



GORDON INSTITUTE
OF BUSINESS SCIENCE

University of Pretoria

**THE LINK BETWEEN RELATIVE DEPRIVATION AND LIFESTYLE CHOICES
OF AFFLUENT BLACK SOUTH AFRICANS**

Thandokuhle Manzi

Student No.: 224781

A research project submitted to the Gordon Institute of Business Science,
University of Pretoria, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Business Administration.

14 November 2007

Abstract

The purpose of this exploratory research is to explore the link between relative deprivation and lifestyle choices of affluent black South Africans. The study seeks to determine what drives the lifestyle choices of affluent black South Africans. The study interviewed fifteen respondents using in-depth face-to-face interviews. The study found evidence of egoistic relative deprivation amongst the majority of respondents interviewed. The study also shows race does not matter in the identification of a reference group. Individuals choose reference individuals or groups according to social class or social network. The spending patterns of the affluent black group show evidence of catching up activity, which contributes to the overall increased consumption patterns observed by policymakers.

The spending patterns of affluent black South Africans provide evidence that relative deprivation is responsible for their lifestyle choices and those of affluent black people in general. The research concludes with a determination of an order of procurement of lifestyle goods for the affluent black South Africans. The research suggests that any measures to curb consumption without understanding relative deprivation will not yield long-term solutions to South African policymakers and marketers. The study concludes that there is a link between relative deprivation and the lifestyle choices of affluent black South Africans.

Declaration

I declare that this research is my own work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration at the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University.

Thandokuhle Manzi

Date

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank God for granting me the courage to tackle this journey, the strength to see it through and the wisdom to persevere.

To my wife, Pontsho, we did it! Thanks for encouraging me to enrol for the MBA, believing in me when I sometimes did not and for supporting me throughout all those sleepless nights and busy weekends. I know it was worth it.

To my son, Thandoluhle (a product of the MBA), thank you for understanding that daddy was too tired most of the time to play or give you a bath.

Thanks to my supervisor, Kerry Chipp, for her time, valuable support and assistance during this research project. Thanks for bringing focus to the research when the topic threatened to overwhelm me. I could not have chosen a better supervisor and your attention to detail was impeccable. Thank you.

My heartfelt thanks go to all respondents who participated in this research. Without you, there would no data, no report and no MBA.

To my transcribers and friends, Lindi and Felicia. Thank you for the weekends and late nights spent typing up the interviews.

Thank you to all my friends and family for understanding that I did not exist for at least two years in your lives while I embarked on this exciting journey. I am back!

Lastly, but certainly not least, thanks to the Native Club for the laughter, hard work and the friendships that will last long after the MBA. You made the journey worthwhile and it is a privilege to have worked with people as inspiring as you are.

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	i
Declaration.....	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
1 Chapter 1: Introduction to Research problem	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Research Motivation	1
1.3 Research Relevance to South Africa	3
1.4 Research Scope	5
1.5 Statement of the Research Problem.....	6
2 Chapter 2: Literature Review	7
2.1 Introduction	7
2.2 Relative Deprivation.....	8
2.2.1 Introduction.....	8
2.2.2 Definition of Relative Deprivation.....	9
2.2.3 Egoistic or Fraternal Relative Deprivation.....	12
2.2.4 Reference Group	14
2.2.5 The Effects of Relative Deprivation.....	16
2.2.6 The Effects of Relative Deprivation in Developing Countries.....	19
2.2.7 Conclusion.....	25
2.3 Lifestyle.....	26
2.3.1 Introduction	26
2.3.2 Definition of Lifestyle.....	26
2.3.3 The Effects of Lifestyle Choice	32
2.3.4 The Effects of Lifestyle Choice in Developing Countries	36

2.3.5	Conclusion	39
2.4	Studies Linking Relative Deprivation and Lifestyle Choice	40
2.5	Conclusion	43
3	Chapter 3: Research Questions	44
4	Chapter 4: Research Methodology	47
4.1	Research Method Applied.....	47
4.2	Definition of the Population	48
4.2.1	Population Selection Criteria	49
4.3	Sampling.....	51
4.4	Unit of Analysis	52
4.5	The Research Instrument Used	53
4.6	Data Collection	54
4.7	Data Analysis.....	56
4.8	Research Data Validity and Reliability	56
4.9	Limitations of the Research	57
5	Chapter 5: Results	59
5.1	Introduction	59
5.1.1	Research Question 1	60
5.1.2	Research Question 2.....	65
5.1.3	Research Question 3.....	67
5.1.4	Research Question 4.....	70
5.1.5	Research Question 5.....	74
5.1.6	Research Question 6.....	83
5.2	Additional Results	86
5.3	Conclusion.....	87

6	Chapter 6: Discussion of Results	90
6.1	Introduction	90
6.1.1	Relative deprivation persists amongst affluent black South Africans.....	91
6.1.2	Link between Relation Deprivation and Consumption	95
6.1.3	The Link between Consumption and Lifestyle	98
6.1.4	The Impact of Lifestyle Choice.....	101
6.2	Further Research Insights.....	107
6.3	Conclusion	110
7	Chapter 7: Conclusion	112
7.1	Introduction	112
7.2	Findings Summary and Conclusions.....	112
7.3	Recommendations	116
7.3.1	Policymakers	116
7.3.2	Marketers.....	117
7.4	Directions for future research.....	117
8	References.....	119
9	Appendix A - Consistency Matrix	130
10	Appendix B: Interview Guide	132

1 Chapter 1: Introduction to Research problem

1.1 Introduction

The purpose of this research is to explore the link between relative deprivation and lifestyle choices of affluent black South Africans. The research aims to percolate an explanation and understanding of black consumption behaviour and lifestyle choices from a theory borrowed from the disciplines of Psychology and Sociology. The base for the research is Relative Deprivation Theory as discovered by Stouffer and his colleagues in 1949 (Heck and Wech, 2003). The research seeks to understand why previously deprived individuals or groups use members of their group or previously privileged individuals or groups as a benchmark for success and economic significance. This behaviour is evident in the type of conspicuous lifestyle choices and material consumption patterns that affluent black South Africans demonstrate, especially in post-apartheid South Africa.

1.2 Research Motivation

The research problem was selected because of a growing concern and interest among economists regarding increased spending patterns of black South Africans since the dawn of the new South Africa in 1994. South Africa's current finance minister acknowledged in his Budget Speech that "Our task, as government, as households, as the business sector ... is to moderate our consumption tendency, to broaden and diversify economic activity" (Manuel, 2006, p8). The same concerns have been a boon for marketers and retailers of all industries as they attempt to sell material goods and services that appeal to the newly affluent black South Africans. The government and the Reserve Bank

governor have joined the fray by recently voicing their concerns regarding the conspicuous and often extravagant spending seen amongst affluent black South Africans. The governor of the Reserve Bank has been quoted in his speeches warning consumers against overspending that is fuelled by a buoyant economy and rampant credit extension by banks, and has subsequently raised interest rates to curb 'senseless' borrowing in pursuit of extravagant lifestyles.

While there is merit in the sentiments voiced by economists and government, the question that lingers on is whether this should not be expected in a new democracy where the black majority had previously been denied the access and means to participate meaningfully in the economy of South Africa. Is it not a correction of past historical injustices and the black majority is merely catching up to the white minority that has enjoyed economic freedom and superior lifestyles under apartheid? Bourguignon, Seron, Zerbyt and Herman (2006) have observed that human beings are prone to create hierarchies that relegate some groups to the bottom of the social ladder. Moore (2003) warns that deprived groups feel less control and develop lower expectations than privileged ones. Perhaps affluent black South Africans feel they are not in control until they are able to buy the goods and services they have desired even under apartheid. Smith (2005) quotes Patience Muyambo who argues that the market is emerging from a state of asset deficit and that the low penetration rate of assets such as household goods and furniture means there will be sustainable volume growth in years to come.

1.3 Research Relevance to South Africa

The link between relative deprivation and lifestyle choices has been studied in both developed and developing countries. Although the manifestation of relative deprivation and the demographics of the countries studied are different to those of South Africa, the findings from research, especially developing countries, are relevant for the proposed South African study. While some relative deprivation research was done in both pre- and post-1994 South Africa, there seems to be no study that links relative deprivation to lifestyle, and certainly not in the targeted affluent black South African group, that is part of the “Black Diamonds”.

There is evidence of the existence of relative deprivation amongst blacks in South African before and after the democratic election in 1994. In an earlier study, Appelgryn and Nieuwoudt (1988) argued that racial ranking, which sparked feelings of relative deprivation amongst blacks, resulted in ethnic classification being a major factor in the distribution of rewards, such as work opportunities, salaries, housing and personal worth. Before 1994, it has reported that the policy of apartheid resulted in a hierarchy of oppression with whites on top, Indians and Coloureds in the middle and blacks at the bottom (De la Rey and Raju, 1996) resulting in feelings of relative deprivation. Van Dyk and Nieuwoudt (1990) reported that Afrikaans-speaking white women started feeling relative deprivation on the social, economic and political fronts as blacks gradually gained political advantage leading to the 1994 elections. In that era, relative deprivation played a more crucial role than perceptions of intergroup differences in predicting socially related behaviour. In one of the more recent South African studies on relative deprivation, Moller (2001) found that

disparities in living standards have become more visible and have fuelled feelings of relative deprivation in blacks who are not seen to be advancing as fast in the democratic dispensation as previously envisaged.

The studies reveal that blacks were relatively deprived in the apartheid years and need to find ways of levelling the playing field in the new political dispensation. The mode seems to be rapid acquisition of material possessions and assumption of new lifestyles that were previously inaccessible to the majority of black people in South Africa. Logic dictates that this phenomenon is perceivable, understandable and justified given the history of South Africa although some people in government and social and economic commentators seem to think otherwise.

This research seeks, however, to explore a different perspective to that of the economists and the government. This perspective suggests an investigation of relative deprivation amongst affluent blacks and the attitudes that they have adopted in our economy is vital as the gap between the rich and poor continues to widen. The research is relevant as relative deprivation must be confirmed or excluded as an intervening force in the current high consumption levels. The research is also appropriate as it locates the lifestyle choices of black South Africans in the consolidation phase of South Africa's transformation. The research will distil the activities, interests and opinions of affluent black South Africans in choosing the lifestyles, which are currently deemed extravagant and unsustainable. The research is also required in order to enable companies to understand affluent black South Africans in order to produce and market

relevant products, and allow for effective advertising to this group in our society. Finally, the research will perhaps shed more light on some of the underlying issues and add to the robustness of the current debate in government and corporate South Africa.

1.4 Research Scope

The scope of the research is limited to the establishment of the persistence of the relative deprivation amongst affluent black South Africans and its possible impact on their lifestyle choices. The research is exploratory and involves extensive discussions with affluent members of the black middle class commonly referred to as “Black Diamonds”. The research aims to investigate the existence of relative deprivation amongst the target group and its possible link to the consumption preferences that inform the group’s lifestyle. The research will establish whether relative deprivation is individually or collectively experienced, and reveal the reference groups against whom affluent blacks compare themselves.

The research will investigate possible reasons behind the elevated consumption patterns amongst affluent black South Africans and how consumption defines their lifestyles. On further exploration of lifestyle, the research will determine the order of consumption of goods and services, and the attendant logic behind the order. The research is not a study of relative deprivation or lifestyle as separate concepts but an investigation of whether Relative Deprivation Theory can be used to explain the lifestyle choices amongst affluent black South Africans.

1.5 Statement of the Research Problem

The success of this research rests in proving/disproving the persistence of relative deprivation and its ability/inability to explain the lifestyle choices of affluent black South Africans. To this end, the research aims to identify **the link between relative deprivation and the lifestyle choices of affluent black South Africans.**

2 Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The theory reviewed in this section defines the theory of relative deprivation as understood from its origins in psychology and sociology, and the many studies conducted in various countries. Relative deprivation has been linked to various economic, psychological, social, health and environmental issues by many researchers since its discovery in 1949 (Heck and Wech, 2003). Relative deprivation theory has also been linked to lifestyle (Halleröd, 2006) as it the latter that gives context to the former. The research, therefore, seeks to understand affluent black South Africans by exploring the concept of relative deprivation as a possible explanation for their lifestyle choices.

The literature review starts by defining the theory of relative deprivation and its origins in social psychology. The review then proceeds to discuss relative deprivation studies conducted in many countries around the world and conclude with studies in developing countries, and South Africa. The review then delves into the definition of the theory of lifestyle, its origins in individual and environmental psychology and the consumption choices that people make everyday. Various lifestyle studies conducted around the world are discussed and the role that lifestyle choice plays in the social milieu. The literature review cites studies that attempt to link relative deprivation to lifestyle choices in both developed and developing worlds. The literature review concludes by offering a compelling argument on why exploring the link between relative deprivation and

the lifestyle choices of affluent black South Africans is important for the South African business community and the developing world.

2.2 Relative Deprivation

2.2.1 Introduction

When people are asked to evaluate their economic situation, the answer usually comprises objective and subjective components (Halleröd, 2006) of the assessment. The objective component gives an indication of where in the economic hierarchy the respondent is positioned and, hence, information about the respondent's actual access to economic resources. At the same time, the subjective component reports on the respondent's preferences. The subjective component may include an "adaptation of preference problem" (Halleröd, 2006, p372) where respondents usually edit out desires they cannot fulfil instead of living with those desires.

Therefore, there are two schools of thought pervasive in the current definition of relative deprivation. One school advocates the notion that relative deprivation is objective and the other suggests it is subjective. Halleröd (2006) argues that the objective school reasons that the way people actually live is crucial to defining relative deprivation, thus making what they, as subjects, think of their situation irrelevant. This school further argues that relative deprivation must be understood in relation to the ordinary lifestyle in the society to which the individual belongs. This implies that deprivation is fundamentally a sociological concept and that hard proof about the ordinary lifestyle prevailing in the society must be used to judge whether an individual is deprived.

The subjective school of thought refers to the choice of reference group, which implies a person or a group of persons whose position one wants, perceives as possible, and feels has the right to reach (Halleröd, 2006), as a central principle. This research will adopt the subjective relative deprivation argument in understanding the lifestyle choices of affluent black South Africans. The reason for adopting this school of thought is that the individuals targeted for this research are reasonably affluent and not deprived economically, thus making what they think relevant to the research. The intention is to uncover the reasons for a relentless trend towards procurement of goods and services, and consequently debt, in pursuit of a lifestyle similar to that of white South Africans.

2.2.2 Definition of Relative Deprivation

Relative deprivation is a theoretical concept that has been used to analyse contexts of perceived injustice and inequality and frequently used within the social sciences (Halleröd, 2006). The concept of relative deprivation was serendipitously discovered in 1949 (Heck and Wech, 2006). Relative deprivation has a kinship with sociological concepts such as “social frame of reference”, “patterns of expectation” or “definition of a situation” (Stouffer, Suchman, DeVinney, Star and Williams, 1949, p125). Merton and Kitt (1950) popularised the concept by linking relative deprivation with the theory of reference group behaviour and opined that people do not suffer in an “absolute” way but compare their lot with that of other people of their kind (Heck and Wech, 2003). Relative deprivation theory claims that a person will feel relatively deprived if he or she (1) lacks an object, (2) desires it, (3) sees some other

person(s) with that object, and (4) thinks it is feasible to obtain that object (López Turley, 2002).

Relative deprivation arises from a subjective feeling of discontent based on the belief that one is getting less than that to which they are entitled (Appelgryn and Bornman, 1996; De la Rey and Raju, 1996; Halleröd, 2006) or less than others (López Turley, 2002) or are lacking the possibility to have living conditions and being able to participate in activities common in the society they live in (Yngwe, Lundberg and Burstrom, 2006). López Turley (2002) argues that there is a sense of entitlement in that deprived people feel they deserve the circumstances that have been granted to others. Relative deprivation may occur when individuals feel dissatisfied because of circumstances that have deteriorated over time and the fear of further deterioration in the future (van Dyk and Nieuwoudt, 1988). Simply put, relative deprivation is the result of a person or group not enjoying what they believe they deserve (Caprioli, 2005). This argument seems to explain the general sentiment amongst blacks in South Africa and why apartheid could not survive. The perception of playing “catch up” is indicated by comments in all media yet it is conveniently left out when government agencies and opinion leaders discuss consumption statistics.

Many authors distinguish between the cognitive (perceived injustice) and affective (feeling of discontent) elements of relative deprivation (Appelgryn and Bornman, 1996). Feelings of relative deprivation, which are triggered by comparisons with an advantaged group, act as a mediator between cognitive and evaluative components of personal identity (Tougas, Lagacé, De la

Sablonnière and Kocum, 2004). The central argument in Relative Deprivation Theory is that a person's sense of contentment does not depend on objective conditions, but on the subjective perceptions and comparisons of self to others in terms of opinions, abilities, and material possessions (Appelgryn and Bornman, 1996; López Turley, 2002; Vala, Pereira and Ramos, 2006). Chandra and Foster (2005) argue that it is the perceived difference between the material and social conditions that individuals think they should achieve, and the conditions they believe they will achieve that causes relative deprivation. This definition also implies materiality of the perceived inequality or injustice pertaining to the affected individual or dimensions of material value restricted to undeserved disadvantage (Schmitt and Maes, 2002).

Roets, van Hiel and Cornelis (2006) stress the pursuit of material resources as an important theme of Relative Deprivation Theory within a given society. The "rampant" consumption of material consumer goods by blacks is in line with this extended definition of relative deprivation and should be part of the black lifestyle debate. Chandra and Foster (2005) argue that the relative deprivation can be managed by a gradual elimination of inequality which causes value expectation and value capability to converge thus avoiding socio-political upheaval. It is thus important for the government and opinion leaders to understand that increased consumption and lifestyle changes amongst previously disadvantaged individuals must be encouraged to ensure that society normalises.

It is important to note that the theory does not refer to common-sense notions of envy, greed or lust. Webber (2007) argues that relative deprivation should be seen as a value-neutral emotion and not conflated with such emotions as envy. The key distinction is between expectation and aspiration. If what is expected does not transpire, there is grave discontent. However, if our aspirations do not materialise, our discontent is minimal (Webber, 2007). The types of goods consumed by affluent back South Africans should be analysed to determine whether they are aspirational items or staple items found in many privileged homes in South Africa. This argument is in line with the suggestion by Quinn (2006) that wealth and social dimensions must be defined across income, consumer durables, housing quality, housing size, land ownership, social standing and social networks as these combined are better indicators of relative deprivation.

2.2.3 Egoistic or Fraternal Relative Deprivation

In the definition of Relative Deprivation Theory, it is important to distinguish individual feelings of relative deprivation from those of a group to which an individual belongs (in-group). The distinction is important because the behaviour of an individual varies when serving their own interests than when the interests of the in-group. The theory suggests that relative deprivation can be explained in terms of an individual (egoistic) or group (fraternal) comparing themselves to a reference group (Webber, 2007). The former refers to individualistic feelings of deprivation, while the latter refers to feelings of deprivation on behalf of the in-group (Appelgryn and Nieuwoudt, 1988; Van Dyk and Nieuwoudt, 1990; Webber, 2007). De la Rey and Raju (1996) posit that egoistic relative deprivation is felt by the individual who compares his or her personal situation

with that of another while fraternal relative deprivation refers to in-group feelings in relation to those of out-groups.

It is vital to locate the egoistic/fraternal relative deprivation debate within the cultural context of black people in South Africa, and the concept of *ubuntu*. Khosa (1994, p13) defines *ubuntu* as “I am because you are and you are because we are.” *Ubuntu* suggests the interdependence between the individual and their community, and the inextricability of the individual from their community. *Ubuntu* suggests that people think and feel as individuals but consider in-group concerns and well-being. This implies that the satisfaction of self is not pursued at the expense of the in-group. Therefore, egoistic relative deprivation should not exist in isolation within the black community but must be accompanied by fraternal relative deprivation.

In all the studies of relative deprivation conducted in South Africa, there seems to be no available study that seeks to determine whether relative deprivation is egoistic or fraternal amongst blacks, in particular affluent black South Africans. North and Western Europe and North America are known for their individualist cultures while Africa, Asia and South America have collectivist cultures (Triandis, 2001). In locating egoistic or fraternal relative deprivation within the African culture, it is important to note that egoistic relative deprivation is not directly linked to individualism neither is fraternal relative deprivation linked to collectivism. Triandis (2001) refers to the extent to which individuals have personalities that aim to satisfy self as idiocentrism while subjugating individual feelings to those of the in-group (collective) is defined as allocentrism.

Therefore, individualism is idiocentrism. The definition of *ubuntu* suggests that it is diametrically opposed to the culture of individualism. In extrapolating the argument, it follows that black South Africans must be, at the least, allocentrics and should be influenced more by in-group than individual feelings of relative deprivation.

The foregoing argument suggests that, in the African society, individuals subjugate their feelings to those of the in-group whenever conflict between individual and in-group feelings arises. It is the purpose of this research to investigate whether this notion holds true for affluent black South Africans. It is therefore important that this research unearths the nature of relative deprivation amongst affluent blacks in South Africa.

2.2.4 Reference Group

Frank (1985) in López Turley (2002, p673) posits that “we come into the world equipped with a nervous system that worries about rank”. The quote implies that there is a natural tendency for individuals to compare their lot to that of others in their environment. The term “relative” in the definition of relative deprivation implies a comparison between self and another. It implies a benchmark to which an individual aspires, either as an individual or as part of a group. Merton and Kitt (1950) added the theory of reference group behaviour to relative deprivation and opined that people do not suffer in an “absolute” way but compare their lot with that of other people of their kind.

Pedersen (2004) distinguishes between three different types of reference group, namely a comparative reference group (group whose situation or attributes a

person contrasts with his own and is directly responsible for generating feelings of relative deprivation), a normative reference group (the group of which an individual aspires to become a recognized member) and a membership group (the group on behalf of which the individual makes her claim against the comparative reference group). Individuals belong to several reference groups and social comparison of economic resources in relation to the standard of these groups relates to feelings of relative deprivation (Yngwe *et al*, 2006). In this research, the definition of a comparative reference group is adopted as a generic description of reference group in exploring relative deprivation.

The role of social comparison is central to relative deprivation (Appelgryn and Bornman, 1996) because individuals use the nature of social reality to rank themselves against others. Individuals must be aware of the differences between themselves and others and perform justice evaluations to judge whether the perceived differential is justified (Moore, 2003). Relative deprivation is an outcome of social comparison (Moore, 2003; Webber, 2007) or cross-societal comparison (Liao, Fu and Yi, 2005). Social comparison theory predicts that individuals choose to compare themselves with similar others (Sweeney and McFarlin, 2005) and that social comparison is a naturally occurring phenomenon that plays an important role in how we judge ourselves, our opinions, our abilities, and our possessions (López Turley, 2002).

The perception of having less than others (López Turley, 2002) can only be determined through the choice of a proper reference group (people in similar circumstances), otherwise the concept of relative deprivation cannot be applied

to understand and predict the outcome of perceived injustice. The research done on relative deprivation in South Africa has so far been on etic (view by individual who is not part of the group being studied) dimensions, with different races looking into each other's culture and living conditions. The affluent black South African group's *ubuntu* has been under scrutiny in public discourse and the adage of "*Uphila njengabelungu*" (He/she lives like white people) bears testament to possible emic identification by affluent blacks with white culture. It is therefore critically important for this research to delve into the choice of reference group against whom affluent black South Africans compare themselves as a departure point in ascertaining whether relative deprivation exists and how it is manifested at home in their lifestyle.

2.2.5 The Effects of Relative Deprivation

The effects of relative deprivation have been reported in studies by social psychologists in both developed and developing countries. Quinn (2006) argues that individuals in communities with fewer amenities have lower utility and are likely to migrate. This could be an explanation of the mass migration of affluent blacks to suburban houses in South Africa. The migration of poor individuals to rich neighbourhoods affords them access to better facilities and improved lifestyles (López Turley, 2002). These studies suggest that the migration of affluent blacks to suburban areas may be driven by relative deprivation and the need to be among peers for inspiration while providing positive role models for the aspiring youth.

These studies also prove the futility of the Group Areas Act of 1950 and advent of migrant labour. When there is fraternal relative deprivation, disturbances are

likely to occur (Chandra and Foster, 2005). The disturbances may result in protest (Schmitt and Maes, 2002; Bourguignon *et al*, 2006) or violence stemming from a subgroup's sense of shared identity and grievances (Caprioli, 2005). Egoistic relative deprivation results in emotional stress (Schmitt and Maes, 2002); a negative impact on well-being (Bourguignon *et al*, 2006) and poor physical and mental health (López Turley, 2002; Schmitt and Maes, 2002). People may, however, respond to the negative psychological effects of relative deprivation by trying harder to succeed to improve their quality of life (López Turley, 2002; Liao, Fu and Yi, 2005). The number of successful black people during the apartheid era bears testimony to this finding. The current literature does outright suggest that apartheid could not have survived for very long.

Sociological research has linked relative deprivation with social protest, violent crime, property crime and drug use (López Turley, 2002). Relative deprivation has an impact on identity (Tougas *et al*, 2004). Schmitt and Maes (2002) suggest that fraternal deprivation is a risk factor for social peace and mostly results in protest. López Turley (2002) refers to a study by Canache (1996), which found that poor Hondurans living in wealthy neighbourhoods experienced greater frustration and discontent and supported political violence more than poor Hondurans living in poor neighbourhoods. Pedersen (2004) suggests that relative deprivation has latent psychic, psychosocial and possibly psychosomatic consequences that might flow from large disparities in the command over economic resources across a population. He further argues that relatively deprived individuals suffer both consciously and subconsciously from an internalised feeling of failure and the potential loss of self-respect. This

suffering could explain the normalisation of society where affluent blacks try to regain their sense of self-worth by acquiring assets that display their success and earns them respect.

Public health studies have linked relative deprivation to negative effects on stress, depression, heart disease, high blood pressure, suicide, homicide, eating habits, alcohol abuse and mortality (Szwarcwald, Bastos, Viacava and Tavares de Andrade, 1999; López Turley, 2002; Ziller, 2004), and self-esteem (Tougas *et al*, 2004). It has also been found in some studies that emotional stress is symptomatic of egoistic relative deprivation while protest is mostly a consequence of fraternal deprivation (Schmitt and Maes, 2002). It is therefore plausible that the first phase of our democracy resulted from fraternal relative deprivation when the collective black majority fought apartheid. The second phase is possibly largely fuelled by egoistic relative deprivation as individuals attempt to rank themselves in a normalised society. Although Chandra and Foster (2005) suggest that evidence of the dismissal of relative deprivation by sociologists as a possible driver of unrest in 1960s America exists, Appelgryn and Bornman (1996) argue that their research on relative deprivation in pre-1994 South Africa explains the political unrest and concomitant levels of discontent experienced in that era. Schmitt and Maes (2002) argue, based on their study, that illegitimate privileges are linked with feelings of existential guilt. The results of a similar study in South Africa would be quite interesting especially given our history of apartheid.

Quinn (2006) suggests that governments have a role to play in reducing the negative effects of relative deprivation. Duclos (2000) argues that the Gini coefficient is positively related to relative deprivation. The higher the Gini coefficient, as is the case in South Africa, the higher is the level of relative deprivation. It is therefore in the best interest of the South African government to devise programmes aimed at reducing the income/inequality gap between the rich and the poor. In his research, James (2006) opines that political reforms that advance equity in economic structures and thus the equalisation of living standards may be required as a matter of justice in order to reduce relative deprivation and avoid an extremely explosive socio-political situation (Langer, 2005). The question that needs to be investigated further is the state of the South African economy and the attitudes that affluent blacks have towards the country. The investigation will be incomplete without a look at studies of relative deprivation in developing countries.

2.2.6 The Effects of Relative Deprivation in Developing Countries

Several studies of relative deprivation were done in developing countries including Nepal, India, Mexico, the Ivory Coast and South Africa. In a study of the rising Mexico-US migration between the 1980's to the early 1990's, Quinn (2006) suggests that the increase in migration was because of relative deprivation felt by non-migrant households in Mexican communities. Quinn's study seems to negate neoclassical migration models, which suggest that migration is primarily a function of wage differentials (Harris and Todaro, 1970) where people migrate because the expected destination wage is greater than the origin wage.

In the absence of wage differentials, Harris and Todaro (1970) propose that individuals in the origin area overestimate the probability of getting a higher income job in the destination area due to error in expectations as a result of incorrect information or “herd” behaviour among migrants (Bauer, Epstein and Gang, 2002). Quinn (2006) reports that wage differentials and similar pull theories dismiss the level of inequality in a community as a significant factor in influencing migration. However, studies have found that communities with the highest migration rates are those with high income inequality that results in relative deprivation (Quinn, 2006). In the Mexican case, Quinn (2006) argues that wage differentials (a pull factor) resulted in the Mexican-US migration while relative deprivation (a push factor) resulted in intra-Mexico migration. As a developing country, the South African government will experience rural-urban migration within South African borders due to relative deprivation unless strategies are devised to reduce income inequality in all South African communities.

In a study of socio-economic conditions of lower caste women in India, Deshpande (2002) argues that these women are worst off because of relative deprivation resulting from low levels of autonomy and education, and greater exposure to domestic violence. Deshpande (2002) suggests that autonomy is dependent, in part, on education levels in developing countries. According to the study, the most obvious implication of low educational attainment for women in India is the persistence of a low income earning capability which results in material deprivation, which leads to a further neglect of women (Deshpande, 2002). The neglect and lower standards of living increases the prevalence of

domestic violence (Deshpande, 2002). Although the caste system and the attendant discrimination are unique to India, South Africa can glean valuable insights into the discrimination-relative deprivation relationship studied in India and the issues of rural South African women who face similar challenges.

Using results of a study of the economic liberalisation of Nepal, Deraniyagala (2005) argues that there is a strong correlation between relative deprivation and the intensity of conflict. Recent literature posits that economic inequality is a key predictor of violent conflict (Deraniyagala, 2005). According to Stewart (2000), “horizontal inequality” (inequality between social groups such as ethnic groups in terms of access to income and assets, access to public employment and access to public services) is a better predictor of civil war than “vertical inequality” (based on individuals and captured by conventional measures such as Gini coefficients). The incidence of income poverty is mostly a rural phenomenon and is discernible using geographical location, caste and ethnicity (Deraniyagala, 2005). The relative deprivation arising from horizontal inequalities can be likened to the South African example where a divide on race and access to resources caused relative deprivation (Appelgryn and Bornman, 1996). The Nepalese study also showed that poverty and relative deprivation were linked to patterns of land ownership with the consequence that a small proportion of landowners have held the bulk of agricultural land granted to them for performing various administrative functions for the state (Deraniyagala, 2005). Deraniyagala (2005) posits that marginal and small landowners subsequently cannot survive on the income generated from their allocated land, thus leaving the majority of the population in poverty with no option but to

support the Maoist rebels seeking to address inequalities. The Nepali land ownership issue is reminiscent of all developing countries where land reform is a hotly debated issue, especially considering South Africa's land reform and the Zimbabwe debacle.

In a study of income inequality and homicide rates in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Szwarcwald *et al* (1999) found that the latter are closely associated income inequality than health indicators such as infant mortality, life expectancy and mortality that have been researched in most studies. In their study, Szwarcwald *et al* (1999) argue that underinvestment in human capital in the metropolitan areas of Rio de Janeiro resulted in income inequality and the establishment of slums, which subsequently led to feelings of relative deprivation between city dwellers in proper housing and those living in slums. Relatively deprived youths from low-income families are lured into gangsterism and the drug trade, resulting in increased homicide rates (Szwarcwald *et al*, 1999). Since both Brazil and South Africa have relatively high Gini coefficients of 0.57 and 0.65 respectively (Regional Economic Focus, 2005), the homicide rates and general crime statistics in South Africa could be symptomatic of the income inequality issues as found in the Brazilian study.

Langer (2005) provides further evidence of the inequality/conflict relationship using the "theory of relative deprivation" to underpin his study of the conflict in the Ivory Coast, and suggests that socio-economic horizontal inequalities at the mass level and severe political horizontal inequalities at the elite level are responsible for the civil war in that country. Langer (2005) further argues that

ethnic tensions and conflicts between locals and foreign and internal migrants over land and economic issues in both the rural and urban areas of the south started to erupt in the 1980s and have evolved along ethnic lines. In such a political environment, socio-economic horizontal inequalities and grievances at the mass level provide a fertile context for violent group mobilisation (Deraniyagala, 2005; Langer, 2005).

In South Africa, Moller (2001) argues that disparities in living standards have become more visible and have fuelled feelings of relative deprivation. She further suggests that feelings of relative deprivation may be fuelled by moral outrage that black people are not advancing faster in the democratic dispensation as previously envisaged. De la Rey and Raju (1996) argue in their pre-1994 study that the policy of apartheid resulted in a hierarchy of oppression with white people on top, Indians and Coloureds in the middle and black people at the bottom. The ranking resulted in ethnic classification being a major factor in the distribution of rewards, such as work opportunities, salaries, housing and personal worth (Appelgryn and Nieuwoudt, 1988). In that era, relative deprivation played a more crucial role than perceptions of intergroup differences in predicting socially related behaviour.

Appelgryn and Nieuwoudt (1988) also found in their study that black people experienced more social, economic and political relative deprivation as individuals and as an ethnic group when comparing themselves with other racial groups in South Africa, especially Afrikaans-speaking whites. In a later study, Van Dyk and Nieuwoudt (1990) found that rural Afrikaans-speaking white

women started feeling relative deprivation on the social, economic and political fronts as black people gradually gained political advantage leading to the 1994 elections. Van Dyk and Nieuwoudt (1990) argue that the relative deprivation felt by these women resulted from a comparison of their past and future to those of black people. The studies imply that black people have always had a long way to go towards establishing equality with other races and that relative deprivation is the key to understanding the social behaviour of black people as a group in South Africa. These studies also show that the decrease in relative deprivation feelings amongst black people occurred concomitantly with the increase in feelings of relative deprivation amongst rural Afrikaans-speaking women as political power shifted.

When considering the fate of affluent black South Africans, Moller (2001) states that better educated black people are more likely to feel relative deprivation as second-class citizens in their own country than the uneducated masses. The Moller study finding corroborates an earlier study by Appelgryn and Nieuwoudt (1988), which shows that higher educational qualification amongst black people, was highly associated with a negative attitude towards Afrikaans-speaking whites because the latter are viewed as oppressors. It is therefore vital to explore relative deprivation, amongst the affluent black people in particular, to corroborate or dispute evidence shown by Appelgryn and Nieuwoudt in 1988, Van Dyk and Nieuwoudt in 1990, de la Rey and Raju in 1996 and Moller in 2001. Since the political pendulum has swung in the favour of black people post 1994, relative deprivation research amongst affluent black people has become vital as van Dyk and Nieuwoudt (1990) argue that white people are now

relatively deprived. It is partly in light of the foregoing authors' work that the educated affluent black South Africans are the target population for this research.

2.2.7 Conclusion

The preceding text has defined relative deprivation; its effects and the studies conducted, and most importantly studies in the developing world. The theory of relative deprivation has been used to understand the South African political, social and economic landscape as shown by the works of Appelgryn and Nieuwoudt in 1988, Van Dyk and Nieuwoudt in 1990, Appelgryn and Bornman in 1996, De la Rey and Raju in 1996 and, more recently, Moller in 2001. The main question that remains, despite the foregoing research, is whether relative deprivation persists amongst affluent black South Africans. If relative deprivation persists, there is a need to define its nature (egoistic or fraternal), the reference individuals or groups, the reasons for its persistence and how it manifests. The research is required to establish how far target group have come in our new democracy and determine whether ghosts of apartheid have been exorcised.

The review will be incomplete without an understanding of the concept of lifestyle and its link to relative deprivation as suggested by Halleröd (2006). To this end, the next section discusses the theory of lifestyle, its definition and the lifestyle research conducted around the world.

2.3 Lifestyle

2.3.1 Introduction

The understanding of the concept of lifestyle is core to the understanding of the behaviour of people in any social context. It is important to understand how people perceive themselves (individual psychology) (Stewart, 2006; Stewart and Stewart, 2007) and how they interact with the environment they inhabit (environmental psychology) (Stewart, 2006), and how the society and culture affects their decisions (social anthropology) (Liao, Fu and Yi, 2005).

This section starts by defining lifestyle and its links to personal and group identify formation and consumption choice, using the most recent literature. The section discusses the effect of lifestyle choice using studies from different countries and draws conclusions from the research results. The section concludes by examining results of studies from developing countries with similar challenges to South Africa and what these results mean for the current research conducted amongst affluent black people in South Africa.

2.3.2 Definition of Lifestyle

“Lifestyle is a pattern of (behavioural) choices made from the alternatives that are available to people according to their socio-economic circumstances and to the ease with which they are able to choose certain ones over others” (Ioannou, 2005, p265). Lifestyle may also be defined as a pattern in which people live and spend time and money (Vyncke, 2002) or as any distinctive and therefore recognisable mode of living (Tzamalouka, Parlalis, Soutlatou, Papadakaki and Chliaoutakis, 2007). Lifestyle is a complex compound of culture, values,

demographics, social position, family, reference groups, personality, motivation, cognition, and learning (Shieh and Cheng, 2007). Lifestyle is not just a set of daily behaviours but an incorporation of the socio-cultural dimension of these behaviours (Ioannou, 2005), which people experience as they pursue the tasks of family, work and community (Stewart, 2007). Lifestyle does not refer merely to risk behaviours but also to the interplay of social circumstances and behaviours (Ioannou, 2005).

Lifestyle is primarily a function of a consumer's values (Vyncke, 2002) and is the material expression of a person's identity (Wilska, 2002). Notions of what and who you are, as well as what and who you are not, only become meaningful and significant through interaction with others (MacRae, 2004), as is the case with relative deprivation. Wilska (2002) further asserts that lifestyles are fragmented, stylised practices that are in a constant state of agitation without necessarily assuming any particular order. Although many variables influence lifestyle, Stewart and Stewart (2006) argue that the family of origin is especially significant in shaping children's orientations in life. The lifestyle of an individual signals to others their taste, knowledge, cultural allegiances and consumer choices to enhance or detract social standing (MacRae, 2004). This is in line with the need to establish rank as suggested by Frank (1985) in López Turley (2002) through social comparison with similar others (Appelgryn and Bornman, 1996).

According to Vyncke (2002), lifestyle can be explained as a combination of a person's activities (manifest actions like work, shopping, sports and

entertainment), interests (degree of excitement that accompanies both special and continuing attention to objects, events or topics like family, home, job, community, recreation, fashion, food and media) and opinions (descriptive beliefs regarding oneself, social issues, politics, business and economics). The alternative view is that people choose certain lifestyles to achieve a sense of accomplishment, equality, self-respect and social recognition (Vyncke, 2002) or as a means for creating hierarchical distinctions both between and within groups while also reflecting and legitimising divisions within the social world (MacRae, 2004). The observation of lifestyle helps researchers make sense of what people do, why they do it and the relative impact and meaning of their actions to themselves and others. In this research, the activities, interests and opinions approach to defining lifestyle is adopted. It is these attributes of lifestyle that will be examined to explain respondents' decisions regarding their consumption of goods and services.

Research reveals that lifestyles are premised on psychographics (Vyncke, 2002). This may perhaps explain why simple demographic segmentations reveal nothing about the motives underlying people's consumption decisions. Knowledge of people's lifestyles provides a door into their thought patterns, therefore resulting in effective interaction and communication. If psychographics reveal the motives of people's actions, then lifestyle is the display of those motives to the world. According to Stewart (2007), interpersonal experiences shape the individual's orientation toward others and to the tasks of life. Liu and Li (2006) posit that people interact more with members of their own group who are in the same social position and have common social experiences and roles,

and similar attributes and attitudes. It is therefore through lifestyle choices that people decide on their identity, and the related consumption patterns that define the chosen identity (Wilska, 2002).

When research on consumption is carefully considered, two schools of thought emerge as explanations for goods and services consumed. The current raging debate among individual psychology professionals pertains to the extent to which consumption is conscious or unconscious. The one side of the argument asserts that unconscious, automatic influences are the primary drivers of judgment regarding the choice of goods and services consumed (Simonson, 2005) and these influences are automatically activated by a multitude of environmental cues taking place outside conscious awareness (Dijksterhuis, Smith, Van Baaren and Wigboldus, 2005). This school of thought implies that consumption is not entirely driven by needs and wants identified, but by the environment in which individuals find themselves. Extending the argument further, this school of thought implies that individuals' activities, interests and opinions, hence lifestyles, are shaped by the environment they choose or find themselves in.

While Chartrand and Bargh (1996) present a counter argument using a study which found that the results of conscious and unconscious goal setting were proven to be identical, thus suggesting that people most often do plan their purchases carefully according to set goals, consumption decisions may still be influenced by stimuli other than rational thought. In their research on the "perception-behaviour link", Dijksterhuis *et al* (2005) prove that mere perception

of the social environment leads people to engage in corresponding behaviour. Perception often affects behaviour directly and unconsciously, causing individuals to do what they see (Dijksterhuis *et al*, 2005). An individual who moves into an upmarket suburb will adopt the lifestyle of that environment, and the activities, interests and opinions will mimic the new environment over time. The emergent lifestyle is affected by environmental variables (Stewart, 2006), implying that behaviour is often highly imitative and contagious.

People strongly adjust their behaviour to that of the immediate social environment, without even being aware of it. Therefore, lifestyle choices are cognitive schemes in response to the perceived environment, personal biology, and genetics (Stoltz and Kern, 2007). The implication of the latter argument may explain the behaviour of black people in previously white suburbs where they seemingly mimic the behaviour of whites, in terms of activities, interests and opinions, by virtue of proximity and channel their energies automatically towards unconsciously achieving equality. As part of these closed communities, people gradually develop similar lifestyles and status identification (Liu and Li, 2006). It is important to emphasise that the adoption of the lifestyle prevalent in the suburb results from imitative behaviour while the move to the suburbs may be caused by relative deprivation.

It can be argued that conscious consumption of some goods, however, is required in order to attain a desired lifestyle, especially when such goods are important and expensive (Dijksterhuis *et al*, 2005). Wilska (2002), however, warns that some individuals do not consider consumption as important and, as

a result, they may base their identities on something totally different. It would then be inaccurate to base conclusions regarding their lifestyle based on their consumption. Whether the choice of lifestyle is conscious or unconscious, the mere exposure to an environment may influence the identity that one chooses via their consumption patterns even though some of the decisions may be conscious and highly intrapersonal (Dijksterhuis *et al*, 2005). Choosing the neighbourhood of the desired lifestyle will ensure that all unconscious purchases are in line with the desired lifestyle by default because outlets sell goods and services as informed by the research done on neighbourhood demographics and the socio-economic status of the prospective consumers (Drukker and Van Os, 2003). Therefore the choice of lifestyle may explain the move away from relatively deprived neighbourhoods which comprise increasing numbers of neighbours of a dissimilar social character (Thorkild, 2006) in terms of activities, interests and opinions in search of a desired lifestyle in privileged neighbourhoods.

There is thus, perhaps, a link between relative deprivation and lifestyle choice, especially considering the migration patterns of blacks from townships to suburban areas previously reserved for white South Africans. The activities, interests and opinions (Vyncke, 2002) of the migrants are then unconsciously shaped by the new environments in which they find themselves. What then are the effects of lifestyle choice? The following section refers to studies that reveal the effects of lifestyle choices.

2.3.3 The Effects of Lifestyle Choice

Lifestyle choice has been studied extensively in many disciplines, including marketing, medicine, individual psychology and sociology. Lifestyle is a concept frequently employed within the area of health promotion (Ioannou, 2005). Physical, psychological, and socio-environmental factors resulting in unhealthy lifestyles such as smoking, excessive alcohol use, low levels of physical exercise, or being overweight or obese may provoke chronic diseases or worsen an individual's health status over time (Van Gool, Kempen, Bosma, van Boxtel, Jolles and van Eijk, 2006) and generally cause poor health (Davidsdottir, 2006; Tzamalouka *et al*, 2007) as a result of the interplay of social circumstances and behaviours (Ioannou, 2005). Davidsdottir (2006) argues that lifestyle matters for physical health and that negative lifestyles, like alcoholism, have been associated with various health problems including cancer, pancreatitis, liver problems, heart disease and stroke. Certain positive lifestyle habits like regular exercise have been found to be beneficial to mental health (Dzokoto, Hicks, and Miller, 2007). Stewart and Stewart (2006) suppose that striving for superiority and significance without contributing to the welfare of others leads to an unhealthy lifestyle and eventually to psychological dysfunction.

In their study, Stewart and Stewart (2006) argue that there is a significantly greater materialism and hypercompetitiveness among people with a higher need to excel over others. The materialism arises from the notion that acquiring money or possessions provides tangible and outwardly visible evidence of excellence or success. Hypercompetitiveness suggests that individuals perceive

contests in ordinary daily activities and feel they need to win such contests to help them maintain feelings of effectiveness, competence, or superiority (Stewart and Stewart, 2006). Triandis (2001) suggests that these individuals thrive in a culture of vertical individualism where people do their own thing and strive to be the best. These negative lifestyle choices are a broad indicator of family health or dysfunction and the United States, because of their competitive nature and individualism, has the highest overall prevalence rates of all disorders, particularly with respect to anxiety and mood disorders (Stewart and Stewart, 2006).

Lifestyle has also been successfully applied in driving behaviour research and car crash risk assessment (Tzamalouka *et al*, 2007). Specific lifestyle patterns have also emerged as promoters of different forms of partner violence among cohabiting partners in Greece whilst traditional and religious lifestyle appears to have a protective effect against the occurrence of partner violence (Tzamalouka *et al*, 2007). Literature provides several links either between alcohol or drug use and violence perpetration or between alcohol or drug use and violence victimization (Tzamalouka *et al*, 2007). A US study by Ellison and Anderson (2001) in Tzamalouka *et al* (2007), confirms that, irrespective of gender, regular attendance of religious services is negatively associated with committing domestic violence. Therefore, a life lived on spiritual principles contributes to a positive lifestyle. All studies seemingly confirm that lifestyle affects behaviour and consequently consumption of goods and services. Therefore, it is important to understand the consumption-lifestyle link and how individuals or groups make lifestyle choices.

When considering the effects of lifestyle on individuals or groups in society, it can be concluded that goods and services consumed determine the identity of the consumer. The identity of the consumer then informs the lifestyle that consumer will adopt *ceteris paribus*. The meaning attached to a lifestyle is best expressed by visible consumption (Wilska, 2002; Stewart and Stewart, 2006) and provides information about the value they place on conformity and differences (Thorkild, 2006). Following this logic, the consumer's income, which determines the range of goods and services that may be bought, decides the lifestyle that may be adopted. Lifestyles that emphasise competition and excellence appear within the movement toward a global economy and in the increasing levels of materialism and consumerism noted in recent years (Stewart and Stewart, 2006).

Therefore, the need to express a particular lifestyle creates desires for particular consumer goods and a commensurate level of income. Identities that are based, for instance, on collective social movements often manifest themselves via consumption (Wilska, 2002). The increased employment and income levels amongst affluent black South Africans as a group should manifest through changing and increased consumption of utilitarian and hedonistic goods. The excessiveness of consumption will accelerate as people quickly take their positions on confirmation by individuals of similar lifestyles and social standing (Thorkild, 2006). The confirmation suggests that the accelerating consumption is by people who have the means but have been denied access as a result of relative deprivation.

Relatively deprived individuals will therefore consume products that alter their identity positively. The new identity will manifest in the lifestyle they adopt and enable individuals of a similar demographic and socio-economic classification, with similar tastes, status identification and norms, to live comfortably amongst peers thus forming groups of relatively closed social strata in a broader sense (Liu and Li, 2006; Thorkild, 2006). Since socio-economic and demographic factors have a strong effect on lifestyles (Wilska, 2002), the accumulation of material possessions by affluent black South Africans could be a conscious effort to change their identity in line with their desired lifestyle, and motivated by feelings of relative deprivation.

As long as self-esteem is gained from accumulating material possessions previously beyond the reach of most blacks, the question of the link between relative deprivation and lifestyle choice in South Africa will remain a topical issue. The question for South Africa is whether the consumption amongst black South Africans is individually (idiocentric) or collectively (allocentric) (Triandis, 2001) motivated. The nature of the motivation will speak to the egoistic or fraternal nature of the underlying reasons for consumption with a possible link to relevant relative deprivation feelings.

The consumption-identity-lifestyle causality is arguably turned on its head in South Africa. All the apartheid laws were geared towards ensuring that the environmental proximity effects of lifestyle changes (Dijksterhuis *et al*, 2005) and the unconscious lifestyle choices (Simonson, 2005) were avoided by racial

separation. Wider physical, social, and cultural contexts in which people and their families are embedded may affect access to opportunities that are central for meeting life tasks (Stewart, 2006). The limited interaction between blacks and whites allowed the former to observe the lifestyles of the latter, thereby creating a yearning for the same lifestyle, thus inverting the causality. Some intervening phenomenon is responsible for this change in causality. Hence the exploration of the relative deprivation-lifestyle choice link as a plausible theory to explain the conspicuous consumption patterns of affluent black South Africans. In order to bring the issues of lifestyle choice closer to the South African scenario, the next section discusses lifestyle choice in developing countries.

2.3.4 The Effects of Lifestyle Choice in Developing Countries

The effect of lifestyle choice in the developing world has been explored in research done in countries in Asia, Eastern Europe, South America and Africa. The studies have explored different aspect of lifestyle choice ranging from social stratification, health and consumption. The research mentioned in this section is selected in order to provide a starting point for the investigation of lifestyle choice amongst affluent blacks in South Africa.

In a study conducted in China, Liu and Li (2006) found that people in closed communities gradually develop similar lifestyles and status identification. The concept of lifestyle has been used to study social stratification by hierarchy or status group based on lifestyle and social prestige as opposed to economic class in China. Liu and Li (2006) argue that the source of distribution of power within a collective is the hierarchy based on lifestyle and social prestige. The

social class and power of an individual is displayed through the consumption processes such as living, clothing, dining and transportation. These consumption processes are part of the particular tendencies embodied in the thoughts and behaviours of people from a certain social class in their daily life (also referred to as habitus), which results in class formation in society (Liu and Li, 2006).

Liu and Li (2006) argue that social inequality has led to the rise individualism and the attendant issues of personal taste, choice, lifestyle and commitment that outweigh traditional social stratification values. The study found that social stratification in the Chinese urban society was based on the dimensions of residence, interaction and identification, and not on lifestyle (Liu and Li, 2006). The study suggests that Chinese communities are clustered around the choices of residence and the interaction and identification with people in those residential areas, and not necessarily on lifestyles. The implication is that lifestyle is determined by residence choice and consumption, and that society has a bigger influence on social stratification than individual lifestyle choices. The study finding is typical of the Asian culture, which is reportedly collectivistic, and in some ways similar to the African culture. The question that remains for the South African affluent blacks' situation is whether relative deprivation, egoistic or fraternal, determines their lifestyle choices.

Kauko (2006), in a study conducted in Randstadt, Holland, found that lifestyle and housing image determine housing consumption behaviour and residential mobility patterns. Consumers are most concerned about having a modern

dwelling and sufficient space in the surroundings, thus implying that standard tastes and mass-consumption still dominate the mind-set and behavioural patterns of the housing consumer. The study shows that Dutch consumers are not collectivistic in their consumption choices and that their living preferences are not based on idiosyncratic lifestyles that are dependent on the value orientations (Kauko, 2006). The motivation for residential preference and distribution amongst affluent blacks in South Africa may yield a similar or different result than the Dutch study.

In a study conducted by Samuelsen (2006) in Burkina Faso, the paradoxical discrepancies between images of modernity and urban lifestyles of the youth on the one hand and the tough socio-economic realities of their everyday life on the other has caused confusion in fighting HIV/Aids, thus lending credence to the environment's relationship to lifestyle. In a similar study conducted in Nigeria, Omorodion (2006) concludes that modernism and urbanism often lead to disorganisation in the lives of many people originating from traditional environments. In the communities of Gelegele and Ogulagha, poverty resulted in female adolescents being more prematurely sexually active than the males and became victims of older "richer" males who work for oil companies in the Niger Delta leading to unplanned and unwanted female pregnancies, illegal abortions and high exposure to sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS (Omorodion, 2006). These studies are documented proof of the environmental effects on lifestyle choices and relative deprivation, and the issues attendant in the modernisation of society.

2.3.5 Conclusion

When considering all the research on lifestyle as cited above, a number of common themes can be discerned to suggest that relatively deprived individuals or groups may use lifestyle choice as a leveraging mechanism to change their circumstances. Lifestyle has been linked largely to health consequences (Davidsdottir, 2006; Samuelsen, 2006; Van Gool, Kempen, Bosma, Van Boxtel, Jolles and Van Eijk, 2006; Tzamalouka *et al*, 2007) and many other consequences in sociological studies mentioned in the preceding sections. Lifestyle is reportedly the result of the interplay between people and the environment (Dijksterhuis *et al*, 2005; Simonson, 2005; Stoltz and Kern, 2007), and socio-economic factors (Wilska, 2002; Liu and Li, 2006; Thorkild, 2006).

Research conducted in the developing world, particularly in Greece, Holland and African countries reveals the kind of challenges that lifestyle poses for countries like South Africa. While lifestyle research on its own warrants extensive investigation and analysis, it is the relationship between lifestyle choice and relative deprivation that is the focus of this research. The question that remains is whether lifestyle has been linked to relative deprivation in any study done in the developed world, and most importantly in the developing world. Is there a link between relative deprivation and the lifestyle choices of affluent black South Africans? In the next section, an attempt is made at uncovering such research.

2.4 Studies Linking Relative Deprivation and Lifestyle Choice

On analysing the literature on relative deprivation, views from social psychologists and the studies conducted, a case can be made that relative deprivation can be linked to many personal and group dynamics. Halleröd (2006) argues that relative deprivation must be understood in relation to the ordinary lifestyle in the society to which the individual belongs. This argument establishes the theoretical link between relative deprivation and lifestyle.

In the preceding sections, relative deprivation has been linked to studies on migration patterns (based on race demographic measures) (Quinn, 2006), conflicts arising from income disparities (Szwarcwald *et al*, 1999; López Turley, 2002), inequality (Duclos, 2000), prejudice, health issues, political unrest and violence (Appelgryn and Bornman, 1996; López Turley, 2002; Schmitt and Maes, 2002; Chandra and Foster, 2005; Langer, 2005). The views of individual and environmental psychologists have been used to define lifestyle and its resultant effects in many studies conducted around the world.

There also have been some studies investigating the link between relative deprivation and consumption choices in countries like Finland, Britain and Sweden. In his research, Halleröd (2006) takes the view that people's consumption preferences are shaped to a larger degree by their economic conditions and that people have to forgo vital consumption because of lack of access to economic resources. The argument can be intuitively expanded to suggest that the more people earn, the more they will consume. Our social environment is saturated with advertising that promotes discrete lifestyles

(Webber, 2007). If individuals cannot consume goods and services commensurate with the lifestyles they expect, ill health may be a consequence (Yngwe *et al*, 2006). This argument links lifestyle choices to relative deprivation, as one must consume the artefacts of the lifestyle they expect to live.

Halleröd (2006) suggests that there is a close connection between economic circumstances, choice of reference group and consumption preferences. Individuals gradually adapt their preferences to what is economically achievable (Halleröd, 2006). Evidence shows that wealth measures such as housing, land and consumer durables provide a better indicator of relative deprivation than current income (Quinn, 2006). Affluent black South Africans seem to exhibit the characteristics required to consume the lifestyle accessories they have. López Turley (2002) refers to a study by Francis (1992), which found that clothing deprivation had a significant effect on the social participation of high school adolescents. In that study, children who did not have comparable clothing to their peers at school felt relatively deprived. This research emphasises the need to establish the order and timeline for the consumption of lifestyle goods and services. Relative deprivation seemingly permeates consumerism. In an economic upswing, as is the case in South Africa, the normalisation of consumerism means that relative deprivation is an integral part of consumerism (Webber, 2007).

In his Mexico-US migration study, Quinn (2006) observes that Mexican migrants in the US tend to purchase a disproportionate amount of consumer durables and that their households, back in Mexico, invest heavily in housing. These

consumption and migration patterns lead to the increasing relative deprivation of non-migrant households in Mexican communities (Quinn, 2006), as the benefit from having a family member working in the US is evident in the lifestyle choices and standard of living of the family living in Mexico. The argument can arguably be transferred into a South African context where a motivation for migration to urban areas may be influenced by relative deprivation. Relative deprivation may result in the relative affluence of families with migrant workers and the lifestyle that those families will adopt as a result of higher incomes earned by migrants in the country's cities.

As can be gathered from the literature found on the link between relative deprivation and lifestyle choice, there is a need to investigate the link further in the South African context. Halleröd, Larsson, Gordon and Ritakallio (2006) suggest that a better understanding of intra-household distribution of money and consumption is probably one way to gain a deeper understanding of relative deprivation. Again, this reiterates the need to understand whether components of relative deprivation amongst individuals or groups are present before arguing that these components influence lifestyle choice. The research needs to establish the reasons for the increased consumption by determining if there is a "catching up" phenomenon by the target population group.

In South Africa, 2.6 million affluent Blacks are responsible for 28% of South Africa's GDP and are collectively worth 180bn (Le Roux, 2007). The research seeks to answer the question whether there is evidence of the link between relative deprivation and the lifestyle choices (attitudes, interests, opinions and

mobility) of the affluent Blacks. If the link is established, the research will attempt to define the order and timeline of procurement of goods and services and possibly give insight into any underlying reasons. It is therefore argued that this research is required to enhance the debate and form the basis for further research to quantify the extent of the link.

2.5 Conclusion

All the literature accessed so far points to similarities in the South African situation as found in studies elsewhere in the world where relative deprivation affected the lifestyle choices of individuals or groups studied. It is in light of this background that relative deprivation must be explored to shed some light on the lifestyle choices of affluent black South Africans. The literature explored shows that relative deprivation does inform consumption choice. Consumption choice informs identity of the consumer. The identity of the consumer influences the lifestyle they choose to adopt. The existence of the link between relative deprivation and lifestyle choice is more important than the direction of causality between them.

The lifestyles of affluent black South Africans may be linked to a deprived past and the consumption patterns are merely an identity-definition exercise. These lifestyle choices are perhaps means to close the gap that was caused by apartheid between the core economy and peripheral Bantustans (Moller, 2001). It is for this reason that this research is required in order to establish whether the lifestyle choices of affluent black South Africans can be explained using relative deprivation theory.

3 Chapter 3: Research Questions

The literature has shown that a definition of relative deprivation without considering the psychological and socio-economic circumstances of individuals or groups is incomplete. These socio-economic and psychological circumstances provide a deeper understanding of the lifestyle of individuals or groups. In most studies, relative deprivation has been used to explain the lifestyle choices of individuals or groups that have been adopted to cope with their environments. The study conducted by Moller (2001) does refer to feelings of relative deprivation in South Africa according to national surveys conducted between 1983 and 1999 for the South African Quality-of-Life Trends Project. Appelgryn and Bornman (1996) also refer to studies on the existence of relative deprivation in South Africa pre and post the 1994 democratic elections. The question remains, however, whether, in the South African situation, relative deprivation feelings experienced by black South Africans in the period of the national surveys have resulted in the lifestyle choices of affluent black South Africans.

This exploratory research seeks to understand lifestyle choice from a relative deprivation theory perspective. Is there a link between relative deprivation and lifestyle choices of affluent black South Africans? To this end, the main questions that the research aims to address are:

1. Does relative deprivation persist amongst affluent black South Africans?
2. Is the relative deprivation amongst affluent black South Africans egoistic or fraternal?

3. Which individuals or groups of individuals form the reference groups against whom the affluent blacks compare themselves?
4. Do the affluent black South Africans see themselves as merely catching up to their perceived reference individuals or groups, or there are other reasons for the increased consumption of lifestyle consumer goods?
5. Is there evidence of relative deprivation in the lifestyle choices of affluent black group in South Africa?
6. What is the order of the procurement of lifestyle consumer goods?

The questions posed above have been chosen in order to understand the target population at a deeper level than market surveys. The first question seeks to understand whether relative deprivation still exists amongst affluent black South Africans. The question is aimed at ascertaining whether affluent black South Africans still feel relatively deprived post 1994, despite the material comfort levels they have attained. The second question delves into the source of the comparison. The question will reveal whether individuals are fighting for the equality between themselves as part of a group or as individuals seeking equality with other individuals of the reference group. The third question will establish the reference group against whom the individuals in the sample compare themselves or aspire to equal. The fourth question goes to the heart of the motivation for the rapid and conspicuous consumption that continues to befuddle and plague our government officials and economists. The question seeks to understand the continued extravagant lifestyles despite numerous attempts by the South African Reserve Bank to curb the trend using monetary policy. Having defined relative deprivation and established the reasons for the

lifestyle choices, the fourth question seeks to determine if there is a link between the two concepts, particularly in the case of affluent black South Africans. The last question is aimed at understanding the sequence of the acquisition of lifestyle goods and services. The reason for the question is to identify the order of importance of goods and services acquired by individuals in defining their lifestyle and the attendant reasons for the sequence. The last question is vital as it will enable businesses to take advantage of the lifestyle trends and the causal link, if any, and provide goods and services that are relevant for this demographic group in particular.

This research also aims to add another dimension to the debate on challenges facing the government, big business and economists in understanding what may be influencing lifestyle choices of affluent blacks in South Africa. While the affluent black South Africans are not the majority of the black population, the understanding of their attitudes, interests and opinions, and consequently, their behaviour, is crucial as they also form a reference group for other blacks to emulate. This population group arguably plays a significant role in determining the political and economic regimes of South Africa into the future, therefore the need to understand it is paramount.

4 Chapter 4: Research Methodology

4.1 Research Method Applied

The methodology that was chosen for this qualitative research is in-depth face-to-face interviews with a select group of affluent blacks of African descent in South Africa. This method was chosen because it enables detailed intimate discussions exploring thought processes that go into and feelings attached to the acquisition of material possessions by the target group. Exploring feelings of relative deprivation and lifestyle choice from interviewees who are educated and affluent needs careful phrasing of questions and analysis of both verbal and non-verbal communication.

A more pertinent reason is that studies show that when participants are confronted privately, ingratiation (a form of self-presentation) is avoided thus allowing honest feedback (Olson, Hafer, Couzens and Kramins, 2000). It is believed that the issues raised by economy watchers, especially the governor of the Reserve Bank, seem to suggest that black people, in general, display irresponsible financial behaviour but fail to address deeper psycho-social issues left by apartheid. It was, therefore, the intention of the research to unearth some of the deepest thoughts and feelings of the interviewees that were selected to participate, hence the choice of methodology.

The face-to-face interview situation was chosen because it fostered an environment of mutual trust between the interviewer and interviewee. The open-ended nature of the questions allowed the interviewee to lead the conversation

to useful insights that were perhaps unintended, but quite vital in understanding the motivations of the behaviours of individuals that were interviewed. The method was chosen because it also afforded the interviewer the opportunity to observe the interviewee's body language for further insights and line of questions. The interviewees were interviewed at their homes and places of their own choice, and at times convenient to them. The requirement for all interviews was that the chosen venues had to be conducive for the intended purpose and that there would be no interference for the duration of the interview. All interviews were scheduled for durations of 45 – 60 minutes and were recorded for later transcription into written text.

4.2 Definition of the Population

The target population for the research was affluent black South Africans of African descent born and resident in South Africa between the ages of 25 – 40 years who belonged to the higher end of the black middle class. The target population comprised people who are either self-employed or permanently employed in the first economy of South Africa. The population of interest for the research is part of the 2.6 million "Black Diamonds" by the University of Cape Town's Unilever Institute and is reportedly worth about R180bn, representing 28% of the total South Africans total spend (Le Roux, 2007). Nearly half live in suburbs previously inhabited only by whites with 70% residing in the financial hub province of Gauteng (Le Roux, 2007).

The current study targeted the "Black Diamonds" living in Gauteng who comprised civil servants, corporate employees and entrepreneurs. Preliminary enquiries and discussions on the research topic with potential members of the

target population indicated that the issue is topical and emotive as they feel that their true identity is not understood, and are that they are often misrepresented (Thorns, 2006).

4.2.1 Population Selection Criteria

The population was chosen because of the following reasons:

- Maturity and accomplishment - Members of the sample were typically mature and grounded, and had accumulated the desired basic consumption items (car, house and other durable consumer goods), including luxuries (expensive clothes, holidays, other houses and recreational goods). The interest for the research on this specific group arose from the question whether relative deprivation persists, despite the group having accumulated material possessions they unfairly lacked, desired and felt their reference group possessed (López Turley, 2002).
- Exposure - Members of the sample were exposed to other racial groups and had interacted with other races both on a personal and professional level. Exposure to other racial groups was assessed based on work history obtained from friends, family and colleagues of interviewees, as well as direct enquiry from interviewees. This was an important determinant as it spoke to familiarity with possible reference groups and the formation of mental comparisons required in establishing relative deprivation feelings. Relative deprivation cannot be explained without mention of a reference group as people do not suffer in an absolute way but compare themselves to others in similar situations (Merton and Kitt,

1950). Therefore, reference group familiarity is required to prove the persistence and nature of relative deprivation feelings.

- Life experience of pre- and post-apartheid South Africa - Members of the sample, because of their age, were exposed to both pre- and post-1994 South Africa and were resident in the country during that period. Each respondent had their own experience to relate regarding their journey from the old to the new South Africa, and had been employed or had run their own business for at least 5 years. They had wider exposure to the dynamics of South Africa and, because of their education, have opinions regarding the attendant issues facing the country. Since lifestyle is a combination of activities, interests and opinions (Vyncke, 2002) created over time, it is important to understand how South Africa's history has shaped the respondents' activities, interests and opinions into making their lifestyles choices.
- Propensity to relocate - Members of the sample live in suburban areas or could afford to do so. This is an important criterion when considering the growing wealth of black South Africans and the attendant choices of residence. The link between relative deprivation and migration patterns (mobility) is well documented (López Turley, 2002; Quinn, 2006) in current literature, and the impact of unresolved socio-political factors (Langer, 2005) on the stability of a country as a result of income inequality (Duclos, 2000) must be investigated. A move out of the township may also be an indicator of the growing idiocentrism (Triandis, 2001) amongst affluent Blacks causing a major cultural adjustment that results in less emphasis on a sharing culture and more on material

welfare (Le Roux, 2007). The migration also sheds light on the egoistic or fraternal nature of relative deprivation (Webber, 2007) if it is found to persist amongst units of analysis in the sample.

Individuals in the target population characteristically appreciate discussions on their material possessions and career aspirations, and were adequately sophisticated to provide meaningful engagement and understood the importance of this research.

4.3 Sampling

The nature of qualitative research demands that issues are discussed in depth with a few respondents. Although respondents in this study had intimate knowledge of the issues discussed, their responses could not be generalised to the rest of the population. Therefore, nonprobability sampling was chosen as the appropriate sampling technique to select the respondents. Nonprobability sampling is defined as a sampling technique where each sampling unit (respondent) is arbitrarily selected based on a researcher's personal judgement or convenience (Zikmund, 2003). For this study, judgemental nonprobability sampling was deemed appropriate as it allowed the researcher to select respondents based on personal judgement (Zikmund, 2003) using the population selection criteria presented in the preceding section as well as demographic measures of age, occupation, education and income.

Fifteen individuals were chosen for the research without any gender preferences or bias. The sample chosen met the requirements of the population selection criteria (maturity and accomplishment, exposure, experience of pre-

and post-apartheid South Africa and propensity to relocate) and the demographic criteria mentioned above. Before interviews, the respondents' level of education (tertiary education regarded as the minimum), material resources and possessions (car, house and other conspicuous durable consumer goods) and managerial level if formally employed (or directorship or full ownership of a registered company) were confirmed to ensure that the sample could engage effectively in the research process.

4.4 Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis for the research was the individual in the target population. The criterion for choosing the unit of analysis was because the individual feels relative deprivation due to perceived injustice in their environment. It is the individual who lacks an object, desires it, sees other individuals with that object and thinks it is feasible to obtain the object (López Turley, 2002). Relative deprivation is, at its most basic, on an individual level, hence the choice as the unit of analysis.

An individual's lifestyle is a combination of their activities, interests and opinions (Vyncke, 2002). The observation of an individual's lifestyle allows researchers to make sense of what people do, why they do it and the relative impact and meaning of their actions to themselves and other. Therefore, in order to understand lifestyle, the unit of analysis has to be the individual.

Since the individual is central to the understanding of both relative deprivation and lifestyle, it followed that the individual is the appropriate unit of analysis. It is also individuals that are responsible for the perceived "excessive" spending in

South Africa. Therefore, individuals must be studied in order to understand the possible link between relative deprivation and lifestyle amongst affluent black South Africans.

4.5 The Research Instrument Used

The research instrument used for the research was an interview guide (Appendix B) that incorporated probes grouped together to address the six main questions of the research as stated in the previous section. The interview guide was designed in such a way that the interviewer was able to capture salient points in answer to research questions explored in the course of each interview.

The guide was designed to ensure that all interviewees were probed on exactly the same issues and themes, and that all questions were answered fully. Patton (2002) argues that the guide ensures that the same basic lines of enquiry are pursued systematically with each individual interviewed and allows the interviewer to build a conversation spontaneously according to areas identified in the guide. The guide also promotes easier analysis of the results and the resultant insights. The interview guide, while vital for methodological effectiveness and control, was not made the main feature of the conversation in an attempt to create a relaxed atmosphere and improve the flow of the interview.

The interview guide was tested for grammar, language and clarity of probes using three respondents of the same demographics as the intended sample.

4.6 Data Collection

Due to the sensitive nature of the subject and to avoid possible ingratiation by the respondents (Olson, Hafer, Couzens and Kramins, 2000), no information regarding the subject of the interview or the proposed interview questions were distributed to the identified interviewees prior to the interview sessions. This was done to ensure that the respondents were not afforded the opportunity to form opinions, modify or rehearse their responses before sessions. The sensitivity of the subject and the contentious nature of possible responses, especially in the cultural context of black people, made the non-distribution of interview material and topic discussion before the interview an absolute condition of the success of the methodology applied and the integrity of the research result.

As typical of all face-to-face interviews, no written feedback was required from the interviewees for the duration of the interview in order to allow the respondents to apply their minds towards answering interview questions without distractions. Notes on salient points, wherever possible, were taken during interviews under each question posed. The interviewer ensured that the interview flowed and that interviewees were not interrupted while giving their responses to questions.

In order to ensure that interviewee comments were captured accurately, a recording device was used to record the proceedings of the interview and the exact comments of the interviewees. Patton (2002) reasons that failure to capture the exact words of the interviewee will invalidate any qualitative

research because it is the actual quotes of the individuals interviewed that provide the raw data. The use of the recording device enabled the interviewer to concentrate on non-verbal communication cues and the body language of the respondents during the interview. In cases where sensitive information was shared and the recording device was not used (at the request of the interviewee), thorough and comprehensive notes were taken.

The emphasis of the interview was on creating a guided conversation in a relaxed atmosphere to remove the barrier between the interviewer and the interviewee. The attempts to take verbatim notes seriously affects interactive nature of the face-to-face interview (Patton, 2002), therefore only strategic and focused notes were taken as a means of assuring the interviewee of the importance of their responses. In order to create this ideal and non-threatening environment, focus was deliberately removed from the interview instrument and the recording device.

After each interview, a post-interview review was conducted in order to capture details regarding the tone of the interview, the setting, the interviewee reactions to questions, the rapport between the interview participants and conduct of the interviewer. A contact summary was used to record interview details (Miles and Huberman, 1994). The review notes provided the context for the immediate interpretation of the interview and the quality of the information received (Patton, 2002), and these were also used to improve interviewer conduct in subsequent interviews. In cases where points made during the interview were unclear, post interview telephone calls were made to interviewees in order to

gain clarity on issues. The interviewer did not attempt to guess the meaning of interviewee responses and disregarded vague comments (missing data) in cases where follow up telephone calls or interviews could not be arranged.

4.7 Data Analysis

The recorded information collected from interviews was transcribed into written text, enriched with handwritten notes from the interviews and edited into a single document per interview. The information gathered was then coded for later retrieval and linking of data segments to form themes of relevant information. Reflective commentaries on aspects of information collected were written to facilitate deeper analysis of the issues raised in the interviews. Thematic content analysis was then used to analyse all data collected from interviews.

Once analysed, the information was grouped by the research's main questions in a systematic and coherent manner in answer to the questions posed. This was achieved by graphically mapping all individual responses to questions to distil common words and thoughts expressed in the recorded transcripts. The graphic mapping was done in order to reveal patterns and provide plausible reasons for the responses given by the interviewees. Conclusions were then drawn using the maps to arrive at the findings of the study.

4.8 Research Data Validity and Reliability

As a consequence of the nature of qualitative research, it is hard to convince the reader that the outcome of the study was rigorously evaluated and the procedures were followed faithfully (Merriam, 1998). In order to improve

interview techniques and the overall quality of the research, the supervisor was consulted to assess the interview guide and data gathering method. A mock interview with the supervisor was conducted before the research interviews in order to assess the potential success of the interview sessions.

The interviewer's membership of the sample population presented challenges in conducting a proper 'outsider' evaluation of the interviewee responses to questions. In order to ensure the validity and reliability of the data collected, and reduce researcher bias during the interview and data analysis, investigator triangulation (Patton, 2002) was applied to improve the validity of the research. To this end, the supervisor of the research, in her capacity as an experienced researcher, was consulted for guidance on the interview process, data collection and analysis, and the interpretation of the results of the study based on the transcripts from all interview recordings.

4.9 Limitations of the Research

The limitations of the research were as expected for all qualitative studies. The research sample did not have to be representative, as no inference would have been made from the research findings for the general population of affluent black South Africans. The research aimed to test evidence of relative deprivation and the existence of the link between the latter and lifestyle choices of affluent black South Africans.

A vital limitation of the research was that the information supplied by the respondents was accepted as correct. No verifications were done to confirm data on age, education, occupation and income levels. No identity documents,

educational qualification transcripts, appointment letters and payslips were requested to verify claims on age, education, occupation and income respectively. Therefore, affluence was based only on third party information, familiarity with the interviewee and direct observation based on material possessions.

Familiarity with the researcher may have led to possible self-presentation issues (ingratiation) on the side of interviewees through giving answers partial to pleasing the researcher. Lack of familiarity with some respondents, on the other hand, may have intimidated respondents to the extent that answers given were measured and some issues not defined in the required level of detail due to privacy concerns.

The triangulation effort could have been expanded further in order to improve the reliability of the research findings, especially considering the fact that the researcher fits the definition of the unit of analysis and consequently has strong opinions on the topic under investigation. However, time and financial constraints militated against the improvement of the triangulation effort.

5 Chapter 5: Results

5.1 Introduction

The purpose for this research was to find out whether there is a link between relative deprivation and the lifestyles choices of affluent black South Africans. In order to prove or disprove the existence of the link, the persistence of relative deprivation as defined in Chapter 2 had to be established amongst the respondents in the study. The lifestyles of the respondents were then explored using the consumption patterns identified as per definition of lifestyle in Chapter 2. As a final step in the interview sessions, the respondents who showed symptoms of relative deprivation were quizzed to tease out the extent to which relative deprivation influenced their consumption decisions.

This chapter presents results of the research from the interviews held with the fifteen respondents as proposed in the research methodology stated in the preceding chapter and in line with the research questions posed in Chapter 3. The chapter starts with a general results overview from all the respondents regarding the emotive issues discussed on underlying factors that drive black consumption behaviour and lifestyle choices. The results of the research are arranged according to the research questions that need to be addressed in the subsections that follow. Additional results are also discussed at the end of the chapter. The chapter concludes with a general statement of the trends in the results.

5.1.1 Research Question 1

Does relative deprivation persist amongst affluent black South Africans?

Reviewing the responses given to questions posed during the interviews can prove the existence of relative deprivation amongst the respondents interviewed. In order to do this, the definition of relative deprivation needs to be revisited in the context of the sample chosen for the research. Relative deprivation is a theoretical concept that is used within the social sciences to analyse contexts of perceived injustice and inequality (Halleröd, 2006). The existence or persistence of relative deprivation can be proven by analysing the interview responses for clues where each respondent (1) lacks an object, (2) desires it, (3) sees some other person(s) with that object, and (4) thinks it is feasible to obtain that object (López Turley, 2002). Relative deprivation is an unconscious feeling and the motivation to act in response to it is unconscious. In order to elicit these unconscious motivations, respondents were asked to single out a material item that they regarded as their favourite possession.

The reason for asking about the favourite possession was to elicit what items respondents value in their lives and why they value those items. The main aim is to find out what these items mean to them and also allow for an easier transition into finding out about the respondents' other material possessions, lifestyle, history and what decisions they have made in their lives to bring them to where they are in their careers. It is easier to get honest answers from respondents on the emotive issues that form the bulk of the research once trust has been established in the course of talking about what they value in their lives.

When all 15 respondents were asked about their favourite possession, nine regarded their houses as their favourite possession. The rest of the respondents chose their cars (2 respondents), shoes (1 respondent), business (1 respondent), paintings (1 respondent) and books (1 respondent) as their favourite possessions. In all but one of the cases reported above, the favourite possession is perceived as a way out of poverty, lack and desperation with the conditions during their childhood years, and as adults. In discussing the reasons for favourite possessions, the results show that all respondents suffered from feelings of relative deprivation as children as individuals within their families, societies as well as relative deprivation as a member of the black group in South Africa.

Their lives growing up were characterised by lack of some material possessions and the desire to have those possessions, accompanied by comparisons with individuals or groups that had what they felt they also deserved to have. Some respondents showed relative deprivation in the comments below:

“You grow up where your neighbour has a TV because their father used to work in the goldmines or the mother used to work as a domestic worker and her employers maybe gave her the TV, now because this is the only house with a TV in the neighbourhood – the whole street will come and watch the TV there; you will grow up wishing that you had a TV in your house. So I think that those dreams are from that kind of exposure.”

“At that time you see them as being better off than you are. If my parents had the same resources as the neighbours surely they will also have such things as TV’s.”

“It is because of the way we grew up, in poor environments. Our parent’s did not have cars and therefore it became a status symbol to own a car. Parents that had cars were somehow well off and they could afford to take their kids to boarding schools. We were never close to kids whose families had cars because they were rather prevented from playing with us in my community. It was because of social classes – we were seen as a lower class and therefore not worthy to play with the upper class kids.”

I did not have a TV and radio. So these are the things I thought I had to have so that I could be able to watch movies, news and all the stories that people where talking about.”

“I knew that it was something that not all of us could afford and you will always associate with another group that did not discuss such things just to avoid being in the discussion.” This result shows that relative deprivation may result in the redefinition of similar others if it becomes infeasible to acquire the desired goods.

Most respondents argue that these incidents in childhood and early adulthood, gave rise to the desire to have all the material possessions and associated benefits that they lacked in earlier life. Intra-community comparisons were rife

while growing up and all respondents shared their responses as shown below. The results show that the individual comparisons within the immediate community of black people were more pronounced than those across racial groups. Some of the comments were:

“I got into a mode of studying because I was surrounded by people who were perceived as achievers due to their level of education. By achievement they meant people with cars, houses and were married.” To this respondent, education the only way offered out of deprivation and lack. This was echoed by almost all respondents interviewed, hence the tertiary qualifications and continuous self-improvement.

“At the time there was this new breed of young people emerging, who drove BMWs and enjoying the finer things in life and I wanted to fit into that social circle to belong with this new breed of young people.” The life the respondent observed around him led him to buy his first car as soon as he could afford one so that he could join his contemporaries.

When growing up, most respondents simply believed that there had to be a better life than what they experienced. One respondent states, *“I have always been ambitious. I grew in poverty and promised myself that I will not live in poverty for the rest of my life.”* This view is shared by most respondents and it forms the basis of desiring a better life.

Most respondents are unwilling to admit that they have not completely escaped from their relatively deprived past despite their relative affluence and personal achievement. However, answers to questions regarding the respondents' lives and opinions about general trends amongst other black people reveal that most respondents still harbour feelings of relative deprivation. One respondent commented that, *"we as black people have a sudden madness for all these things because we never had any of the things that we have access to now"* This comment was repeated in the opinions of almost all respondents.

While admitting past relative deprivation, some respondents genuinely feel they are not relatively deprived currently and said the following:

"I am content with my life the way it is right now and I am happy."

"When my friends judge me based on my lack of material things and somehow think that they are better than me because of that, I am honestly not bothered. I am not going to start and be intimidated by such things."

"I think I have everything that I need, but if I was to dream I would like to have a convertible and it is not because it will define me but I would just like to drive it for the thrill of it."

All the respondents interviewed come from disadvantaged backgrounds and these backgrounds have shaped their current behaviour. The results show that all respondents were relatively deprived in the past. However, not all respondents presently feel relatively deprived as shown in the expressions

above. The results show that, in general, relative deprivation persists in the lives of most respondents interviewed.

5.1.2 Research Question 2

Is the relative deprivation amongst affluent black South Africans egoistic or fraternal?

In order to decide whether relative deprivation amongst affluent black South Africans is egoistic or fraternal, the basis for comparison needs to be ascertained. Relative deprivation is the result of an individual or members of a group comparing themselves to other individuals or other members of a reference group. Egoistic relative deprivation is felt by the individual who compares his or her personal situation with that of another individual while fraternal relative deprivation refers to an individual's comparison of his/her in-group with an out-group.

The results show that the relative deprivation that persists as shown in the previous section results mostly from individuals comparing themselves with other individuals. All respondents compare themselves with other individuals although a few also went on to compare black people with other races or groups of friends or family with similar friends or families. There is, however, a stronger sense of care for the individual's feelings of deprivation as shown in the comments below:

"I think it comes from me seeing people that I like and admire and have always wanted to find out what drives them to be where they are. I have always told myself that I want to be where they are."

“If I see someone driving a convertible I also want to get it and end up putting a higher residual on that vehicle just to belong to a certain league.”

“This creates a next layer of thinking that I must be like that guy.”

“She comes from a small town in the Eastern Cape – that is something we have in common because I also come from a small town in the Witbank.” The respondent in this case compares herself to another individual who has the possessions and career attributes that she lacks, desires and thinks she can attain.

There are, however, indications that fraternal relative deprivation also persists within the affluent black group in South Africa. Of the fifteen respondents, four respondents showed feelings of fraternal relative deprivation. It should be noted, however, that these four respondents also had strong egoistic relative deprivation feelings. One respondent commented, *“we as black people have a sudden madness for all these things because we never had any of the things that we have access to now”*

The results show that, overall, all respondents show signs of egoistic relative deprivation. All respondents expressed compared themselves to other similar individuals. Although there were elements of fraternal relative deprivation, these were overshadowed by individual-to-individual comparisons.

5.1.3 Research Question 3

Which individuals or groups of individuals form the reference groups against whom the affluent blacks compare themselves?

Frank (1985) in López Turley (2002, p673) posits, “we come into the world equipped with a nervous system that worries about rank”. The quote implies that there is a natural tendency for individuals to compare their lot to that of similar others in their environment. Social comparison is important in establishing whether individuals or groups feel relatively deprived. In the definition of relative deprivation, an individual or group must see someone else who has what they lack and desire in order to prove relative deprivation.

The results show that respondents had or desired to have items that other people of their social circle or intended social circle had. The comparative individuals against whom the respondents compare themselves vary but can be grouped according to a few broad categories across societies. They compare themselves with:

- Other people in the books they read

“I used to read novels and books. To me things that I read about were things that seemed to be the world for me.”

- TV programmes they watch

“CNN used to advertise CNN partner hotels. There was a great advert showing a businessman which said something like, ‘You are businessman. You have travelled to a meeting in Belgium, you stay at the partner hotels like Hilton, Marriott whatever’ and that will resonate well with me because that is the life I could have and I wanted to afford it.”

- People in lifestyle magazines

"I used to read a lot of magazines (Tribute Magazine while it was still in its prime). I used to follow the lives of guys like Mike Mangena, Marks Maponyane, Don Ncube, Mr. Moseneke – all those guys came up as my role models and I am proud to this day because they are still up there and making it so it means theirs was a sustainable prosperity."

- Other black people in the neighbourhoods in which they grew up

One respondent admitted to comparing himself with *"mainly friends and people in the neighbourhood."*

- World standards as a result of globalisation

One of the respondents claims that people compare themselves against *"world standards and friends' standards. People are led by fashion standards and what they consider to be an in thing."* PN

- Other successful black people that are paraded in all media in South Africa.

One respondent states, *"People watch TV and people see guys like Tokyo (Sexwale). People look up to him and think if he can do it then they can also do it."*

When all respondents were pressed to physically describe people against whom they compared themselves, most respondents de-emphasised race as a descriptor of a relatively advantaged person or group in South Africa but emphasised the similarity with their reference individual in terms of socio-economic class. On being quizzed about whites being used as a benchmark and reference group, one respondent replied that it is *"very unfortunate because*

not all whites are successful and not all whites are smart. In fact, I believe that I am doing better than most whites. I have never considered whites as a special breed.”

The general response is that there are sufficient competitive and comparative pressures within the affluent black group to offset the impact of race as a reference point and whites as the reference group or individuals. One respondent opined, *“Previously we used to see only white people driving big cars and living in expensive houses. Today there are several black people who are holding very senior positions and they also can afford to be in the expensive houses and drive the expensive cars.”* This sentiment was shared by almost all respondents.

A further argument advanced is that *“we (black people) should be more preoccupied with changing the situation and moving up from the levels that we are in and getting to be good role models for younger guys.”* This comment implies that successful individuals in the black community should be concerned about becoming the reference group for younger people.

The results show that the reference group against whom respondents compare themselves is not based on race or whites as expected. The choice of reference group is based on the individual experiences of respondents and the history that informs their feelings of relative deprivation. The respondents seem comfortable in comparing themselves with various similar individuals despite glaring socio-

economic inequalities. This is usually used as a means to turn aspirations into feasible goals.

5.1.4 Research Question 4

Do the affluent black South Africans see themselves as merely catching up to their perceived reference individuals or groups, or there are other reasons for the increased consumption of lifestyle consumer goods?

The results show that four out of fifteen respondents showed no signs of catching up to their reference individuals. Their responses prove that they are neither concerned about the activities of their reference groups nor do they feel relatively deprived anymore. These respondents were asked to comment on the concerns by government authorities regarding reasons for increased consumption by affluent black South Africans. The results, primarily from these respondents, show a clear perception that less affluent black people are catching up to their reference groups through increased consumption of lifestyle consumer goods.

One respondent explained increased consumption by less affluent people when they become employed by saying, *“They will start looking at getting a house and a car as a step and therefore that house will require furniture. They start to look at life and start to feel like they must catch up (gain material things) in order to match what other races have always had. There is going to be an increase in spending and it will not decrease any time soon because as much as black people enter the formal employment arena so will their spending increase.”*

The rest of the respondents believe that catching up activity is rife amongst affluent black people in South Africa. Some of the comments that have been expressed are:

“I think it’s keeping up with the Khumalo’s and the Joneses depending on how you look at it. If your colleague has just bought a new C-class, you may want to dump your car to also buy a C-class. Maybe you may not want the entry level one but you want a C32 if you can afford it. People want to be seen to be better than other people are. Sometimes it is not that they want to be seen to be successful.”

“Blacks were prevented from filling senior positions in the workplace and that is the reasons we were staying in townships and not owning houses in the suburbs. Now that we have been given the opportunity of filling those positions and earning decent salaries, you get to see more blacks buying more things that they previously could not afford (better cars, travelling, etc)”

“People’s targets are always moving. You might be driving a Tazz and you see your friends driving BMWs – that will make you feel like your car is not adequate and want a better car.”

“If I see someone driving a convertible, I also want to get it and end up putting a higher residual on that vehicle just to belong to a certain league.”

“I still see it a lot and I think it comes from peer pressure where you see your friend with a certain item and you think you also need it without considering the fact that you cannot afford it.”

All respondents refer to the statutory death of apartheid and the increased employment amongst black people as the drivers of increased economic activity. One respondent says, *“People were paid less than living wage and fast forward to 15 years later – people earn decent salaries and are exposed to more things that money can buy. I think that people suddenly want to live and they want to experience things...They want to fit it...I can call it a class issue where we all aspire to be seen in a certain way with certain affiliations”*

Respondents also view this phenomenon as part of the normalisation of society and express revulsion at the general concerns raised by the government regarding the increased spending. One respondent argues, *“You need to know what forms that decision. You get to understand the circumstances that push them to make the buying decisions that they make.”*

The feeling amongst respondents is that most people are purchasing essential durable consumer goods and are making investments that have previously been denied to them due to lack of employment or access to business opportunities. One respondent comments that *“we as black people have a sudden madness for all these things because we never had any of the things that we have access to now”* while another concurs by stating that *“people have*

an opportunity to spend because they have access to more credit due to their better paying jobs.”

When quizzed about their spending patterns and lifestyle choices, most respondents argue they have all they need to survive and are not responsible for the increased consumption patterns. One respondent was bemused by the notion of catching up and stated, *“I do not know where the pressure is coming from. I grew up in the township like everybody else, studied like everybody else, quit my job to start my own business but I do not remember being in any type of pressure to show off or to rush and get possessions.”*

As expected from the group, most respondents want additional lifestyle items to enhance their lives and differentiate themselves from their peers. The general argument is that they are out of the survival stage and they base their decisions on improving their lifestyles in line with their set goals. One respondent maintained that *“If I need to drive a car like a Jaguar then there must be very large returns in that for me.”* while another respondent claimed that material possessions *“do not mean anything to me – for instance I do not care what type of car I drive. If I could reverse anything in my life, I would not buy the cars that I have owned. I bought very expensive cars too early and as a result they took a lot of money from me and delayed my plan of moving quicker towards achieving financial freedom.”*

The shopping list comprises expensive sports cars (eight respondents), a yacht (one respondent) and bigger houses or holiday homes (6 respondents). The

earmarked purchases are based on deliberate efforts to show progression, break into desired social or business circles, or display their relative affluence. Some respondents feel that this is predominantly a 'black thing'. It used to happen with clothes and furniture in the townships. It has now progressed amongst the affluent blacks into different asset classes, but it is still the same old issue. One respondent sums up the sentiments expressed by almost all respondents by saying, *"Black people have a distance to go in understanding wealth, the creation thereof and I think the sustainability thereof."*

Respondents however acknowledge that there are too few affluent black South Africans to create a significant increase in consumption as stated by government agencies. One respondent attests to this fact by saying, *"In my opinion there are too few black people who can afford to do that. They cannot be making that much of a dent to the economy."*

Since eleven of the respondents admitted to either consuming goods in order to catch up to their reference individuals or know of other people that do so, it can be said that affluent black people generally buy material goods to catch up. The small number of affluent black people shows that they cannot be solely responsible for increased consumption of lifestyle consumer goods.

5.1.5 Research Question 5

Is there evidence of relative deprivation in the lifestyle choices of the affluent black group in South Africa?

The answer to research question 1 above shows that relative deprivation persists amongst affluent black people in South Africa. The results also show

that the relative deprivation experienced by affluent black people in South Africa is largely individualistic in nature as shown in research question 2. The evidence provided in research question 3 shows that respondents interviewed for this research do not use the race of individuals as a reference points but list various media, role models, friends, colleagues and other successful people as reference individuals or groups against whom they compare themselves to gauge their level of success. It is also clear in the responses to research question 4 that there are elements of catching up in their consumption of lifestyle consumer goods like the rest of the recently employed black middle class.

In order to prove whether relative deprivation is reflected in their lifestyle choices, all respondents were asked about their consumption choices and those of their reference groups, and the underlying reasons for their choices. The results provide evidence that supports the contention that their lifestyles choices are a result of past and present relative deprivation experienced in various forms. All respondents interviewed lack and desire lifestyle items they see in their social and business circles, and reasonably expect to have the same lifestyle items that others at their level have. One respondent who chose to buy a house in the suburbs argued, *“There needs to be a sense of correlations of wealth, possibly similar interests and behaviour where I live.”* VN

The results show that respondents’ consumption choices are linked to relative deprivation. One respondent, who owns eight properties, speaks of the need to reclaim land stolen by whites by saying, *“I believe that black people should*

embrace property ownership and that was my bit to make sure that happens.”

On being asked about the conspicuous consumption, another respondent suggests, *“I think for us it is a new thing. Maybe later, when we are used to these things, the trend will subside in future.”*

Other comments that show that relative deprivation can be used to explain consumption of lifestyle consumer goods are:

“There is this thing called the physiology of the deprived and of the oppressed: The physiology of the deprived – it means for a very long time as a people we were denied access to opportunities and material resources. We were living in the bundus, bushes and prisons. All of a sudden you are freed and suddenly from being a liberated person underground you find yourself being a minister of something, you once struggled to come up with R10 but suddenly you find yourself managing millions of rands. You have a car that is chauffer-driven; you live in a big house with bodyguards and a chef where you get to eat three well-balanced meals. Your kids go to secure schools and not township schools and all of this is happening in a capitalist country.”

“I have bought a vacuum cleaner because I wanted to get away from kneeling and scrubbing the floor which I did for a long time and was tired of it.”

“I have to look the part at all times. I cannot be mingling with CEO’s of companies and not look as if I also want to be there one day. I have to look like I am a professional.” This comment came from a respondent who buys clothes

that allow her to fit in and have confidence around her more successful female friends.

“That is why most of us have helpers – it is because we do not want to do that (clean the house) anymore and the fact that we don’t have time to do it.”

The cars that respondents drive and the houses they live in are constantly reviewed in light of the changes in their environments and against similar possessions by friends and colleagues. One respondent explains the relentless acquisition of material goods by stating, *“I live in Gauteng. People are status conscious and I think I belong to that age group... black yuppies who are status conscious; and it matters what you drive, what you drink (whisky, wine, etc).”* This comment suggests that a culture of individualism exists that results in individuals comparing themselves with other individuals in terms of lifestyle consumer goods resulting in egoistic relative deprivation.

This sentiment points to peer pressure and most respondents suggest that, *“unfortunately we blacks have a weakness of looking at a car that a person drives and all of a sudden you think that person is wealthy. When you drive a cheap car, other business people do not want to associate with you because you are perceived as not being successful”* When quizzed about this trend, one respondent further explained that *“it is because of the way we grew up in poor environments. Our parent’s did not have cars and therefore it became a status symbol to own a car”* while another said, *“I think all of us want to say something post ’94 and we all want to be seen.”*

Most respondents want lifestyles and concomitant consumer goods they see in the social circles in which they move. Relative deprivation is still a major factor as one respondent reveals that *“This (house, car and lifestyle items like whisky, wine, DSTV, etc.) allows me an opportunity to fit into such groups... again I went to school with these guys and if I cannot fit in with their progression it will mean that I have not progressed. I believe we belong in the same league.”*

Most respondents buy into the advertising messages and the portrayal of the “ideal lifestyle” for their demographic group in various media. One respondent observes, *“We are living in an age of global influence. Look at the type of advertisement that we watch on TV – a mini cooper advert is not simply about that mini cooper, they are presenting a sense of a certain lifestyle by saying if you want to drive this car then you must look and portray yourself in a certain way... in a nut shell look a certain way.”*

All respondents deny the fact that they are “playing to the gallery”. The responses to questions posed during interviews and points that emanate from the discussions, however, show that they model their lifestyles around other people’s lifestyles and the latter drive their consumption of lifestyle goods and services. One respondent states that his lifestyle allows him to *“...fit into a certain group that I can relate to, e.g. among my friends that I went to the university with. These are the people that I mingle with ...and more likely to discuss things like what was on DSTV and not SABC 1... before we are even*

comfortable in our seats someone will be venturing in a topic about their recent trips to Dubai, France, etc. This allows me an opportunity to fit into such groups”

It seems that admitting to peer or societal pressure goes against the grain of all the respondents interviewed although responses to other questions proves otherwise. One respondent refers to his acquisition of cars by stating that *“I believe in progression. When I started, I drove a Golf 1 CTI, then a Golf3 GTI, which to me was a natural progression. I later drove a BMW 320 which I replaced with a BMW 330.”* On further investigation, this ‘natural progression’ is used to gauge the respondent’s own success and eligibility as a member of the group of friends and peers in the social circle to which he belongs.

Some respondents lament the lack of financial education in the consumption choices of lifestyle goods. This has resulted in poor financial decisions by some affluent black people according to some respondents. Most feel that credit is on the increase but blames this on poor financial education and advice given to the newly employed black South Africans. Most respondents show concern for people who are *“concerned with showing off but without a decent bank account or still staying with parents. Running out of money while at the same time driving a Land Rover is just not good enough.”* Most respondents feel that this tendency speaks to the lack of financial education. Some respondents feel that black people *“have access to these things (resources) but still no acumen on how to best use their finances.”* Other comments that have been made are:

“If you can do a study where you go around checking the owners of all the expensive BMWs and check which places they live in I am sure there is a

strong possibility that one lives in a shack. But it is important for that person to be seen in a party driving that car.”

“It is the image that they want to portray as well as peer pressure in terms of the BEE that everyone wants to belong to. But not anyone can afford to be in that league.”

“It is called false consciousness where a person lives beyond their means; you believe that you have arrived. It is important to see you in a Bentley while your fridge is empty. You come to my house in a 5-series, then turn around, and ask me for petrol money. To them it’s important to be seen.”

“People’s targets are always moving. You might be driving a Tazz and you see your friends driving BMWs – that will make you feel like your car is not adequate and want a better car.”

Most respondents feel that the financial education is the responsibility of the government, parents and the community through initiatives aimed at children and recently employed adults. Some respondents acknowledge that, *“financial management should be introduced to the schools curriculum where kids will get to learn what and what not to do with their finances.”* Parents need to *“impart that value for money to them while they are still young and at ten years they read the business day and start noticing the financial indicators on TV unlike us where there was not even access to a TV while we were still young.”*

Most respondents agree that it is the government's responsibility to educate the community about sound financial principles. One respondent said that *"I think guys like Trevor Manuel should start to think why after so many attempts trying to tell people to save and nothing is happening – they must try and understand why it is not happening. They must start to embark on ways to make sure that people see the benefit of saving and educate them."*

On relative deprivation and consumption that leads to credit, one respondent commented that this is not new by saying, *"It is the reality that we have. It is normal in the sense that it has been known for a while before people had money. People would rather buy Johnston and Murphy shoes brand with pants, Pierre Cardin shirts when they do not have a place to live. But if when they walk out there looking clean, smelling good with Old Spice or You Are The Fire, that mattered more than where they live or how much they owed in getting those things."* This suggests that getting into credit in order to reduce feelings of relative deprivation is nothing new to black people and is just carried over to different asset classes as people become affluent. Another respondent concurs by saying, *"It is still prevalent but with more assets, like with different assets classes and different packages. Same old thing but different arena."*

Other comments from respondents on credit as a means to acquire goods in order to reduce relative deprivations feelings are:

"Trying to belong to the group of success by false means has a ripple effect in that it will leave a trail of debt behind"

There seems to be a standard list of items that individuals must possess in order to belong to a societal class or social stratum. Ownership of certain material goods buys one into a class to which they believe they belong. One respondent commented about the clothes he wears by saying that *“whenever people look at me they can see success just by the way I am dressed. It is a form of branding for me.”* Two of the respondents, who co-own a company, realised that material possessions are necessary for business and decided, *“to get better cars because, frankly, to have business we will need to seem like we do belong to that particular group of successful people.”*

There are, however, dissenting views that merely regard consumption patterns as not purely relative deprivation inspired but argue that these patterns are evidence of progress. One respondent suggests, *“Being able to buy a house in the suburbs is a sign of progress”* while another respondent was adamant that he is *“not going to buy a car just to belong to some elite society”*

In general, all respondents downplay the effect that their perceived reference groups have on them. One respondent claims *“I do not remember being in any type of pressure to show off or to rush and get possessions... I will not be forced into doing things that are not important”*

There is, however, a general insistence that the reference group does not dictate their consumptive behaviour or lifestyle choice, despite clear evidence that they behave in ways that guarantees desired group membership. One respondent opines that *“people want to show off and I know because I come*

from that background as well. They want to fit it in.... I can call it a class issue where we all aspire to be seen in a certain way with certain affiliations.”

The general response from interviews, however, provides evidence to support the contention that relative deprivation drives the lifestyles of some affluent black people in South Africa. There is therefore possibly a link between relative deprivation and the lifestyle choices of affluent black South Africans.

5.1.6 Research Question 6

What is the order of the procurement of lifestyle consumer goods?

When the order of procurement of lifestyle consumer goods was discussed, two distinct trends emerged. When respondents offer their opinions regarding the order of procurement of other people in their social circles, there is harsh criticism about lack of priorities in other people’s consumption behaviour. One respondent went as far as saying that *“there is a tendency to think that we (blacks) are nearing the end and I must acquire as much as possible and as quickly as possible to show off as if we are rushing through something. By that rushing attitude we get to make the funniest decisions.”*

Most respondents suggest that the appropriate order of procurement should be a house, furniture (including appliances), other personal effects (clothes, entertainment and personal grooming products) and car. *“Personally, I think there is an order of things. First, the house, as it means you have somewhere to enjoy yourself. After a house, you need transport”* as one respondent pointed out. This is borne out of the lessons they have learnt over the years, especially on the value of property as an appreciating asset. Some respondents

expressed regret at earlier financial decisions made regarding property transactions. One respondent has worked hard at reversing earlier decisions and says, *“If I have to move into another house then I will do so without selling the house that I stay in right now.”*

The trend that emerged from most respondents was that personal effects were first in the list, followed by a car and house as later purchases. One respondent summed up the quandary aptly by saying that *“When they get a job the first thing they buy is a car” DH*. When the respondent was asked if their first purchase was a house, he answered, *“No, I actually bought a car but interestingly I bought a house accidentally.” DH* The reason offered for buying personal effects and a car is that most respondents had jobs that required a car as a tool of the trade. It was necessary because *“a lot of people start by buying cars because they need to travel back and forth to work”* as one respondent reported.

One the issue of personal effects like clothes, black people are starting to realise that one has to dress for their destination and not their origin in order to be successful. One respondent claimed that failure to dress and drive the car that shows success results in people not being *“given an opportunity to start up as they are not perceived as successful. These people never even made an allowance for a car in their budgeting and frankly I do not think it’s fair.”*

Most respondents suggest that there are goods that one needs in order to function and others that people want but can live without. These refer to

utilitarian and hedonistic goods respectively. It would seem that personal effects, house, furniture and car are utilitarian goods as one respondent says, *“You need a microwave, you need a fridge to store food, you need a TV to watch news, and you need suits to appear decent at work and at clients.”* Other goods are hedonistic goods that respondents may want but can do without. One respondent comments that after one has a house and car, then *“afterwards you have enough finances to afford other things in life. You can go for a massage once or twice a month.”*

The criticisms for getting the priorities wrong in the order of procurement are:

“I cannot be driving a car and still be sleeping in my father’s house.”

“People drive nice cars but sleep in their parent’s houses and beds. To me that means priorities are all mixed up.”

When the respondents were quizzed about the order if given a chance to start all over, the answers were surprisingly not very different from what happened in the past. One respondent confirmed that *“The first thing I will buy will still be a car and the reason for that is for easy accessibility to the work place and the other is just a question of not pressure but something like when my friends say come to a party somewhere I will not ask them to come pick me up.”*

The results also suggest a role of relative deprivation in the order of procurement of lifestyle consumer goods. Black people were deliberately located far from suburban areas and towns where they work due to the Group Areas Act of 1950, and had to use public transport to commute everywhere.

With the public transport system in the poor state that it is, respondents bought cars for commuting to and from work. One respondent says, *“I bought a car a year later mainly because it was a necessity for my job. I was an auditor and needed the car to travel between clients.”*

Some respondents’ relative deprivation affects lifestyle choice so much that they willingly choose lifestyle consumer goods that will get them recognition despite knowledge that this is not ideal. They observed the respect given to certain people in their neighbourhood who had certain lifestyle goods when growing up. They are now the people being observed and respected by neighbours because of their possessions. Some respondents expressed the effects of relative deprivation on the order of procurement in this manner:

“If you can do a study where you go around checking the owners of all the expensive BMWs and check which places they live in I am sure there is a strong possibility that one lives in a shack. But it is important for that person to be seen in a party driving that car.”

“You believe that you have arrived. It is important to see you in a Bentley while your fridge is empty. You come to my house in a 5-series (BMW) and then turn around and ask me for petrol money. To them it is important to be seen.”

5.2 Additional Results

The interview responses received during interviews with the respondents identified for this research show that there is a need to discuss the underlying issues that fuel consumption patterns of affluent black South Africans. Judging from the responses received, there is a general feeling of aggravation caused

by the lack of understanding of affluent black South Africans by government authorities.

The respondents are sceptical about concerns raised by Manuel (2006) on the need by government to moderate the consumption tendency and diversify economic activity among South Africans. While acknowledging the surge in consumption, the general feeling amongst respondents is that government authorities should expect this pattern in a country with structural socio-economic imbalances caused by apartheid. The increase in economic activity is a normalisation of society as more black people are getting employment and enjoying the liberties associated with democracy.

The respondents, however, stress that people at their level have different socio-economic dynamics to contend with than the rest of the black South African population. Respondents feel that the government should understand them as individuals first before making assumptions about their consumption patterns and lifestyles choices. While the issues discussed during the interview sessions are deeply personal and emotive, the respondents welcomed the opportunity to “set the record straight” in as far as what drives their consumption behaviour, hence their lifestyle choices.

5.3 Conclusion

The results of the research show that relative deprivation is still persistent in the consumption behaviour of affluent black people in South Africa. In the group interviewed, relative deprivation is clearly egoistic in nature as evidenced by individual pursuits of lifestyle choices and the emphasis on self-actualisation.

While there are tendencies to assist members of society who are not at the same level of affluence as they are, most respondents intend to pursue these initiatives only when their own lifestyle needs have been satisfied.

The group against whom most respondents measured themselves detracts from the usual general interracial comparisons commonly expected in countries here history pitted racial groups against each and awarded privileges based on racial or ethnic grouping. Although some feelings of hostility remain, these are not related to relative deprivation or lifestyle. Class emerges as the strongest variable in social comparisons made by respondents. Lifestyle choices determine the friends that respondents have and the social circles to which they currently belong, and business and social circles that respondents intend to join predominantly.

The results also show that there is a general trend of catching up in the respondents' consumption choices. The planned acquisition of material goods or 'natural progression' encourages consumption in line with the social circles to which they belong or intend to join. Although there is outright denial of the external pressures exerted by friends or the environment in their lifestyle choices, the respondents' consumption behaviour arguably supports the influence of these factors in their decisions. The consequences of relative deprivation in the lifestyle choices of affluent people are evident in the observed credit extension trends and the resultant over-indebtedness. Relative deprivation is arguably a factor in their lifestyle choices.

While there is an agreed ideal order of procurement of material goods, their own order detracts from this order and each respondent reasonably justifies the deviations. Relative deprivation seems to have a major role in determining the order of procurement as observed by some respondents in response to research question 6. The common justification is that they made earlier consumption decisions in response to the prevailing circumstances at that time. The respondents also argue that they had no access to established financial management principles to inform consumption decisions. Given what they know now, most respondents argue that earlier consumption choices would have been slightly different.

6 Chapter 6: Discussion of Results

6.1 Introduction

The results reported in the preceding chapter have answered all the main questions asked in the research and provided much needed insights into the debate cited in Chapter 1 regarding government's blanket concerns on increased economic activity amongst Blacks in South Africa. The conversations with the 15 members of the affluent black South African population has provided further insights into their feelings about general trends in South Africa and other issues that form part of their daily discussions.

This chapter seeks to locate the arguments and issues discussed in the interviews within the literature reviewed on relative deprivation and lifestyle choice, and the issues raised in Chapter 1 as motivations for the research. To this end, this chapter discusses the results of the research in accordance with the literature presented in chapter 2, questions posed in Chapter 3 and the results presented in Chapter 5. The results are then linked to the relevant literature reviewed with the aim of either confirming or providing an alternate view to the literature and/or similar or related earlier studies conducted in other countries as mentioned in Chapter 2. The overall argument in the discussion of results suggests that relative deprivation persists and this affects the consumption patterns of individuals. The consumption patterns lead into a change in the lifestyles of individual respondents, which causes pressure for relatively deprived individuals. The argument concludes by showing that lack of financial education leads to credit abuse and over indebtedness. The chapter

details further insights that do not form part of the research questions but are relevant in the understanding of the affluent black group in South Africa. The chapter concludes with a summary of the findings and the insights gained in the research.

6.1.1 Relative deprivation persists amongst affluent black South Africans

The results in chapter 5 show that all respondents had feelings of egoistic relative deprivation and compared their situations with those of other individuals in their business or social circles. In the group interviewed for the research, relative deprivation therefore seemingly comes from past injustice and current inequality felt by affluent black South Africans. The distinction is important in that respondents no longer feel deprived because of socio-economic injustice but are now relatively deprived because of socio-economic inequality. All the respondents interviewed come from disadvantaged backgrounds and these backgrounds shaped the respondents' thinking. Relative deprivation feelings dictated their major acquisitions and favourite material possessions in their fight against injustice.

In order to understand the context in which to interpret the results, there has to be an evaluation of the factors pertaining to the place of origin of respondents that constitute the sample. The propensity to relocate that was used as a population selection criterion may have also influenced the respondents' feelings of relative deprivation. Quinn (2006) suggests that relative deprivation resulted in intra-Mexico migration. Nine of the respondents came from places outside Gauteng while the remaining six came from Soweto or other townships within Gauteng. Most of the respondents moved to Gauteng due to relative

deprivation. If the respondents grew up in suburban areas and never suffered the indignity of the Group Areas Act of 1950, they would not understand growing up under cramped living conditions with diminished life prospects, hence relative deprivation. One respondent opines, *“People who grew up post 1994 do not have the same political experience as those who came of age before 1994. For us it was hard to live in the suburbs and for most of those people that is the only place (suburbs) they know.”*

Respondents from outside moved to Gauteng in order to get better opportunities than available at their place of origin. López Turley (2002) posits that the migration of poor individuals to rich neighbourhoods affords them access to better facilities and improved lifestyles. This is also found in a study by Quinn (2006) who suggests that the highest migration rates were found in Mexican communities with high income inequality, which resulted in relative deprivation and intra-Mexico migration. Therefore, it is to be expected that migrants to Gauteng would have relative deprivation feelings when they meet people of the same skill and experience affording lives they could not afford in the areas they originated. One respondent sums this up by saying, *“I will not be able to get the job that I want – there isn’t much development there. People here have the mentality that they came here to achieve something and must achieve whatever the stakes. So they get to be very individualistic.”*

People from local Gauteng townships also have exposure to more economic activity and have a longer history of successful black people. As a result, they have had more exposure to various reference groups that were successful.

Individuals in townships around Gauteng compared themselves to other individuals in their communities or compared themselves as a racial group against other racial groups in other areas in Gauteng. The literature also suggests that relative deprivation can be explained in terms of an individual (egoistic) or group (fraternal) comparing themselves to a reference group (Webber, 2007). It follows that they would be relatively deprived as well. The contention is that there is an element of geography in feelings of relative deprivation of the sample selected.

The sample comprises people between the ages of 25 and 40. Some of the respondents have experienced racism and the effects of apartheid or may have been part of the struggle for liberation at various levels. Depending on the level of exposure, as most of these people were exposed to some forms of social injustice, relative deprivation feelings are almost a certainty. If a younger sample had been chosen, the results may have been different. One of the respondents suggests that people younger than the age bracket might have different views on life. She says, *“From our history I would feel a sense of achievement moving to Sandhurst from Soweto not because Sandhurst is more lavish but because of sentimental values attached to it. We as young black professionals feel a significant tie to our political background and it becomes very important on all the things that we do and want to do as a people.”*

Relative deprivation is further defined as lacking the possibility to have living conditions and ability to participate in activities common in the society in which one lives (Yngwe, Lundberg and Burstrom, 2006). As shown in the results,

almost all respondents report that they needed to possess certain material possessions in order to fit in with their current or prospective peers, hence relative deprivation. The respondents see favourite possessions as a way out of poverty, lack and desperation with the conditions during their childhood years, and as adults. These material possessions give them the currency required to participate in the activities commonly associated with the people and environments in which they find themselves. Socio-economic inequality therefore causes feelings of relative deprivation amongst most of the respondents interviewed.

In all answers to the questions asked, there is a strong sense of individualism in the answers given to questions. This negates the trend as found by Triandis (2001) who suggests that North and Western Europe and North America are known for their individualist cultures while Africa, Asia and South America have collectivist cultures. A possible explanation might be that affluent black South Africans have adopted first world cultural principles in terms of addressing the relative deprivation feelings and have abandoned the sense of community as suggested by Khosa (1994) where he defines *ubuntu* as the interdependence between the individual and their community, and the inextricability of the individual from their community. The general trend in the discussions held with respondents revolved around unfulfilled individual needs based on comparisons with other individuals. This blatant culture of individualism is reflected in the basis of comparison that respondents use when comparing their situations to those of similar others in their environments. Some respondents argue that black people are losing their values, like *ubuntu*, in the face of rising

individualism. One respondent expressed her sorrow by saying, *“I think there is something wrong with that because I think as black people we have certain values and looks like we are loosing that by the individualism that is growing.”*

Although there are elements of fraternal relative deprivation where comparisons were made between black people and other races, the majority of the respondents suggested that fraternal relative deprivation could only be addressed once their individual needs have been met. This is an important finding as it establishes an order that is different to the one *ubuntu* suggests. *Ubuntu* emphasises the interdependence and coexistence of individual and in-group needs, with the former giving way to the latter when conflict arises. One respondent says, *“You are not going to start to share until you feel that you have enough.”* Almost all respondents share this view.

It is clear that the feelings of relative deprivation are as expected in the literature reviewed. The effects of sample and geography have an impact in the answers that respondents gave. Egoistic relative deprivation is fuelled by a culture of individualism that makes individuals compare themselves with similar others.

6.1.2 Link between Relation Deprivation and Consumption

Roets, van Hiel and Cornelis (2006) stress the pursuit of material resources as an important theme of Relative Deprivation Theory within a given society. This suggests that relative deprivation can be observed through the consumption patterns of the respondents. When the type of goods that respondents regard as favourite possessions and future purchases are considered, it is clear that these are not aspirational items. Otherwise, they will not be relatively deprived

because the theory does not refer to common-sense notions of envy, greed or lust (Webber, 2007). All respondents have the means to acquire the goods they seek to procure as is required to prove relative deprivation.

The holiday homes and second houses, the sports cars, yachts and businesses they want to start are all achievable. These will allow them to fit in or gain access to the social and business networks they seek to join. The concern and interest among economists regarding increased spending patterns of black South Africans since the dawn of the new South Africa in 1994 and the request by Manuel (2006) moderate our consumption tendency is valid when considering the research finding that people are generally catching up. Self-presentation causes respondents to deny that they are catching up, as this is an undesirable personal trait.

Respondents project a facade of calculated actions towards material goods consumption that are not influenced by friends, family and business or social circles. The reality of their responses suggests that what friends say, in general, matters. The responses also suggest that Gauteng, especially Johannesburg, tends to overwhelm people and sends them into a spiral of consumption, which pressurises some respondents to keep up. Relative deprivation and the immense exposure of affluent people to other individuals of varying wealth results in mixed and skewed consumption priorities. One respondent posits that people are caught up in the race to rival their contemporaries in terms of material possessions and opines, *“To me there is something wrong, but again people have different priorities. If you want to succeed in life – my definition of*

success is reasonable financial freedom – then that is not the way to go, to me it is just putting oneself in a rat race.”

The results are also affected by the geography of the respondents selected. The proximity of individuals in Gauteng lends itself to the observation of life between similar individuals in an environment that abounds with material goods available for purchase. Similar circumstances arguably do not exist in rural or peri-urban areas. Therefore, consumption is easier to moderate in such environments. It is also important to note that the South African market is emerging from a state of asset deficit and that the low penetration rate of assets such as household goods and furniture means there will be sustainable volume growth in years to come (Smith, 2005). The resulting relative deprivation results in acquisition of material possessions. One respondent argues, *“They cannot try and stabilize that (spending) whilst people are still coming into consumer base. You cannot expect a person to buy a house and refuse them access to buy furniture.”*

The consumption patterns that respondents observe around them and their own contributions to the increased spending boom seems to concur with the notion that what people consume or want to consume is key in understanding relative deprivation in any given society. Being thrown into the cauldron of consumption as happens in major cities like Johannesburg, results in re-ordering of priorities of consumption for some respondents, especially those who have migrated to Gauteng from other provinces.

6.1.3 The Link between Consumption and Lifestyle

The results show that most respondents buy into the advertising messages and the portrayal of the “ideal lifestyle” for their demographic group in various media. The cars that respondents drive and the houses they live in are constantly reviewed in light of the changes in their environments and against similar possessions by friends and colleagues. The results also show that some respondents migrated to suburban areas because they felt that their peers live in the suburbs and they would therefore be comfortable living there. The literature states that individuals choose to compare themselves with similar others (Sweeney and McFarlin, 2005). Liu and Li (2006) also posit that people interact more with members of their own group who are in the same social position (class) and have common social experiences and roles, and similar attributes and attitudes.

Once in the suburbs, the extent of relative deprivation feelings intensifies and is exacerbated by the environmental effects of the suburban lifestyle. Dijksterhuis *et al* (2005) suggest that mere perception of the social environment leads people to engage in corresponding behaviour and this often affects behaviour directly and unconsciously, causing individuals to do what they see. Therefore, the consumption patterns of the migrants are then unconsciously shaped by the new environments in which they find themselves (Vyncke, 2002) and this is evident in the consumption patterns of most respondents that have inevitably changed in line with the new environment. The change in consumption patterns has resulted in a change in identity and subsequently lifestyle of all respondents.

The literature suggests that consumption determines the identity of the consumer, which in turn determines the lifestyle they adopt. If relative deprivation resulting from socio-economic injustice causes the migration to suburbs, socio-economic inequality results in the persistence of relative deprivation as shown in the change in lifestyles. Since all the change occurs at a subconscious level, most respondents deny that their consumption, hence lifestyle, has changed due to the new suburban environment and that new feelings of relative deprivation have emerged. This is not surprising since relative deprivation is in itself an unconscious feeling and its manifestation is cumulative rather than a cataclysmic event. This is the reason why, perhaps, it is through visible material goods consumption that relative deprivation can be detected. The results show that affluent black South Africans choose the lifestyle of individuals they perceive to be similar to them and define their identity by consuming goods that belong to people of the desired lifestyle.

All respondents deny the fact that they are “playing to the gallery”. The responses to questions posed during interviews and points that emanate from the discussions, however, show that they model their lifestyles around other people’s lifestyles and the latter drive their consumption of lifestyle goods and services. Some of the comments suggest that it matters what their contemporaries say about them and that respondents will change their lifestyles to ones desirable to their peers by buying goods that draw attention to them. One respondent pointed out, *“Personally I think it is wanting recognition of some sort. It is that human element of recognition. If you were in primary school, you*

wanted to get the best marks to please the teachers and parents. As you grow older, it is about your material possessions. You are not necessarily buying for the crowd but it is a nice thing that comes with whatever you buy.”

There is, however, a general insistence that the reference group does not dictate their consumptive behaviour or lifestyle choice, despite clear evidence that they behave in ways that guarantee desired group membership. The quote above seems to show the extent to which some individuals will go to gain approval from their peers but remain adamant that others do not influence them in their decisions. The need to express a particular lifestyle, hence social class, creates desires for particular consumer goods and a commensurate level of income. The increased employment and income levels amongst affluent black South Africans as a group should manifest through changing and increased consumption of utilitarian and hedonistic goods. The excessiveness of consumption will accelerate as people earn more money or become wealthier compared to individuals of similar lifestyles and social standing (Thorkild, 2006).

Therefore, speeches made by the governor of the Reserve Bank warning consumers against overspending will not be heeded as long relative deprivation persists, incomes or levels of employment rise and affluent black people become wealthier. The increase in consumption, hence changing lifestyle, supported by ‘senseless’ borrowing in pursuit of extravagant lifestyles, will not cease. The argument advanced in some of the interviews is that this should be expected in a new democracy where the black majority has previously been denied access and means to participate meaningfully in the economy of South

Africa. In short, the changes in lifestyle are inevitable in the face of the increasing affluence of blacks and the rising levels of unemployment as displayed in their consumption patterns.

The results therefore establish that relative deprivation persists amongst affluent black South Africans and is linked to their consumption patterns. The consumption is linked to the lifestyle that affluent blacks choose. Therefore, there is a link between relative deprivation and the lifestyle choices of affluent black South Africans.

6.1.4 The Impact of Lifestyle Choice

The results suggest that there seems to be a standard list of items that individuals must possess in order to belong to a societal class or social stratum. Ownership of certain material goods buys one into a class to which they believe they belong. This causes pressure for individuals who perceive themselves as belonging to a certain income or societal group. This logic suggests that earning less than peers due to socio-economic or historical injustice will result in feelings of relative deprivation, as individuals cannot afford the lifestyle consumer goods that their peers can afford. If the comparisons between a relatively deprived individual and their reference group result in discrepancies in terms of material ownership of lifestyle consumer goods, there is pressure to keep up with those reference individuals. The pressure is worse if lifestyle consumer goods are not of the same high standard as one respondent points out, *“I have strong views on that. If I have the biggest BMW that money can buy and my life is balanced (house to match) then that is fine. But if I see a person*

driving an expensive car and they do not have a proper place they call home then I think that is a skewed picture.”

The age and geography effects of the respondents cannot be ignored in the discussion of pressure that emanates from social comparisons. All respondents are at a stage in their lives where they are starting to accumulate higher order material assets and defining their lifestyle, therefore age is vital in understanding the dynamics of the prevailing pressure. All respondents have had more than one car each, all have houses and they travel extensively. This is also made worse by the geographical location of all respondents in Gauteng. The old adage of ‘*walala, wasala*’ (you snooze, you lose), which captures the intolerance of lethargy and the culture of individualism in Gauteng, is at the centre of the pressure felt by respondents and other black people in the province. If respondents cannot consume material goods that reference group individuals can, they may suffer both consciously and subconsciously from an internalised feeling of failure and the potential loss of self-respect (Pedersen, 2004). It is this fear of failure and loss of self-respect that drives most of the respondents to gain further affluence in order to afford their lifestyle choices, and gain the reverence of their social networks.

The dissenting views on the pressure aspect of relative deprivation and lifestyle are in the minority for the respondents interviewed. The results show that four out of fifteen respondents showed no signs of catching up in their consumption activity. Even amongst the four respondents, their level of awareness and the opinions shared regarding the pressure to keep up with reference group

individuals in Gauteng, it is arguable that they do feel the pressure but have decided not to try to keep up. It is suspected that ingratiation or fear of appearing out of control causes these respondents to be defensive regarding peer pressure on their lifestyle choices. In general, there is a feeling that life in Gauteng is pressurised and lonesome as one respondent points out, *“Here in Johannesburg, people don’t care about greeting you, people mind their own business.”*

The pressure to keep up with individuals of the reference group has resulted in some respondents (or people that respondents have observed) making wrong financial decisions in pursuit of the lifestyles of people they believe are similar to them. One respondent confesses, *“There is a tendency to think that we are nearing the end and I must acquire as much as possible and as quickly as possible to show off as if we are rushing through something. By that rushing attitude we get to make the funniest decisions.”* As mentioned earlier in the document, this is not something new to the black group. The tendency should continue, as respondents are part of the generation that has attained affluence almost overnight. Unfortunately, financial skills cannot be learnt in the same short period.

The results show that some respondents lament the lack of *finsense* (financial sense) in the consumption choices of lifestyle goods. This has resulted in poor financial decisions by some affluent black people according to some respondents. Most feel that credit is on the increase but blames this on poor financial education and advice given to the newly employed black South

Africans. Respondents argue that the lack of *finsense* results in sub optimal financial decisions. This trend is expected to continue as one respondent says, *“There is a large amount of financial illiteracy that is brought about by being oppressed for so long.”* Future generations reportedly have a better chance of overcoming the lack of *finsense* as they will form the second generation of wealthy black South Africans and would have learnt from the current generation. One respondent thinks, *“Financial management should be introduced to the schools curricular where kids will get to learn what and what not to do with their finances. It will help kids focus and know that if you cannot afford something then you cannot have it.”*

Some respondents argue that the flooding of the market with easy credit to recently employed blacks was not followed by financial education on basics like budgeting and the implications of credit. The interventions via the National Credit Act to educate people are too late for some people who respondents feel are already in trouble. One respondent attests to this fact and says, *“I think employment equity allowed people to have kind of jobs they could not get before and with that came competitive packages and more money in people’s hands. There were more things in the market to acquire. With that came more cars, more clothing labels, more lifestyle purchases and more money to use on those purchases. And with that the lack of a savings culture because there was not more to save. With more money people forgot to save and acquired more lifestyle assets.”*

None of the literature found spoke of the link between relative lifestyle choice and the implications of newfound wealth. South Africa is in a unique position as the only country where the majority of the population was excluded from meaningful financial participation in the economy. There seemingly is no blueprint available elsewhere in the world on how this can be achieved. It is therefore up to government to ensure that financial education is rolled out to all that need it to avoid a worsening credit crisis. Some respondents argue, however, are mostly ill equipped to address this problem and it should be the responsibility of government to address the financial education needs of children. One respondent opines, *“It is going to take a while not unless the government takes a stand to educate kids while they are still in school.”*

The results show that getting into credit in order to reduce feelings of relative deprivation is nothing new to black people and is just carried over to different asset classes as people become affluent. Following the consumption-identity-lifestyle logic, the consumer’s income decides the lifestyle choice. This logic suggests that earning less than peers due to socio-economic or historical injustice results in feelings of relative deprivation, as individuals cannot afford the lifestyle consumer goods that their peers can afford. In order to bridge the gap between lifestyle choice and current income, respondents argue that individuals borrow money to fund purchases they would otherwise not be able to afford. One respondent says, *“You cannot think about the burdens of credit in your life. The only thing you want to think about is acquiring everything that you have been dreaming about.”*

In South Africa, increased consumer credit gives people a false sense of affluence and the ability to afford lifestyles they cannot realistically afford. This false sense of affluence puts pressure on individual members of the affluent group to increase spending as well in order to show that they qualify for group membership. Therefore, the bar is artificially raised over time. This causes more peer pressure and catching up activity, which results in increased consumer spending, and stress associated with over-indebtedness. This false sense of affluence distorts income inequality amongst the affluent black group in South Africa as measured by the Gini coefficient. Duclos (2000) argues that the Gini coefficient is positively related to relative deprivation. The higher the Gini coefficient, as is the case in South Africa, the higher is the level of relative deprivation. The misrepresentation of income, aided by increased access to debt, results in income no longer deciding the lifestyle that may be adopted.

The individualistic tendencies of most affluent black people in South Africa feeds this misrepresentation of income. The level of competition is high amongst affluent blacks and respondents argue that the outcome of that competitiveness is in the conspicuous spending on lifestyle goods. High levels of competition are common in individualistic cultures as found by Stewart and Stewart (2006) who argue that acquiring possessions provides tangible and outwardly visible evidence of excellence or success. Most respondents feel that it is therefore inappropriate for government officials like the governor of the Reserve Bank and the Minister of Finance to intervene at the tail end of the problem by increasing the interest rates without understanding the dynamics that fuel credit which eventually leads over-indebtedness. The government

should address the causes of the credit problem rather than tackle over-indebtedness, which is the outcome. The government should stop giving mixed messages regarding the economic growth and addressing inequality. The political and economic agendas do not dovetail with each other. One respondent suggests, “*Monetary and fiscal policies have to be revised because this is a developing country.*”

The impact of lifestyle is ultimately that of lives that are lived on credit. The literature suggests that one of the solutions is to address relative deprivation because it affects lifestyles via identities that are chosen via consumption. Any measures to address consumption problems without rooting out relative deprivation will not achieve lasting results.

6.2 Further Research Insights

The questions asked in the discussions with respondents provide important insights into this population group. These insights are not part of the research questions but are necessary in enhancing understanding of affluent black South Africans as a population group and form the basis for future quantitative research to academic scholars, the government and marketers.

The research revealed an alternative argument that may be used to explain the link between relative deprivation and lifestyle choice, and explain why affluent black people have feelings of egoistic relative deprivation. This argument also explains the pursuit of individual wealth and the satisfaction of individual needs above those of the black population group. The respondents acknowledge the concept of ‘new money’ vs. ‘old money’. The idea is that other races in South

Africa and the world have had access to money for generations while affluent black South Africans do not yet have generation wealth. Respondents suggest that this generation of affluent black South Africans, and most probably the next, will understandably tend to hoard financial resources and material possessions until the novelty of having vast financial resources wanes and the perceived 'risk' of losing it all disappears. One respondent captures this by saying, *"The fact that these people I interacted with had had money for a long time it made them very comfortable to share with others and that is why I think that the reason for South Africans to shy away from sharing is because it is new money."*

A trend that emerges from discussions is a sense of duality of both residence and consciousness. The duality on residence affects the lifestyle of the individuals as both residences have different consumption patterns. This implies dual identities for one individual. Some respondents expressed a need for owning houses in the township and the suburbs. One respondent laments not having a house in the township and states, *"I respect people with money who still choose to stay in the township. I stay in the suburbs not because I have money but because I wanted to invest in a property that will appreciate in value."* A house in the township has the same value appreciation as in the suburbs and allows people to stay connected with the neighbourhood of their origin. This allows individuals with dual residences to repatriate some of their expenditure to their places of origin. This is similar to the study by Quinn (2006) who argues that relative deprivation caused migration of individuals within Mexico, which resulted in repatriation of funds that improved the families left in

the individuals' places of origin. Some respondents confess that suburbs do not have the same vibrancy as the township, hence the trend to go back to the townships for weekend entertainment.

Most respondents suggest that only black people must uplift other black people in order to improve the situation of poverty and lack. This is evident in expression by most respondents that they will repatriate skills gained or provide financial assistance to needy black people in South Africa. This is in line with *ubuntu* although it flies in the face of individualism. To most respondents, there is no dichotomy between pursuing own interests in order to subsequently share with the black community once an individual becomes affluent. On stressing the point, one respondent said that *"We should try to better our families where if I have a certain position I need to fill I would ask you if you have a certain guy from the township who needs employment so that we can help eradicate the poverty and struggle that is covering our nation."* The fate of black people is too important to be left in the hands of other racial groups.

The results show that there is widespread jealousy amongst black people, which causes people to pull other black people down. This perhaps suggests the existence of a third form of relative deprivation where there is no out-group *per se* but the comparisons are **within-group**. One respondent observes that *"Looking at black people. Normally not a lot of people are well-wishers. When you have a bit of success people tend to be jealous."*

While within-group jealousy was evidenced, antipathy towards the formerly privileged out-group remains. Relative deprivation created the consequence of distrust of whites by blacks. One respondent categorically stated that *“Maybe you might call me a racist but I will never employ a white person in my companies. I also feel uncomfortable discussing personal matters with Whites. I am not sure what kind of support will I be able to offer them when the need arises.”*

The issues raised above were mostly made in passing but speak to the mentality of some of the respondents interviewed and the issues that occupy their minds. If this population group is the source of future leaders of our country, the issues that occupy their minds must be brought up and debated in order to understand some of the underlying dynamics that determine interactions amongst citizens of South Africa.

6.3 Conclusion

The overall argument in the discussion of results suggests that relative deprivation persists. The relative deprivation is egoistic and is fuelled by a culture of individualism that makes individuals compare themselves with similar others. Relative deprivation affects the consumption patterns of individuals. The consumption patterns that respondents observe around them and their own contributions to the increased spending boom is key in understanding relative deprivation in the affluent black South African society. The consumption patterns lead to changes in the lifestyles of individual respondents. Changes in lifestyle are inevitable in the face of the increasing affluence of blacks and the

rising levels of unemployment. This argument establishes the link between relative deprivation and lifestyle choice.

The impact of relative deprivation in the lifestyle choices of individuals results in high consumer credit and the consequence of over-indebtedness. It is the fear of failure and loss of self-respect that drives most of the respondents to gain further affluence in order to afford lifestyle items, and gain the reverence of their social networks. This is exacerbated by the lack of financial education or *finsense* (term coined in this research) due to affluent blacks being the first generation to experience wealth creation. Since there is seemingly no blueprint available elsewhere in the world on how financial education for the masses can be achieved, it is up to government to ensure that financial education is rolled out to all that need, especially in schools, in order to avoid a culture of living on credit.

If government could resolve the inconsistencies between political and economic agendas, all respondents believe that this country will have gone a long way towards addressing relative deprivation and its devastating effects on lifestyle choices on affluent black South Africans.

7 Chapter 7: Conclusion

7.1 Introduction

This chapter details the findings of the research in terms of the main questions asked and the reasons for the research stated in chapter 1. The chapter closes the loop in terms of questions asked in chapter 3. To this end, the chapter starts with the summary of findings and conclusions that may be drawn from the research findings. The chapter concludes with recommendations for policymakers and marketers, and directions for future research.

7.2 Findings Summary and Conclusions

The overall finding of the research is that relative deprivation persists amongst all fifteen respondents interviewed. Relative deprivation seemingly comes from past injustice and current inequality felt by affluent black South Africans. The relative deprivation is egoistic in nature as individuals compare themselves to other reference individuals in their business or social networks. Although there are elements of fraternal relative deprivation where affluent black South Africans (in-group) compare themselves to other races (out-groups), the overwhelming trend is individual comparisons.

There is an emerging culture of individualism, which emphasises individual needs above those of the group amongst the respondents interviewed. This culture goes against the reported culture of collectivism and *ubuntu* that Africans are known for and is of concern to some respondents who feel that the changing lifestyles put immense pressure on individuals to conspicuously display their affluence through material possessions. This pressure is

sometimes revealed through jealousy within black South Africans because of intra-group comparisons. This perhaps suggests a third type of relative deprivation that arguably is one of the reasons black South Africans have not progressed as should be expected since our democracy.

The research also reveals that the comparative or reference group has changed from simple race comparisons between blacks and other races as found in South African studies by Appelgryn and Nieuwoudt in 1988, Van Dyk and Nieuwoudt in 1990, Appelgryn and Bornman in 1996, De la Rey and Raju in 1996 and, more recently, Moller in 2001. Respondents compare themselves with a variety of reference individuals found in books they read, TV programmes they watch, people in lifestyle magazines, world standards, other black people in neighbourhoods of their origin and other successful people that are paraded in all media in South Africa. The main reasons for this tendency is that there are sufficient competitive and comparative pressures within the affluent black group to offset the impact of race as a reference point.

The research shows that relative deprivation is best defined through observations of consumption patterns amongst affluent black South Africans. The consumption patterns that respondents observe around them and their own contributions to the increased spending boom seems to concur with the notion that what people consume or want to consume is key in understanding relative deprivation in any given society. There is a trend of catching up amongst the respondents interviewed and their observation amongst affluent black people in general. The respondents caution that the number of affluent black people in

not sufficiently large to cause any significant increase in the spending patterns as observed by the governor of the Reserve Bank and the Minister of Finance.

The research found that there is evidence of relative deprivation in the lifestyle choices of affluent black South Africans. The argument advanced in some of the interviews is that this should be expected in a new democracy where the black majority has previously been denied the access and means to participate meaningfully in the economy of South Africa. The results of the interviews suggest that there is an order of procurement of lifestyle consumer goods. Respondents agree that relatively deprived individuals should ideally start with a house, furniture, personal effects and car personal effects. The reality is that most respondents invert the order when acquiring possessions because of circumstances militate against this order. In short, the changes in lifestyle are inevitable in the face of the increasing affluence of blacks and the rising levels of unemployment. This argument establishes the link between relative deprivation and lifestyle choice.

The research also found that there is a negative impact on individuals and the economy of South Africa due to the pressure caused by changing lifestyles. There is a fear of failure and loss of self-respect that drives most of the respondents to gain further affluence in order to afford lifestyle items, and gain the reverence of their social networks. This fear sometimes forces affluent black people to finance lifestyle choices through credit. Since this is the first generation of affluent black people in the new democracy, the lack of financial education and familiarity with wealth leads to credit abuse and over-

indebtedness. There seemingly is no blueprint available elsewhere in the world on how financial education for the masses can be achieved.

It is therefore suggested that government is ultimately responsible for the introduction of financial education in schools in order to avoid a worsening credit crisis. The introduction of the National Credit Act and the continued interest rate adjustments do not address the core of the problem facing the country and black people in particular. Government will succeed only if it addresses the underlying socio-economic inequality that causes feelings of relative deprivation and ensuring that all government policies are geared towards the achievements of objectives of a developmental state.

Besides the findings in line with the research questions, there were further insights that conversations with respondents highlighted and these have been included in the report in the interest of improving knowledge about the respondents and affluent black people in general. Additional insights include the following:

- The concept of 'new money' vs. 'old money' – the conspicuous consumption by black using recently found wealth.
- Sense of duality of both residence and consciousness – this is unique to South Africa and results in repatriation of spending to townships although respondents reside in suburbs.
- A suggested third form of relative deprivation as shown in within-group comparisons.

7.3 Recommendations

The research is aimed at exploring the link between relative deprivation and the lifestyle choices of affluent black South Africans with the intention of enriching the debate on reasons for the changing lifestyles and increased spending amongst affluent black South Africans. The research is also aimed at helping South African businesses and marketing consultants understand this population by exploring the reasons behind their actions. To this end, the recommendations detailed below are for both groups that stand to benefit from this research.

7.3.1 Policymakers

It is recommended that the Minister of Finance and the governor of the Reserve Bank of South Africa should read the research report to determine the context and do the following:

- Commission their own exploratory research across the country to confirm the link between relative deprivation and lifestyle choice amongst affluent black people in all provinces.
- Do quantitative research to determine the extent of the link in the affluent group as well as the lower middle class.
- Align all government policies to ensure that issues raised by respondents, especially on financial education and the reasons for credit abuse.
- Use this as a basis to start engaging with various stakeholder groups within the black population to improve efficiencies in government

policy, especially the affluent black group as they supply South Africa with future leaders in both public and private sectors.

7.3.2 Marketers

The research is important for marketers in terms of understanding this particular section of the black population. This is important in light of some of the accusations levelled at marketers and advertisers for missing the mark in terms of marketing campaigns and adverts in various media. To this end, the marketers should use this research as a base to:

- Commission focus groups across the country to explore issues in this report further with the affluent black group.
- Use the consumption priorities discussed by respondents interviewed as points to consider in all marketing campaigns.
- Expand the research into a quantitative study to determine the extent of the link between relative deprivation and lifestyle choices in order to design campaigns to convert these insights into bankable products.

It should be noted that this study is of an exploratory nature. Therefore, further studies are required in order to quantify the findings and explore the results using different respondents in different provinces and varying ages or levels of affluence.

7.4 Directions for future research

The research was conducted using 15 respondents who were based in Gauteng as per sample selection criteria. For future research, the following directions are suggested:

- It is recommended that the research be extended to include respondents of other provinces in order to tease out geographic nuances and enrich the research findings. Results may prove different if conducted in other provinces in South Africa where life is less hurried and people are not located in close proximity to each other.
- It is recommended that the study be done using an older sample above 40 years. The reason for this suggestion is to find out if the older generation of affluent black South Africans have also embraced the culture of individualism as seen in the younger sample. This research would be important in establishing whether wealth has eroded the culture of collectivism and *ubuntu* even in the older generation.
- It is also recommended that a quantitative study be done to determine the extent of the link between relative deprivation and lifestyle choices amongst affluent black South Africans

8 References

Appelgryn, A. E. M. and Nieuwoudt, J. M. (1988) Relative Deprivation and the ethnic attitudes of Blacks and Afrikaans-speaking Whites in South Africa. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 128(3), 311 - 323.

Appelgryn, A. E. M. and Bornman, E. (1996) Relative Deprivation in Contemporary South Africa. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 136(3), 381 - 397.

Bauer, T., Epstein, G. and Gang, I. N. (2002) Herd Effects or Migration Networks? The Location Choice of Mexican Immigrants in the U.S. *Institute for the Study of Labour (IZA)*, Discussion Paper 551, 1 - 42.

Bourguignon, D., Seron E., Zerbyt, V. and Herman G. (2006) Perceived group and personal discrimination: Differential effects on personal self-esteem. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 36, 773 - 789.

Caprioli, M. (2005) Primed for violence: The role of gender inequality in predicting internal conflict. *International Studies Quarterly*, 49, 161 - 178.

Chandra, S. and Foster, A. W. (2005) The “revolution of rising expectations”, relative deprivation and the urban social disorders of the 1960s. *Social Science History*, 29(2), 299 - 332.

Chartrand, T. L. and Bargh, J. A. (1996) Automatic activation of impression formation and memorization goals: Non-conscious goal priming reproduces effects of explicit task instructions. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 71, 464–478.

Daividsdottir, S. (2006) Psychological processes and lifestyle by age: Predictors for psychosomatic complaints. *Counselling and Clinical Psychology*, 3(3), 137 – 147.

De la Rey, C. and Raju, P. (1996) Group relative deprivation: Cognitive versus affective components and protest orientation among Indian South Africans. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 136(5), 579 – 588.

Deraniyagala, S. (2005) The political economy of civil conflict in Nepal. *Oxford Development Studies*, 33(1), 47 – 62.

Deshpande, A. (2002) Asset versus autonomy? The changing face of the gender–caste overlaps in India. *Feminist Economics*, 8(2), 19 – 35.

Dijksterhuis, A., Smith, P. K., Van Baaren, R. B. and Wigboldus, D. H. J. (2005) The unconscious consumer: Effects of environment on consumer behaviour. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 15(3), 193 – 202.

Drukker, M. and Van Os, J. (2003) Mediators of neighbourhood socio-economic deprivation and quality of life. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology*, 38(12), 698 - 706.

Duclos, J. (2000) Gini indices and the redistribution of income. *International Tax and Public Finance*, 7(2), 141 - 162.

Dzokoto, V., Hicks, T. and Miller, E. (2007) Student lifestyles and emotional well-being at a historically black university. *Education*, 127(4), 511 – 522.

Ferraro, R., Shiv, B. and Bettman, J.R. (2005) Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we shall die: Effects of mortality salience and self-esteem on self-regulation in consumer choice. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 32, 65 – 75.

Halleröd, B. (2006) Sour grapes: Relative deprivation, adaptive preferences and the measurement of poverty. *Journal of Social Policy*, 35(3), 371 - 390.

Halleröd, B., Larsson, D., Gordon, D. and Ritakallio, V. (2006) Relative deprivation: a comparative analysis of Britain, Finland and Sweden. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 16(4), 328 – 345.

Harris, J. R. and Todaro, M. P. (1970) Migration, unemployment and development: A two-sector analysis. *American Economic Review*, 60, 126 - 142.

Heck, A. K. and Wech, B. A. (2003) Samuel A. Stouffer and the American soldier: The serendipitous discovery of relative deprivation and its contribution to management thought. *Journal of Applied Management and Entrepreneurship*, 8(4), 52 - 67.

Ioannou, S. (2005) Health logic and health-related behaviours. *Critical Public Health*, 15(3), 263 - 273.

James, A. (2000) Equality in a realistic Utopia. *Social Theory and Practice*, 32(4), 699 – 724.

Kauko, T. (2006) Expressions of housing consumer preferences: Proposition for a research agenda. *Housing, Theory and Society*, 23(2), 92–108.

Khosa, R. (1994) *African Humanism: A discussion paper on Ubuntu as a philosophy of life and its potential application*. Series 1. Diepkloof Extension, Soweto, Johannesburg: Ekhaya Publications.

Langer, A. (2005) Horizontal inequalities and violent group mobilization in Côte d'Ivoire. *Oxford Development Studies*, 33(1), 25 – 45.

Le Roux, M. (2007) *Future so bright*. Available from http://www.news24.com/News24/South_Africa/News/0,,2-7-1442_2164296,00.html (accessed 15/08/07)

Liao, P. S., Fu, Y. C. and Yi, C. C. (2005) Perceived quality of life in Taiwan and Hong Kong: an intra-culture comparison. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 6, 43 – 67.

Liu, J. and Li, L. (2006) Stratification: Residential space, lifestyle, social interaction, and stratum identification. *Chinese Sociology and Anthropology*, 38(4), 55 - 90.

López Turley, R. N. (2002) Is relative deprivation beneficial? The effects of richer and poorer neighbours on children's outcomes. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 30(6), 671 – 686.

MacRae, R. (2004) Notions of 'Us and Them': Markers of stratification in clubbing lifestyles. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 7(1), 55 – 71.

Manuel, Trevor (2006) *Budget Speech 2006*. Pretoria: Ministry of Finance. Report 10/2006. Available from <http://www.fin24.co.za/BudgetSpeech2006.pdf> (accessed 26/02/07)

Merriam, S. B. (1998) *Qualitative Research and case study applications in education*. San Francisco: Josy-Bass Inc.

Merton, R. K. and Kitt, A. S. (1950) Contributions to the theory of reference group behaviour. In Merton, R. K. and Lazarsfeld (eds.) *Continuities in Social*

Research: Studies in the Scope and Method of "The American Soldier".
Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press.

Miles, M. B. and Huberman, A. M. (1994) *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook*. 2nd ed. California: Sage.

Moller, V. (2001) Happiness trends under democracy: Where will the new South African set-level come to rest? *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 2, 33–53.

Moore, D. (2003) Perceptions of sense of control, relative deprivation and expectations of young Jews and Palestinians in Israel. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 143(4), 521 – 540.

Olson, J. M., Hafer, C. L., Couzens, A. and Kramins, I. (2000) You're OK, I'm OK: The self-presentation of affective reactions to deprivation. *Social Justice Research*, 13(4), 361 – 374.

Omorodion, F. I. (2006) Sexuality, lifestyles, and the lures of modernity: participatory rural appraisal (PRA) of female adolescents in the Niger delta region of Nigeria. *Sexuality & Culture*, 10(2), 96 - 113.

Patton, M. Q. (2002) *Qualitative research and evaluation methods*. 3rd ed. California: Sage.

Pedersen, A. W. (2004) Inequality as relative deprivation: A sociological approach to inequality measurement. *Acta Sociologica*, 47(1), 31 - 49.

Quinn, M. A. (2006) Relative deprivation, wage differentials and Mexican migration. *Review of Development Economics*, 10(1), 135 - 153.

Regional Economic Focus (2005) *Global Insight Southern Africa*.

Roets, A., Van Hiel, A and Cornelis, I. (2006) Does materialism predict racism? Materialism as a distinctive social attitude and a predictor of prejudice. *European Journal of Personality*, 20, 155 - 168.

Samuelsen, H. (2006) Love, lifestyles and the risk of AIDS: The moral worlds of young people in Bobo-Dioulasso, Burkina Faso. *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, 8(3), 211 – 224.

Schmitt, M. and Maes, J. (2002) Stereotypic in-group bias as self-defence against relative deprivation: evidence from a longitudinal study of the German unification process. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 32, 309 – 326.

Shieh, K. and Cheng, M. (2007) An empirical study of experiential value and lifestyles and their effects on satisfaction in adolescents: An example using online gaming. *Adolescence*, 42(165), 199 – 215.

Simonson, I. (2005) In defence of consciousness: The role of conscious and unconscious inputs in consumer choice. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 15(3), 211–217.

Smith, T. (2005) Who makes up the emerging black market? *Cape Argus*, June 2, 18.

Stewart, A. E. (2007) Individual Psychology and Environmental Psychology. *The Journal of Individual Psychology*, 63(1), 67 – 85.

Stewart, A. E. and Stewart, E. A. (2006) The preference to excel and its relationship to selected personality variables. *The Journal of Individual Psychology*, 62(3), 270 – 284.

Stewart, F. (2000) Crisis prevention: tackling horizontal inequalities. *Oxford Development Studies*, 28, 245 - 263.

Stoltz, K. B. and Kern, R. M. (2007) Integrating lifestyle, the therapeutic process, and the stages of change. *The Journal of Individual Psychology*, 63(1), 32 – 47.

Stouffer, S. A., Suchman, E. A., DeVinney, L. C., Star, S. A. and Williams Jr., R. M. (1949) *The American soldier: Adjustment during army life*. Volume I. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Sweeney, P. D. and McFarlin, D. B. (2005) Wage comparisons with similar and dissimilar others. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 78, 113–131.

Szwarcwald, C. L., Bastos, F. I., Viacava, F. and Tavares de Andrade, C. L. (1999) Inequality and homicide rates in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. *American Journal of Public Health*, 89(6), 845 – 850.

Thorkild, A. (2006) Residential choice from a lifestyle perspective. *Housing, Theory & Society*, 23(2), 109-130.

Thorns, C. (2006) *New study shows how marketers can better connect with South Africa's black middle class.* Available from <http://www.bizcommunity.com/Article/196/19/11443.html> (Accessed 16/08/07).

Tougas, F., Lagacé, M., De la Sablonnière, R. and Kocum, L. (2004) A new approach to the link between identity and relative deprivation in the perspective of ageism and retirement. *International Journal of Aging and Human Development*, 59(1), 1 – 23.

Triandis, H. C. (2001) Individualism-collectivism and personality. *Journal of Personality*, 69(6), 907 – 924.

Tzamalouka, G. S., Parlalis, S. K., Soultatou, P., Papadakaki, M. and Chliaoutakis, J. E. (2007) Applying the concept of lifestyle in association with

aggression and violence in Greek cohabitating couples. *Aggressive Behaviour*, 33, pages 73–85.

Vala, J., Pereira, C. and Ramos, A. (2006) Racial prejudice, threat perception and opposition to immigration: A comparative analysis. *Portuguese Journal of Social Science*, 5(2), 119 - 140.

Van Gool, C. H., Kempen, G. I. J. M., Bosma, H., Van Boxtel, M. R. J., Jolles, J. and Van Eijk, J. T. M. (2006) Associations between lifestyle and depressed mood: Longitudinal results from the Maastricht aging study. *American Journal of Public Health*, 97(5), 887 – 894.

Van Dyk, A. C. and Nieuwoudt, J. M. (1990) The relationship between relative deprivation and the attitudes of rural Afrikaans-speaking women towards Blacks. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 124(5), 513 - 521.

Vyncke, P. (2002) Lifestyle Segmentation: From Attitudes, Interests and Opinions, to Values, Aesthetic Styles, Life Visions and Media Preferences *European Journal of Communication*, 17(4), 445 - 463.

Webber, C. (2007) Revaluating relative deprivation theory. *Theoretical Criminology*, 11(1), 97 - 120.

Wilska, T. (2002) Me – A consumer? Consumption, identities and lifestyles in today's Finland. *Acta Sociologica*, 45(3), 195-210.

Yngwe, M. A., Lundberg, O. and Burstrom, B. (2006) On the importance of internalised consumption norms for ill health. *Scandinavian Journal of Public Health*, 34, 76 – 82.

Zikmund, W. G. (2003) *Business Research Methods*. 7th ed. Ohio: South Western.

Ziller, A. (2004) The community is not a place and why it matters - Case Study: Green Square. *Urban Policy and Research*, 22(4), 465-479.

9 Appendix A - Consistency Matrix

Title: The link between relative deprivation and the lifestyle choices of affluent black South Africans.

QUESTIONS	LITERATURE REVIEW	DATA COLLECTION TOOL	ANALYSIS
Research question 1 Does relative deprivation persist amongst affluent black South Africans?	Appelgryn and Bornman, 1996 Caprioli, 2005 Chandra and Foster, 2005 Halleröd, 2006 Heck and Wech, 2003 López Turley, 2002 Moller, 2001 Schmitt and Maes, 2002 Roets <i>et al</i> , 2006 Stouffer <i>et al</i> , 1949 Vala <i>et al</i> , 2006	Recorded interview and transcribed notes in answer to probes on question 1	Thematic content analysis to uncover concepts that form the definition of relative deprivation in the responses of each respondent
Research question 2 Is the relative deprivation amongst affluent black South Africans egoistic or fraternal?	Appelgryn and Nieuwoudt, 1988 De la Rey and Raju, 1996 Van Dyk and Nieuwoudt, 1990 Triandis, 2001 Webber, 2007	Recorded interview and transcribed notes in answer to probes on question 2	Thematic content analysis to determine the choice of selected reference group or individuals as indicated by each respondent
Research question 3 Which individuals or groups of individuals form the reference groups against whom the affluent blacks compare themselves?	Appelgryn and Bornman, 1996 Liao, Fu and Yi, 2005 López Turley, 2002 Merton and Kitt, 1950 Moore, 2003 Pedersen, 2004 Sweeney and McFarlin, 2005 Vala <i>et al</i> , 2003 Webber, 2007 Yngwe <i>et al</i> , 2006	Recorded interview and transcribed notes in answer to probes on question 3	Thematic content analysis to uncover words that refer to collectivism or individualism as defined by relative deprivation theory
Research question 4 Do the affluent black South Africans see themselves as merely	Caprioli, 2005 Chartrand and Bargh, 1996 Dijksterhuis <i>et al</i> ,	Recorded interview and transcribed notes in	Thematic content analysis to determine existence of a

<p>catching up to their perceived reference individuals or groups, or there are other reasons for the increased consumption of lifestyle consumer goods?</p>	<p>2005 Moller, 2001 Ioannou, 2005 James, 2006 Liu and Li, 2006 Pedersen, 2004 Quinn, 2006 Roets <i>et al</i>, 2006 Simonson, 2005 Stewart, 2006 Stoltz and Kern, 2007 Thorkild, 2006 Wilska, 2002</p>	<p>answer to probes on question 4</p>	<p>trajectory towards equality or discover other factors spurring consumption</p>
<p>Research question 5 Is there evidence of relative deprivation in the lifestyle choices of affluent black group in South Africa?</p>	<p>Chandra and Foster, 2005 Dijksterhuis <i>et al</i>, 2005 Drukker and van Os, 2003 Halleröd <i>et al</i>, 2006 MacRae, 2004 Quinn, 2006 Shieh and Cheng, 2007 Thorkild, 2006 Tzamalouka <i>et al</i>, 2007 Vyncke, 2002 Wilska, 2002</p>	<p>Recorded interview and transcribed notes in answer to probes on question 5</p>	<p>Thematic content analysis to uncover words that indicate relative deprivation and lifestyle choice decisions</p>
<p>Research question 6 What is the order of the procurement of lifestyle consumer goods?</p>	<p>Dijksterhuis <i>et al</i>, 2005 Halleröd, 2006 Stewart and Stewart, 2006 Webber, 2007 Wilska, 2002 Yngwe <i>et al</i>, 2006</p>	<p>Recorded interview and transcribed notes in answer to probes on question 6</p>	<p>Content analysis to determine order and type of items purchased.</p>

10 Appendix B: Interview Guide

- ❖ Does relative deprivation persist amongst affluent black South Africans?
 - Favourite item
 - Item wanted the most. Why?
 - Meaning of item to you
 - Talk about people that have it
 - Talk about people that don't have it
 - Affordability
- ❖ Is the relative deprivation amongst affluent black South Africans egoistic or fraternal?
 - Who deserves it
 - Family/society role
 - Does it bother you that other black people cannot get it?
- ❖ Which individuals or groups of individuals form the reference groups against whom the affluent blacks compare themselves?
 - Typical people who have it
 - What you think about them
 - Comparison with people who have it
- ❖ Do the affluent black South Africans see themselves as merely catching up to their perceived reference individuals or groups, or there are other reasons for the increased consumption of lifestyle consumer goods?
 - Other things you desire. Why?
 - Who has them?
 - After you get them. What is next?

- ❖ Is there evidence of relative deprivation in the lifestyle choices of the affluent black group in South Africa?
 - Meaning of material possessions
 - Activities – hobbies, travel, sport
 - Discuss interests
 - Opinions about of South Africans in general
 - Opinions about AIO of other black people

- ❖ What is the order of the procurement of lifestyle consumer goods?
 - First purchase
 - Other purchases
 - Discuss order and reasons
 - Peer observation
 - Opinions about order