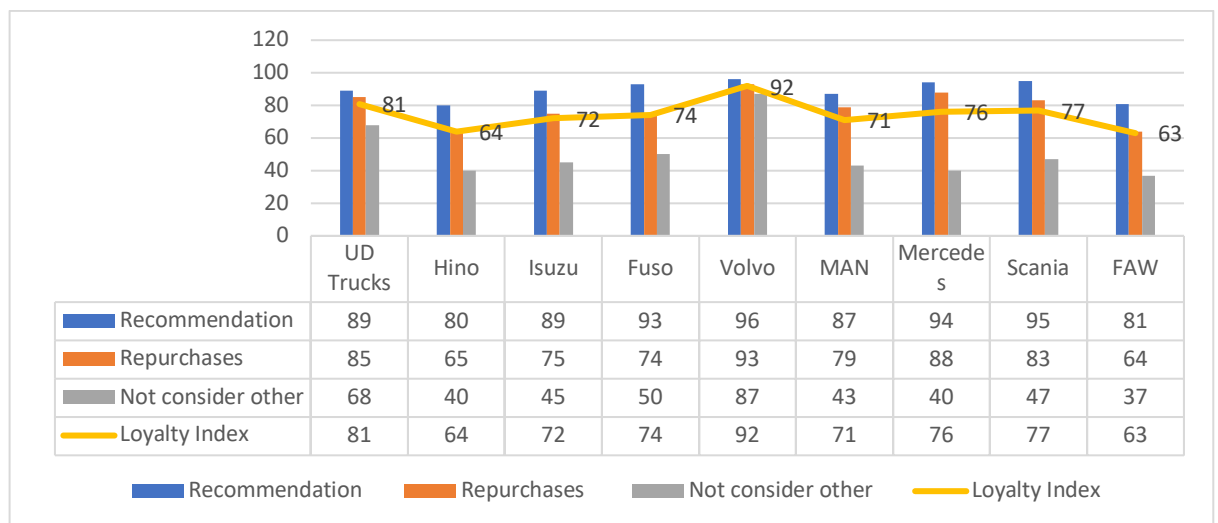
Figure 11: Loyalty Index



Base: Loyalty Index. Unweighted results. Questions C2: Recommendation C3: Repurchases C4: Consider another brand.

Descriptive Statistics: Key dimensions of the study: Customer Loyalty Index

Table 4. 5: Customer Loyalty Index



Based on the table 4.5 above (89%) of participants will recommend UD Trucks to other consumers. 85% of the respondents indicated that their company will invest in buying a UD Truck again. In conclusion of this graph, 68% of the respondents said that they will not consider buying a different brand other than a UD Truck.

4.5.4 Section D: Brand Images

Section D: Brand Images: Brand image positioning: image index and Personality attributes of truck brands.

Objective 3: Examining the impact of brand extension strategy on consumers buying behaviour at UD Trucks automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa.

Personality attributes to describe different truck brand.

Reputation for each attribute of a truck brand?

Truck/product attributes which truck brand represent it?

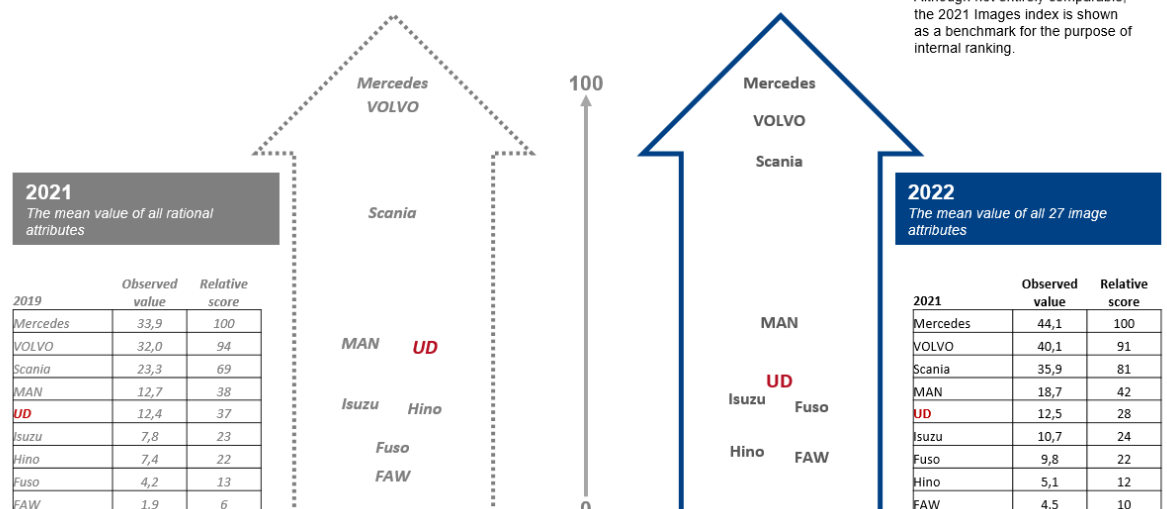
Costs attributes, which truck brand represent it?

Attributes related to Network, which truck brand represent it?

Figure 12: Descriptive Statistics: Key dimensions of the study: Brand image positioning: image index. In the figure below the positions of the data tables are based on a relative scale. The top-scoring brand is allocated the maximum value 100, and the other brands' positions are percentages of that maximum value. The data tables show both observed values and its corresponding relative score.

Figure 12: Brand image positioning: image index

Brand image position: image index



Based on the figure above figure UD Trucks has remained in the 5th position of the image index, when considering all the image attributions.

A brand image profile identifies relative strength and weaknesses in a brand's image. Some brands, by virtue of their size or higher awareness levels, will be more highly endorsed across all statements than others. People will make more comments about brands they know quite well, in oppose of those they are less familiar with. Similarly, some statements will be more highly endorsed than others.

To find out which are the real strengths and weaknesses of each brand, we need a way of working out where a brand's level of endorsement is greater than we would expect, and where it is lower. In other words, we are looking for the strong identifying characteristics of each brand compared to the others, while also comparing it with its own average score. This is a matric called Profile value.

If a brand has a strong and clear profile, the indication is that it also has a strong brand identity which helps the target group differentiate themselves from their competitors. This can positively influence their purchasing decisions, which might have a direct impact on the organization's profitability.

The profile value can be calculated in the following way:

Profile value = Observed value – Expected value.

Expected value = Brand average + Attribute average – Overall average.

Brand average: The average value of all attributes, for one brand

Attribute average: The average value of all brands, for one attribute.

Overall average: The average value of all brands, all attributes.

Personality, Brand image, Truck/Product attributes, Costs and Network.

Profile value >5: Borderline strength, highlighted with light green colour

Profile value >10: True profile strength, highlighted with **dark green** colour

Profile value <-5: Borderline weakness, highlighted with light red colour

Profile value <-10: True profile weakness, highlighted with **dark red** colour

Table 4. 6: Descriptive Statistics: Key dimensions of the study attributes:

Attribute	UD Trucks	Hino	Isuzu	Fuso	Volvo	Scania	MAN	Mercedes	FAW
Dependable & Trustworthy	-1	0	-2	1	3	6	-3	-2	-2
Friendly	0	5	-2	3	-2	1	-3	-5	4
Innovative	1	1	-2	1	3	-2	-6	2	2
Premium	-4	0	-2	0	7	3	-6	0	1
Has an excellent reputation	-5	-6	-2	-2	5	4	2	11	-8
Trucks driver can be proud of	-2	-5	-3	-1	0	5	3	10	-6
Trucks I really would like to own	0	-1	-2	1	-2	1	-1	3	1
Sustainable/ Environmental friendly	0	-3	0	1	-5	2	0	7	-3
Leading in self-driving trucks	-1	3	1	4	-8	-7	0	8	1
Leading in electric trucks	1	4	0	7	-9	-11	-1	2	5
High reliability	-1	-2	2	-5	7	5	2	-4	-4
Durable trucks	-3	0	3	-4	10	1	1	-7	-2
Easy to drive	-1	-1	2	-4	8	2	-1	-2	-2
Excellent engines	-2	-1	0	-3	5	5	2	-4	-2
High safety standards	-3	-2	0	0	9	3	-2	-2	-2
Low fuel consumption	1	3	4	-1	2	3	0	-14	2
Comfortable & practical cab interior	-2	1	-2	-4	7	2	1	-2	-1
Attractive exterior styling	-2	-1	-2	0	4	0	0	1	0
Good resale value	2	0	-1	-2	-2	0	3	3	-2
Low operating cost	5	6	5	3	-2	-8	0	-13	4
Good value for money	4	3	1	-1	1	-6	1	-2	1
Attractive truck pricing	11	6	3	4	-11	-8	1	-10	6
Competitive prices on service & parts	6	3	2	4	-7	-13	2	-1	5
Takes good care of customers	-1	-5	-1	-3	-5	7	-1	11	-1
High quality of service & repair	-1	-4	-1	-2	-5	2	1	9	1
Emergency breakdown service	-1	-2	0	0	-2	0	2	2	1
Leading in connected services	2	-2	0	2	-9	3	4	-1	1

Base: All (n=232). Weighted results

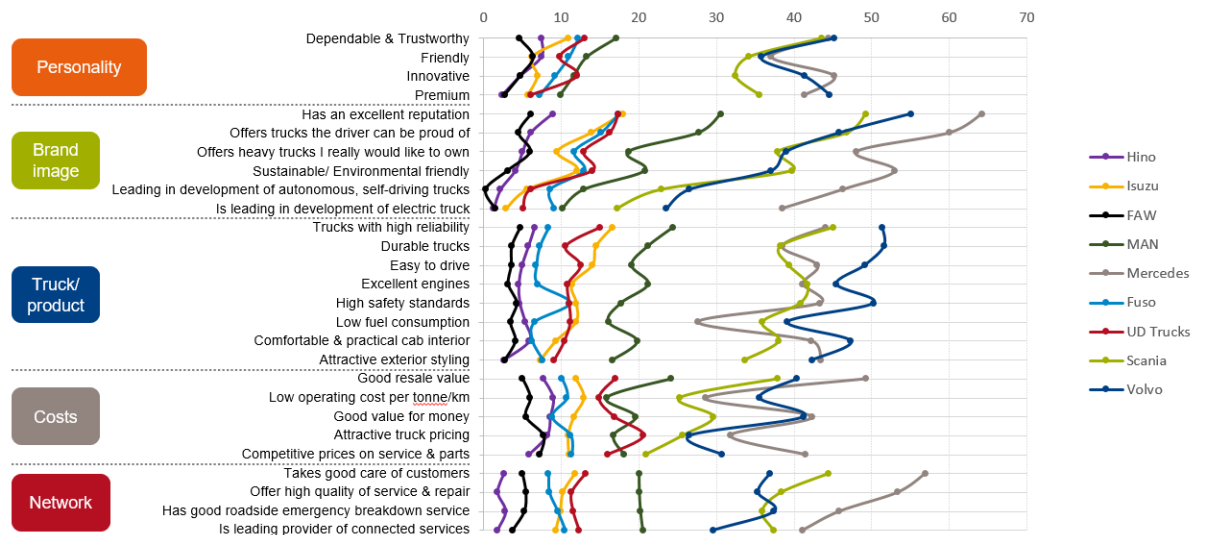
If a brand (looking from top to bottom) has a majority of red or green highlighted cells, it has a very differentiated profile. Similarly, if an attribute (looking from left to right) has a majority of red and green highlighted cells, that attribute is very differentiated.

What do we mean by "differentiated brand" and "differentiated attribute"?

A differentiated brand is one that has a clear brand identity. Truck owners instantly associate a differentiated brand with certain qualities. A premium brand usually has a profile leaning towards Personality, Image and Truck aspects whereas a value brand with large market share may lean more towards Network and Costs. Some brands do not have a strong identity, and it doesn't matter if this brand is strong or weak in general. If a brand has very high association percentages on every attribute, its identity will be weak, just as it would be if scores were very low overall.

The table below indicates that Gauteng customers for trucks attach varying degrees of importance to the effectiveness of brand attributes in the trucks automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa.

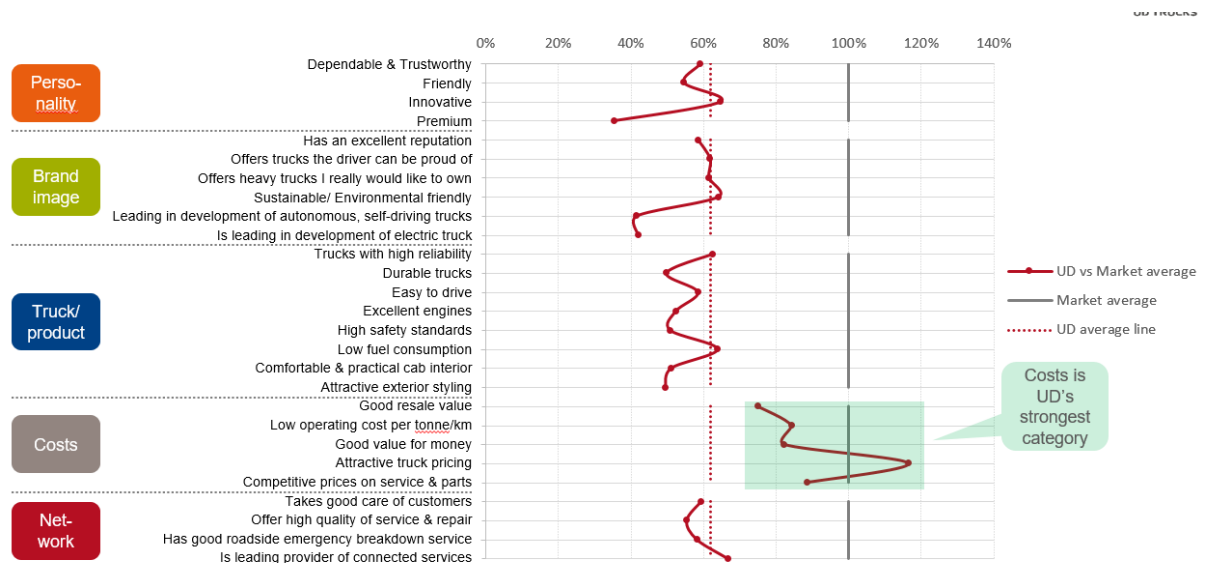
Table 4. 7: Brand attributes



Base: All (n=232). Weighted results. Questions D1 personality attributes to use to describe different brands, D2 Image related attributes that can apply to truck manufacture D3 Truck/product attributes to which brand it applies to, D4 Costs attributes to which brand it applies to.

The question is “For each attribute, please indicate which brand/brands you think it applies to”. The respondent answers by ticking the brand names, and the answers are spontaneous/un-aided. The chart above shows the relative frequency of how often each brand was ticked on every attribute.

Table 4. 8: Brand Image Attributes: UD vs Market average



According to table 4.8 above cost is UD Trucks strongest category in brand image attributions. UD does not have that many identifying characteristics in the eyes of the participants. Attractive truck pricing is the only clear profile strength, and is also the only image attribute where UD scores above market average. In general, cost attributes is where UD has its profile strengths.

Volvo Trucks is a premium brand with an excellent reputation. Volvo has a very differentiated profile with many identifying characteristics among truck attributes such as High reliability, Durable trucks, Easy to drive, Excellent engines, High safety standards and Comfortable & practical cab interior. Volvo is not widely associated with costs or network attributes.

Mercedes-Benz is a very differentiated brand. It is an aspirational brand; it has an excellent reputation and trucks that make the drivers proud. Mercedes takes good care of its customers and offer high quality of service and repair. Mercedes is also a leader in the development of self-driving trucks. Mercedes' brand weaknesses are mainly Low fuel consumption, Low operating cost and Attractive truck pricing.

4.5.5 Section E: Customer satisfaction

Section E: Customer satisfaction: Key dimensions of the study: Overall satisfaction with a truck brand and features.

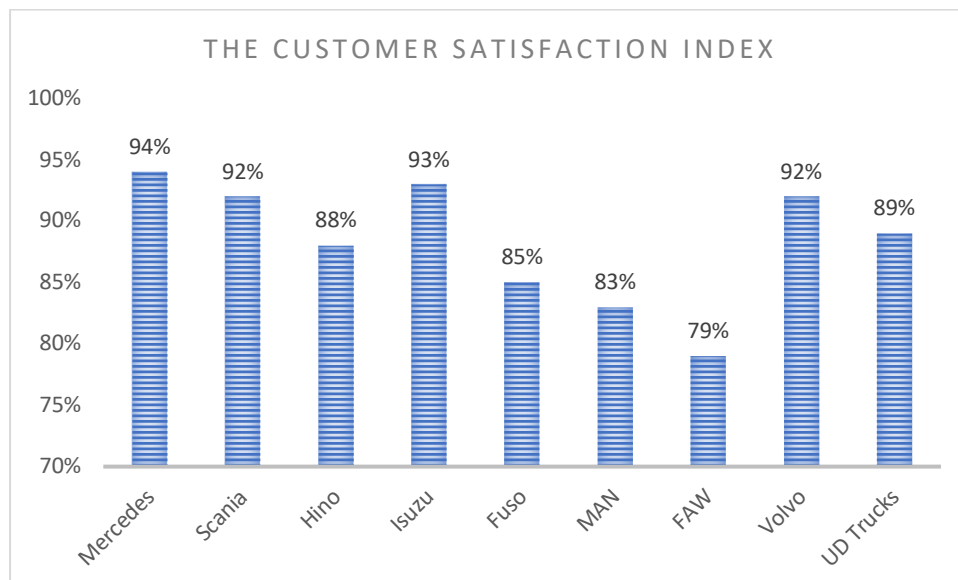
Objective 4: Establish the impact of Co-Branding strategy on consumers buying behaviour at UD Trucks automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa.

The customer satisfaction with the brand of the truck purchased.

How satisfied are you with the Truck/product features?

Which sources would you consult to get information about truck brands?

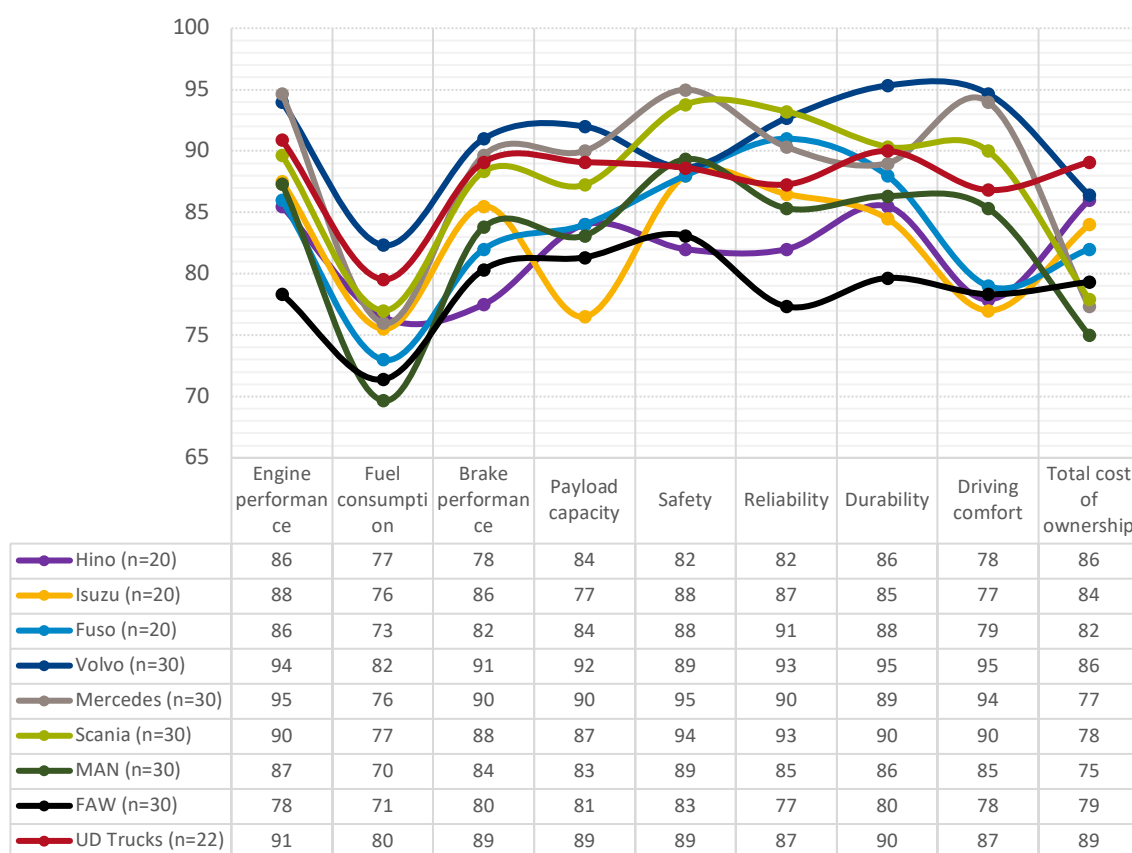
Table 4. 9: Descriptive Statistics: The customer satisfaction index



Base: Unweighted results. The customer satisfaction index was calculate based on the overall satisfaction question and recode the answers to obtain an index between 0-100.

Question E1: Customer satisfaction with the brand of truck purchased? Scale answers 1-5 are recoded into 0/20/50/80/100 to create an index between 0-100. Based on table 4.9, above (89%) of the participants were satisfied with purchasing a UD Truck. The lowest scoring brand was FAW with an overall purchasing satisfaction rate of (79%) and Mercedes with the highest score of (94%) overall purchasing satisfaction rate.

Table 4. 10: Descriptive Statistics: Truck/product features



Base: Unweighted results.

Questions F2:1-9. Scale answers recoded as 1=0, 2=20, 3=50, 4=80 and 5=100 to create mean values between 0-100

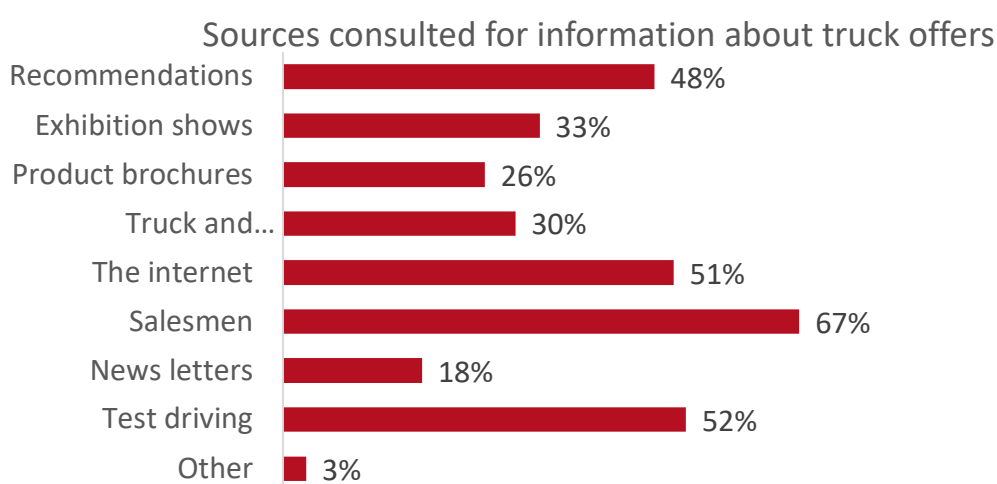
Table 4.10 indicates that Gauteng customers for trucks attach varying degrees of importance to truck/product features of the different brands.

In the context of Truck/product features, the results of the study reveal that Mercedes scored the highest (95%) in engine performance and UD Trucks were in third place scoring 91%. For the fuel consumption feature MAN scored the lowest (70%) and Volvo the highest (91%) UD Trucks scored (89%), 2% above the top score. In the payload capacity Isuzu scored the lowest (77%) and Volvo the highest (92%). For the safety features Mercedes scored the highest (95%) and UD Trucks (89%). In the reliability category Volvo and Scania scored the highest (93%) and FAW the lowest (77%). For durability Volvo scored the highest (95%) and FAW the lowest (80%). In the driver comfort category Hino and FAW scored the lowest (78%) and Volvo the highest (95%). For Total cost

of ownership Mercedes scored the lowest (77%) and UD Trucks the highest (89%).

Overall UD Trucks is fairly average in the Truck/product features segments. They can improve in the following features: safety, reliability, and diving comfort. As per the above table they stood out in engine performance and total cost of ownership.

Table 4. 11: Descriptive Statistics: Sources consulted to get information about truck brands



Base: All (n=232). Weighted results.

Question E3 Sources consulted to get information about truck brands.

Table 4.11 indicates that Gauteng customers for trucks attach varying degrees of importance to consulting external sources to get information about truck brands.

In the context of Sources consulted to get information about truck brands, the results of the study reveal that 52% of the participants prefer test driving the truck to get a better feel of the truck itself. In addition, 67% of the participants indicated that they would consult with a salesman to get information about the offer from different truck brands, and 51% indicated that they use the internet to get information about the offer from different truck brands.

4.5.6 Section F: Market evaluation in Gauteng South Africa

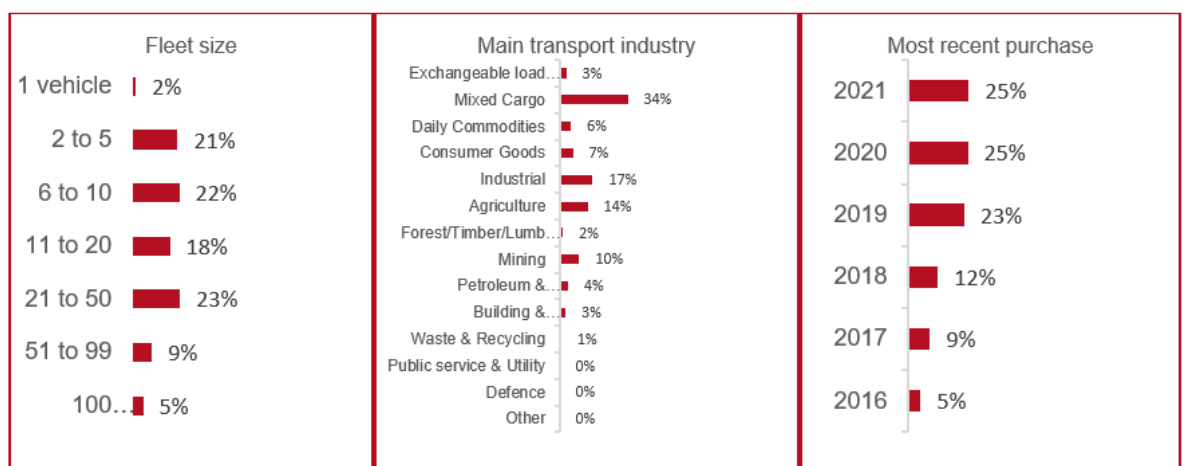
Objective 5: Exploring theoretical and practical brand marketing strategies effective enough to resolve challenges associated with consumers buying behaviour at UD Trucks automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa

Fleet Size?

Main transport industry?

Most recent purchase?

Table 4. 12: Descriptive Statistics: Key dimensions of the study: Overall fleet size, in which transport industry does the participant operate and when did the participant purchase a truck.



Base: All (n=232). Weighted results.

Questions: F1 How many trucks does your company own/operate, F2 What type of goods do you mainly transport, F3 When/what year did you last buy a new truck.

According to table 4.12, 5% of the participants has over a 100 and above trucks currently operating in their fleet. The biggest fleet sizes of 23% is between 21 and 50 trucks in the fleet. In the main transport industry 34% are operating in the mixed cargo segment and 17% in the industrial segment and 14% in the agricultural segment. Based on the figure above 25% participants have purchased a truck in 2021 and 2020, that is an increase of 2% from 2019. As

indicated by the latest figures, based on most recent purchase data, there has been a steady increase from 2016 to 2021 in truck purchasing.

4.6 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter outline the descriptive statistics of the study. In addition, the study examined the important that consumers in Gauteng attach to the key dimensions of the study. Finally, the study undertook a statistics analysis of the questionnaires. Chapter 5 focuses on a discussion of the results.

5 CHAPTER 5: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The research findings discuss in Chapter 4 will be discussed in this chapter in relation to the literature reviewed earlier in the research study. The layout of Chapter 5 will be similar to chapter 4, i.e., the research questions will be addressed in the following order. The first aspect is identifying brand marketing strategies currently implemented at UD Trucks automotive industry. Thereafter the impact of product extension strategy on consumers' buying behaviour at UD Trucks automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa will be addressed, together with the examination of the impact of the Co-Branding strategy on consumers' buying behaviour. Lastly there will be a discussion regarding exploring theoretical and practical brand marketing strategies effective enough to resolve challenges associated with consumers' buying behaviour at UD Trucks automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa.

5.2 CONSUMER'S PERCEPTIONS OF THE KEY DIMENSION OF THE STUDY

This section will discuss the findings of the study in terms of the relevant objectives. The first objective's aim is to investigate the brand marketing strategies currently implemented at UD Trucks automotive industry. The second objective intended to investigate the impact of product extension strategy on consumers' buying behaviour at UD Trucks automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa. The third objective focused on the impact of brand extension strategy on consumers' buying behaviour at UD Trucks automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa. In addition, the fourth objective established the impact of the Co-Branding strategy on consumers' buying behaviour at UD Trucks automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa. The last objective aimed at exploring theoretical and practical brand marketing strategies effective enough to resolve challenges associated with consumers'

buying behaviour at UD Trucks automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa.

5.2.1 Identifying brand marketing strategies currently implemented at UD Trucks automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa.

The first objective of this study was to identify the brand marketing strategies currently implemented at UD Trucks automotive industry. The findings of this objective will be discussed.

5.2.1.1 Brand Names

Various aspects of brand names were investigated in this study. In terms of brand name and their impact on purchasing decisions of customers of UD Trucks in Gauteng, most of the respondents are aware of brand names when purchasing a truck and are able to differentiate easily between competing brands based on the marketing strategy, brand names, design and logos. Based on a study done by Assali (2016) the findings were similar, which found that brand names were considered an important factor when making purchase decisions.

Over sixty percent of the participants knew the main trucks brands in South Africa, most of the respondents indicate that there is overall impression when a certain brand of truck is mentioned. Bulle (2020), who discovered a substantial association between brand awareness and familiarity, reported similar results to those of the recent study. Additionally, the research conducted by Sivaram et al. (2022), demonstrated a significant positive relationship between brand influence and brand consciousness and suggested that consumers do associate brands with product categories. In contrast to the findings of this study, a study by Sethna & Blythe, (2019), found that consumers are drawn to branded goods because they believe they are significant to them and that they might improve their social status and lifestyle.

5.2.1.2 Brand marketing strategies

With regards to brand marketing strategies and their impact on consumers buying behaviour at UD Trucks, respondents revealed that familiarity increases but Opinion, Consideration and Preference have decreased. UD

Trucks is ranked 5th or 6th on all funnel stages except Awareness. Most of the respondents indicated that Volvo and Mercedes-Benz are the strongest at all subsequent stages. Based on the researchers' opinion consideration is the key stage since this is where we find the lowest conversion rate for UD. The results of the study revealed that most of the respondents indicated that UD Trucks is a well-known brand. In support of these results Esau & Harris (2022) found that brand marketing strategies strengthens the brand's position and create a positive perception in the market over the long term.

Opatha (2015) found that brand marketing strategies that were built on brand images helps consumers to distinguish truck brands from competitor's brands.

5.2.1.3 Brands

According to the study's findings, more than half of the respondents felt that brand names had a significant impact on their decisions to buy a specific truck brand. This result supports research by Esau & Harris (2022), who discovered that buyers already have a subconscious brand preference before making a purchase. The results of a study done by Aulia and Briliana (2017) revealed that brand familiarity and brand heritage are strongly related; consumers are more likely to trust and believe in brands that have a strong history and legacy. The study clearly shows that among the respondents Mercedes Truck was the preferred brand.

5.2.2 Investigate the impact of product extension strategy on consumers' buying behaviour at UD Trucks automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa.

The second objective of this study was to investigate the impact of product extension strategy on consumers' buying behaviour at UD Trucks automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa. The findings of this objective will be discussed.

5.2.2.1 Brand loyalty

Various aspects of brand loyalty were investigated in this study. In terms of brand loyalty and the impact on purchasing decisions of customers of UD Trucks in Gauteng, most of the respondents indicated that they will not consider buying a different brand other than a UD Truck. According to a study

done by Sethna & Blythe, (2019) which align with this study stating that when consumers buy the same product on purpose and a frequent basis, it is known as brand loyalty. Brand loyalty measures the proportion of loyal customers to those who are satisfied with the product.

5.2.2.1.1 Performances

In terms of performance, the study's findings show that most respondents carefully consider a product's performance and durability before making a purchase. Corresponding with the results of this study, a study by Sethna & Blythe, (2019) showed that most of the participants believe that product performance will influence consumer buying behaviour.

5.2.2.1.2 Recommendation

In this study most of the respondents recommended a specific truck brand to others. Based on research done by Kotler & Keller, (2012) regarding the decision-making process, consumers tend to make decisions based on their first interactions with the brand, product research, or recommendations from friends, family, or social media. Similarly, Senecal and Nantel (2004) found that word-of-mouth can also have a positive impact on consumers purchasing behaviour.

5.2.2.1.3 Repurchasing

In terms of repurchasing a specific truck brand, more than half of the respondents indicated that they would repurchase their current brand of truck. Chen et al. (2022) found that when a consumer has a positive experience with a brand this can lead to reinforcing the customer's choice to buy and build brand loyalty for a repeat purchase.

5.2.2.1.4 Considering another brand

In terms of considering another brand other than UD Trucks, the majority of the respondents indicates that they will not consider buying a different brand. The study by Sethna & Blythe, (2019), indicated that consumers build up a brand loyalty towards a specific brand which leads to the practice of consciously and routinely buying the same product. The ratio of loyal customers to those who are pleased with the product is used to calculate brand loyalty. Loyal customers won't quickly switch to other brands.

5.2.2.1.5 Customer Loyalty

In the study it was found that UD Trucks' loyalty index is at 81%, which is ranked 2nd (behind Volvo). UD's advantage compared to most competitors is that most of the UD customers did not seriously consider another brand for their most recent purchase. In agreement with the findings of this study, Keller et al., (1998) discovered that a high-quality product improves brand image, which has a strong positive link with consumer purchasing behaviour. This conclusion is in line with the findings of this study.

5.2.3 Examining the impact of brand extension strategy on consumers' buying behaviour at UD Trucks automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa.

The third objective of this study was to examine the impact of brand extension strategy on consumers' buying behaviour at UD Trucks automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa.

5.2.3.1 Intercorrelations between Personality attributes and other key dimension of the study.

According to the study's findings, there is a considerable positive correlation between the influence of personality traits on purchasing behaviour and opinions regarding the efficiency of brand components in fostering consumer loyalty, brand awareness, and brand image.

This relationship implies that consumers who are strongly influenced by personality attributes (such as personality, image, truck, costs, and network) when making purchase decisions have a strong belief that a brand's personality attributes are important for establishing brand awareness, brand image, and customer loyalty. Additionally, while choosing amongst truck brands, these buyers pay close attention to evaluative variables (such product performance, quality, and marketing communications).

According to the researcher the brand image attributes are grouped into the categories Personality, Image, Truck, Costs and Network, and the research showed that UD Trucks has a stable level of Personality attributes. Although

the European brands all increase, UD Trucks is stable in 5th or 6th place related to all brand image categories.

5.2.3.2 Cost and Affordability

The findings of this study indicate that the majority of respondents are quite aware of the cost of truck brands when they make purchasing decisions in terms of price and affordability. However, the results of the study reveal that majority of respondents will not purchase the cheapest brand of truck that is available on the market. The findings of this study concur with the findings of Chen et al. (2022), who founded that price plays an important role when purchasing decisions are made especially on a product that has a big price tag. In addition, Aulia and Briliana (2017) found that, although most consumers are rather sensitive to price, they also consider other factors, such as good resale value, low operating cost, good value for money, attractive truck pricing and competitive prices on service & parts. Felton (2021) found that perceived quality has an impact on consumer purchase decisions while buying trucks.

Esau & Harris (2022) found that consumers will purchase a brand on a trial bases and after being satisfied, they will keep on buying that specific brand. Based on research done by Keller et al (1998) consumer will convince themselves that purchasing a pricey product will guarantee quality.

5.2.3.3 Quality

In terms of quality, the majority of research participants claim that when making judgments about buying trucks, brand quality is the most crucial consideration for them. Assali, (2016) found that there is a very strong relationship between the quality of the product and consumers buying behaviour. This is the fourth most significant element that people consider when choosing a product. Additionally, most respondents are prepared to pay a higher price for high-quality trucks.

5.2.4 Establishing the impact of the Co-Branding strategy on consumers' buying behaviour at UD Trucks automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa

The fourth objective of this study was to establish the impact of the Co-Branding strategy on consumers' buying behaviour at UD Trucks automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa.

5.2.4.1 Consumer Behaviour

The study of consumer behaviour focuses on how consumers choose, buy, and use items. The consumer environment has an impact on how customers think, feel, and behave. Examples of environmental elements include feedback from previous consumers, advertising, packaging, pricing, product presentation, etc (Sethna & Blythe, 2019).

The findings show various consumer buying patterns; when customers went to buy trucks, they adopted various patterns, which include looking for considerable information about various brands of trucks, looking for the best deal on a high-quality truck, while others simply buy the same brand over and over because they have grown accustomed to it. However, some customers will frequently swap between brands.

5.2.4.2 Decision making

Before making a decision, the consumer will look for product information. The degree of consumer interaction determines the scope of the information search. The level of involvement is considerable in the case of expensive products. In contrast, the level of involvement is typically low in the case of more inexpensive products.

The findings of this study indicate that 67% of the respondents indicated that they would consult a salesman to get information about the offer available from different truck brands. This outcome concurs with those of Haugtvedt et al., (2018), who found that the buying experience of the consumers takes place by learning, and through learning, their behaviour changes and they gain information and only then take action. In addition to this the study by Haugtvedt et al., (2018), showed that it is not a guarantee that consumers will purchase the product, but brand awareness has been created and may lead to future purchases. The survey's findings support the hypothesis that people search for information about various truck brands. Before making a final selection, customers who want to buy a vehicle look up information about the

various brands of trucks. When individuals receive enough information about a branded truck, it can be quite beneficial to their decision-making process. Further findings show that individuals are very interested in buying trucks and that they make every effort to learn as much as they can about the various truck brands before making a purchase.

5.2.4.3 Post-purchase behaviour

The consumer takes additional action after the purchase as the last step of the purchasing process. When a consumer expresses satisfaction or dissatisfaction with a product, the cause is frequently found in the intersection of the consumer's expectations and the product's perceived performance.

The findings of this study indicate that 89% of the participants were satisfied with their purchasing of a UD Truck. According to the study done by Bruner, (1988), during the post-purchase phase, the buyer assesses the truck's performance in comparison to the goals set before the purchase.

5.2.4.4 Product feature

In terms of product feature, the majority of research participants claim that when evaluating a truck brand product feature, it has a big impact on their purchasing decisions. Kotler and Keller (2012) founded that in the eyes of current and potential customers, each of these features contributes to the product's tangible and intangible benefits. Hackley and Hackley (2021) agreed that a product includes more than simply a physical item when used as a marketing tool. However, it also incorporates all the client perks that is provides to meet their needs. These criteria could be strictly functional, such as safety and fuel economy. The social value of the object, such as compliments from friends, co-workers, and family members praising the purchased item, may be even more significant. Building a brand is important because it influences the symbolic meaning or characteristics of the entire branding marketing offering.

5.3 INFLUENCES OF BIOGRAPHICAL VARIABLES ON THE EVALUATIVE CRITERIA

The results of this study reveal that the perception of Gauteng consumers of the various truck brands evaluative criteria is influenced by the biographical variable and job roles. The results indicate that owners, finance manager, purchasing manager and managing directors are the key role players when making purchasing decisions related to buying trucks.

The last objective of this study involves exploring theoretical and practical brand marketing strategies effective enough to resolve challenges associated with consumers' buying behaviour at UD Trucks automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa. These challenges will be discussed in the subsequent chapter.

6 CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTIONS

Chapter 6 contains an overview of the research. The findings of the research and the implications of these findings for truck brands and OEMs are also discussed. The main results, as discussed in Chapter five, are compared with the work done by previous researchers in the field and the conclusions are grounded on these evaluations. The limitations of the study are also indicated. The recommendations could assist truck OEMs to better comprehend customers' buying behaviour and remain relevant in the market while addressing customers' needs more effectively.

6.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE AND FINDINGS

The core objective of this study was to explore the impact of branding marketing strategies on consumers buying behaviour at UD Trucks' automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa.

To achieve the core objectives, the supplementary objectives listed below were relevant.

1. Identifying brand marketing strategies currently implemented at UD Trucks automotive industry.
2. Investigate the impact of product extension strategy on consumers' buying behaviour at UD Trucks automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa
3. Examining the impact of brand extension strategy on consumers' buying behaviour at UD Trucks automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa
4. Establish the impact of the Co-Branding strategy on consumers' buying behaviour at UD Trucks automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa
5. Exploring theoretical and practical brand marketing strategies effective enough to resolve challenges associated with consumers' buying behaviour at UD Trucks automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa

After formulating the objective, a literature review was conducted on the following independent variables that could potentially influence truck vehicle brand buying behaviour, of which the first four are brand-related factors and the last three are personal factors.

- Price
- Perceived Quality
- Safety
- Brand Awareness
- Innovative
- Brand Conscious
- Reliability

To determine how each of the independent factors utilized in this study would affect customers' purchasing decisions, a variety of literature sources were consulted in chapter 2.

In Chapter 3, the study's research methodology was discussed. 232 respondents were included in the sample, and the study's population consisted of UD Trucks customers who operate in the heavy-duty truck segment as well as own a heavy-duty truck. A convenience sampling method was employed to find the participants for the study. Developing a self-administered questionnaire involved using secondary materials. The following are the sections that made up the questionnaire.

- a) Biographical Variables
- b) Truck Brand Elements
- c) Consumer Buying Behaviour
- d) Brand Images
- e) Customer Satisfaction
- f) Market evaluation in Gauteng South Africa

The questionnaires were distributed to UD Trucks customers in Gauteng and collected via a Google survey. A number of statistical methods and analyses were used to analyse the information gathered from these questionnaires. These statistical techniques included exploratory and descriptive methods. Chapter 4 comprised the presentation of the research findings.

6.3 DATA ANALYSIS

The interpreted data showed that the biographical variables of the respondents (gender, age, and job title), although not the main basis for this study, provides insights into which groups are mostly influenced by branding marketing strategies. Such findings demonstrated, therefore, that the majority of males (63%) were the respondents in comparison to females (37%). Also, most of the respondents in this study (27%) are adults aged 55 and above. On the other hand, looking further at the results, the majority of the respondents were the owners of the truck. Overall, research indicates that while adopting a branded marketing plan, the characteristics of participants are crucial.

In line with brand awareness, the majority (90.8%) of the respondents were aware of the different types of trucks available in South Africa. It was also realised that most of the respondents (61.6%) knew the truck brands in South Africa, and (58.4%) of participants were of the opinion that they are overall impressed with the availability of truck brands. In retrospect, however, it was picked up that (43%) of the respondents would seriously consider a Volvo truck for their next purchase and (26%) of the respondents would most likely prefer a Mercedes Trucks for their next purchase.

In addition, there are still respondents that are (88%) satisfied with the overall performance of UD Trucks. The lowest scoring brand was FAW with an overall satisfaction rate of (74%) and Mercedes with the highest score of (90%).

In addition, there are still more than (89%) of participants that will recommend UD Trucks to other consumers, and 85% of the respondents indicated that their company will invest in buying a UD Truck again. Overall, 68% of the respondents said that they will not consider buying a different brand other than a UD Truck. This means that the branding marketing strategy plays an active role in causing the customer to stay loyal towards a specific brand. Indicating that UD Trucks has a stable loyalty index of 81%.

In addition, to the above the strongest category in brand image attributions for UD Trucks is pricing. In the participants' eyes, there aren't many distinguishing characteristics of UD Trucks, but the sole obvious profile strength and the one

aspect of the image where UD outperforms the market is the attractive truck price. In general, UD's profile strengths lie in cost aspects.

In conclusion to the finding of the researcher, the context of Truck/product features revealed that Mercedes scored the highest (95%) in engine performance and UD Trucks were in third place scoring 91%. For the fuel consumption feature, MAN scored the lowest (70%) and Volvo the highest (91%) UD Trucks scored (89%), 2% above the top score. In the payload capacity, Isuzu scored the lowest (77%) and Volvo the highest (92%). For the safety features, Mercedes scored the highest (95%) and UD Trucks (89%). In the reliability category, Volvo and Scania scored the highest (93%) and FAW the lowest (77%). For durability, Volvo scored the highest (95%) and FAW the lowest (80%). In the driver comfort category, Hino and FAW scored the lowest (78%) and Volvo the highest (95%). For Total cost of ownership Mercedes scored the lowest (77%) and UD Trucks the highest (89%).

In terms of truck/product feature performance overall, UD Trucks is quite ordinary. Safety, dependability, and driving comfort are all areas where they may be improved. The engine performance and total cost of ownership of UD Truck were exceptional.

In this study, it was discovered that 5% of the participants have over 100 and above trucks currently operating in their fleet. The biggest fleet size of 23% is between 21 and 50 trucks in the fleet. In the main transport industry, 34% are operating in the mixed cargo segment and 17% in the industrial segment and 14% in the agricultural segment. Based on the research of this study 25% of participants purchased a truck in 2021 and 2020, which is an increase of 2% from 2019. As indicated by the latest figures, based on the most recent purchase data, there has been a steady increase from 2016 to 2021 in truck purchasing.

Important to highlight, customers, react in various ways upon or after implementing a branding marketing strategy. As a result, marketers must integrate their products in a variety of methods and with sufficient lead time. This will make it easier for the target market to interact with and become convinced of the brand.

Lastly, marketers should be aware that when it comes to a high-involvement product such as a truck, consumers are more aware of the functionality/performance of the truck. Therefore, since trucks do not have a symbolic value, marketers must include them in programs about qualities and events that customers consider to be real and significant.

As a result of the significant risk involved in selecting the best truck brand for their needs, consumers want to be aware of the truck features to engage with them. For instance, several respondents in this study mentioned that attractive truck prices, low running costs, dependability, and ease to drive are important considerations.

6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

This thesis contributes to the practical contributions by showing how consumers perceive branding marketing strategies and how this affects the consumers buying behaviour in the automotive industry. It appears that the current topic has not been thoroughly explored in the South African context after analysing and reviewing the available secondary literature. Little research has been carried out in South Africa exploring branding marketing strategies in the automotive industry. This study investigated a topic that has gotten little attention in the literature, which is advantageous for dealerships engaged in the truck industry.

The following recommendations for future study are given based on the research findings, conclusions, and limitations discussed:

The results of the study revealed the consistent shifting of consumers buying behaviour trends and the importance of using branding marketing strategies approaches to help increase brand awareness with customers. This study further contributes to South African truck manufacturers by highlighting that the use of the pillars of brand marketing strategies has the potential to increase consumers buying behaviour towards truck brands.

Based on this study consumers are very loyal towards a specific truck brand, making it very difficult to persuade a customer to consider another brand. Although this increases brand loyalty towards a specific brand and provides a brand with a competitive advantage in the truck industry. The study revealed that customers in the truck industry want to have an experience when considering

purchasing a specific truck brand these experiences include having skilled salesmen, test driving the truck and getting recommendations from external sources.

Seeing as the study was limited to the province of Gauteng, therefore views outside of the persons that were chosen were not included. The recommendation for future study might be to locate more individuals in different South African provinces. Additionally, including truck drivers in the sample may result in a different set of findings.

As the study used a mixed method approach and covered closed-ended questions only, it is recommended that future research should try to incorporate open-ended questions to cover personalised options from customers.

The study further discovered challenges that need to be addressed to increase the effectiveness of the brand marketing strategy. The findings about the challenge presented that most of the participants are in an older age group. This means that the branding marketing strategies that UD Trucks want to implement need to speak to the older generation and should target more newspapers and radio marketing strategies as well as short informative videos giving current and potential customers fast and effective product information. The findings about the challenge presented by how the target audiences fall more into the older categories constitute a new finding to the body of knowledge. Truck OEMs may find this information on targeted audiences valuable when designing the branding marketing strategy to achieve their objectives.

6.5 LIMITATIONS

While there weren't many issues during the research, it's nevertheless important to consider the restrictions that resulted from them.

The collection and capturing of the data proved to be time-consuming and due to the time restriction, many people in Gauteng may have been left out or neglected the request for answering the survey questionnaire.

The study was conducted in the Gauteng province of South Africa; therefore, the other provinces in South Africa were excluded from the study. The research was

focused on products from one specific company, UD Trucks excluding other truck brands. Purposive sampling was used which resulted in selection bias, which is a sample bias resulting from differential selections of participants.

As an employee of UD Trucks Southern Africa bias in the questionnaires could have occurred. Lastly, the small sample size of 232 respondents limited the generalisation of the research results in the Gauteng population.

The outcomes of this study could still be regarded as significant despite these limitations.

6.6 CONCLUSION

This study aimed at exploring the impact of branding marketing strategies on consumers buying behaviour about a particular truck brand to enable OEMs to better understand customer needs. By doing this, organizations might grow sales and improve their profitability and sustainability. The study provided a clearer understanding of how consumer and brand-related factors can affect consumers' purchasing decisions.

OEMs were given recommendations on how to apply the research's conclusions in a way that would help their businesses. These suggestions were practical and supported by prior research that had been documented in the literature. The suggestions were also based on the observations made by participants in this study's investigation. Applying the findings of this study's recommendations should help OEMs create a stronger brand identity, which should be a key component of their entire business strategy.

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7 APPENDICES

7.1 Appendices A: Permission Letters



Appendix A: Permission Letter

13th December 2022

Ms. Annika Botsa
Piering Street 509
Rietvalleirand
Pretoria
Gauteng
0181

RE: Permission to Carry Out a Study at UD Trucks Southern Africa

This letter serves to confirm that the approval is hereby granted to Annika Botsa proceed in carrying out a study entitled: "The impact of branding marketing strategies on consumers' buying behavior at UD Trucks automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa."

The researcher should ensure that the following are adhered to:

- The information can be submitted to Regenesys Business School but must be kept confidential and safe. It cannot be distributed for other purposes.
- Participation to the study should be on a voluntary basis.
- The study may be conducted on pre-arranged times to avoid disturbances.
- Organization's information should be kept confidential; and
- The researcher must provide a hard copy and electronic copy of the research on completion.

I hope the above is in order and you will allow Annika to use the information based on the above conditions for her dissertation.

Yours Faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Marle Visagie', written over a horizontal line.

Marle Visagie

Dealer Development General Manager – UD Trucks Southern Africa

7.2 Appendices B: Ethical Clearance

14th December 2022,

Dear Annika Botha,

Approval of Ethical Clearance

Project title: Examining the impact of branding marketing strategies on consumers' buying behavior at UD Trucks automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa.

This letter serves to notify you that your application for ethical clearance to conduct the above research towards your MBA Dissertation has been fully approved by the Regenesys Business School (RBS) Ethics Committee.

Please note that any changes to the title and research protocols (title/method/data collection/sample etc.) have to be reviewed and amendments approved prior to commencement of the data collection.

All research being conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic have to strictly follow the RBS research guidelines and protocols, as well as that of the South African National Research Ethics Council.

Please note that this is valid for a period of one year from the date of issue. Furthermore, a copy of this approval letter must be appended to your dissertation /research report.

We wish you every success in your research.

Yours Sincerely



Dr Stanford Makore
Head: Higher Degrees Research Committee

7.3 Appendices C: Consent Statement

Consent Statement

I am conducting researcher on the impact of branding marketing strategies on consumers buying behaviour at UD Trucks automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa. The questionnaire will take about 15-20 minutes and it will help me to understand how branding marketing strategies impact consumers buying behaviour. Your participation is voluntary, and you can withdraw at any time without penalty. We do, of course, guarantee you complete anonymity. If you have any concerns, please contact my supervisor or me. Our details are provided below.

Researcher : Annika Botha

Email : Annika.botha21@gmail.com

Phone : 076 742 3258

Research Supervisor : Dr, Austin Musundire

Email : amusundire@gmail.com

Phone : 073 531 4197

Participant Name	
Participant Signature	
Participant Job Title	
Date	

Researcher Name	
Researcher Signature	
Date	

7.4 Appendices D: Questionnaire Questions

Section A

Biographical Information

In all cases, place a cross [x] in the appropriate box. Select one option only, unless otherwise indicated.

Question 1: Gender

1	Male	
2	Female	

Question 2: Age Group

1	25-29	
2	30-34	
3	35-40	
4	41-45	
5	46-50	
6	51-55	
7	55+	

Question 3: Job title

1	Owner	
2	Managing director	
3	Fleet manager (responsible – fleet management)	
4	Purchasing manager (responsible – purchasing)	
5	Finance manager (responsible – finance)	
6	Partner	
7	Project manager	

Section B

Objective 1: Identifying brand marketing strategies currently implemented at UD Trucks automotive industry.

Question 1: Which brand of trucks are you aware of, even if it is only by name?

1	Mercedes	
2	Scania	
3	Hino	
4	Isuzu	
5	Fuso	
6	MAN	
7	FAW	
8	Volvo	
9	UD Trucks	

Question 2: How well would you say you know the following brand truck makes? Give your answers using a scale from 1 to 5 where...1 - I have never heard of it 5 - I know it very well

I have never heard of it	I have heard of it but know nothing about it	I know a little about it	I know it fairly well	I know it very well
--------------------------	--	--------------------------	-----------------------	---------------------

1	Mercedes					
2	Scania					
3	Hino					
4	Isuzu					
5	Fuso					
6	MAN					
7	FAW					
8	Volvo					
9	UD Trucks					

Question 3: What is your overall impression of the following truck brands available in Gauteng South Africa? Give your answers using a scale from 1 to 5 where... 1 - Very poor 5 - Excellent		Very poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
1	Mercedes					
2	Scania					
3	Hino					
4	Isuzu					
5	Fuso					
6	MAN					
7	FAW					
8	Volvo					
9	UD Trucks					

Question 4: Which brand of truck would you seriously consider for your next purchase?

1	Mercedes	
2	Scania	
3	Hino	
4	Isuzu	
5	Fuso	
6	MAN	
7	FAW	
8	Volvo	
9	UD Trucks	

Question 5: Which one make would you say is the most likely choice for your next purchase?

1	Mercedes	
2	Scania	
3	Hino	
4	Isuzu	
5	Fuso	
6	MAN	
7	FAW	
8	Volvo	
9	UD Trucks	

Objective 2: Investigate the impact on product extension strategy on consumers buying behaviour at UD Trucks automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa.

Question 1: Please think of the all the truck brands. How would you assess the overall performance of this make in general?		Completely dissatisfied	Fairly dissatisfied	Fairly satisfied	Very satisfied	Completely satisfied
1	Mercedes					
2	Scania					
3	Hino					
4	Isuzu					
5	Fuso					
6	MAN					
7	FAW					
8	Volvo					
9	UD Trucks					

Question 2: How likely are to recommend any of the brands below to others to buy?		Definitely not	Probably not	Fairly likely	Probably	Definitely
1	Mercedes					
2	Scania					
3	Hino					
4	Isuzu					
5	Fuso					
6	MAN					
7	FAW					
8	Volvo					
9	UD Trucks					

Question 3: Next time your company is going to invest in a new truck, how likely is it that you would choose a one of the trucks below again?		Definitely not	Probably not	Fairly likely	Probably	Definitely
1	Mercedes					
2	Scania					
3	Hino					
4	Isuzu					
5	Fuso					
6	MAN					
7	FAW					
8	Volvo					
9	UD Trucks					

Question 4: Have you consider buying a different brand of truck?	
1	Yes
2	No

Objective 3: Examining the impact of brand extension strategy on consumers buying behaviour at UD Trucks automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa.

Question 1: Personality attributes to you that can be used to describe different truck brands?		Dependable & Trustworthy	Friendly	Innovative	Premium
1	Mercedes				
2	Scania				
3	Hino				
4	Isuzu				
5	Fuso				
6	MAN				
7	FAW				
8	Volvo				
9	UD Trucks				

Question 2: For each attribute I want you to tell me which brand or brands you think it applies to?		Has an excellent reputation	Offers trucks the driver can be proud of	Offers heavy trucks I really would like to own	Sustainable/ Environmentally friendly	Leading in development of autonomous, self-driving trucks	Is leading in development of electric truck
1	Mercedes						
2	Scania						
3	Hino						
4	Isuzu						
5	Fuso						
6	MAN						
7	FAW						
8	Volvo						
9	UD Trucks						

Question 3: Truck/product attributes. For each attribute I want you to tell me which brand or brands you think it applies to?		Trucks with high reliability	Durable trucks	Easy to drive	Excellent engines	High safety standards	Low fuel consumption	Comfortable & practical cab interior	Attractive exterior styling
1	Mercedes								
2	Scania								
3	Hino								

4	Isuzu								
5	Fuso								
6	MAN								
7	FAW								
8	Volvo								
9	UD Trucks								

Question 4: Costs attributes. For each attribute I want you to tell me which brand or brands you think it applies to?

		Good resale value	Low operating cost per tonne/km	Good value for money	Attractive truck pricing	Competitive prices on service & parts
1	Mercedes					
2	Scania					
3	Hino					
4	Isuzu					
5	Fuso					
6	MAN					
7	FAW					
8	Volvo					
9	UD Trucks					

Question 5: Attributes related to Network. For each attribute I want you to tell me which brand or brands you think it applies to?.

		Takes good care of customers	Offer high quality of service & repair	Has good roadside emergency breakdown service	Is leading provider of connected services
1	Mercedes				
2	Scania				
3	Hino				
4	Isuzu				
5	Fuso				
6	MAN				
7	FAW				
8	Volvo				
9	UD Trucks				

Objective 4: Establish the impact of Co-Branding strategy on consumers buying behaviour at UD Trucks automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa.

Question 1: If you think about the brand of truck, you purchased last, how satisfied are you overall with it?

1	Completely dissatisfied	
2	Fairly dissatisfied	
3	Fairly satisfied	
4	Very satisfied	
5	Completely satisfied	

Question 2: Thinking of the truck you purchased LAST, how satisfied are you with the following Truck/product features?

		Completely dissatisfied	Fairly dissatisfied	Fairly satisfied	Very satisfied	Completely satisfied
1	Engine performance					
2	Fuel consumption					
3	Brake performance					
4	Payload capacity					
5	Safety					
6	Reliability					
7	Durability					
8	Driving comfort					
9	Total cost of ownership					

Question 3: Assuming that you were about to buy a new truck. Which sources would you consult to get information about the offers from different truck makes?

1	Recommendations (colleagues/other companies)	
2	Exhibition shows	
3	Product brochures	
4	Truck and transport magazines	
5	The internet	
6	Salesmen (at dealers' or manufacturers)	
7	Newsletters (from dealers or manufacturers)	
8	Test driving	
9	Other	

Objective 5: Exploring theoretical and practical brand marketing strategies effective enough to resolve challenges associated with consumers buying behaviour at UD Trucks automotive industry in Gauteng province of South Africa.

Question 1: How many trucks does your company own/operate?

1	1 Vehicle	
2	2 to 5	
3	6 to 10	
4	11 to 20	
5	21 to 50	
6	51 to 99	
7	100 and above	

Question 2: What type of goods do you mainly transport?

1	Exchangeable load systems	
2	Mixed Cargo	
3	Daily Commodities	
4	Consumer Goods	
5	Industrial	
6	Agriculture	
7	Forest/Timber/Lumber/Paper industry	
8	Mining	
9	Petroleum & Chemicals	
10	Building & Construction	
11	Waste & Recycling	
12	Public service & Utility	
13	Defence	
14	Other	

Question 3: When/what year did you last buy a new truck?

1	2016	
2	2017	
3	2018	
4	2019	
5	2020	
6	2021	

Thank you for your time and cooperation.