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The significance of townhouse interiors to support home-owners' extended selves: the case of home-owners in Tshwane

Lorna Christie (*née Swanepoel*)

Thesis

M Consumer Science (Interior Merchandise Management)

Supervisor: Prof AC Erasmus

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by

Lorna Christie (*née Swanepoel*)

Thesis submitted for fulfilment of the requirements for the degree
M Consumer Science (Interior Merchandise Management)

in the

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Dedicated to:

Matthew Christie

Chris & Elsabé Swanepoel

Declaration

I, Lorna Christie, declare that the dissertation, which I hereby submit for the degree M Consumer Science: Interior Merchandise Management, at the University of Pretoria, is my own work and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other tertiary institution.

Lorna Christie

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Summary

An investigation of home-owners' construction and adornment of their homes to reflect family identity and social status

by

Lorna Christie (née Swanepoel)

Supervisor: Prof AC Erasmus
Department: Consumer Science
Degree: M Consumer Science (Interior Merchandise Management)

Housing can be used to satisfy man's needs on all five levels as identified by Maslow, although in the context of Tshwane, South Africa, housing decisions are especially guided by a great need for safety as well as status. Townhouse living offers a secure living environment for residents, while simultaneously providing an adequate status living option that is generally accepted by the public. Along with several advantages townhouse living provides, there are also significant negative aspects. The main consideration for this study is the fact that all of the units in a given complex look either the same or very similar, leaving no room for differentiation amongst the units. This can become problematic, since theory suggest that all people have a need to be unique, and when placed in a situation where they are perceived as being highly similar to others, as in a townhouse complex, people will tend to act in a counter-conforming manner. The only viable option available to the residents lies in the interior of their homes. Much has been published to date concerning the need to be unique and the expression thereof within the clothing environment, but only limited research has been done to explore townhouse residents' need to express their extended selves in the interior of their homes.

The study involved 182 respondents of both genders, who lived in townhouse complexes in Tshwane. They completed a structured questionnaire, which investigated who was responsible for decisions regarding the interior design and décor of their homes, identified their most valued objects, as well as the reason why it is regarded as such, whether or not they restricted guests to their social zones of their homes, as well as whether they portrayed their social selves to onlookers, their level of need for uniqueness, their buyer behaviour, the source of interior inspirations and lastly, a section on the overall satisfaction they might have with residing within a townhouse complex. One qualitative section, the identification and motivation on their valued

objects, was included to gain insight into what type of objects are regarded as valuable, supported by motivations on why it is regarded as valuable. Data collection was especially time consuming, since it was difficult to gain access to townhouse complexes. Convenient snowball sampling proved to be the only option viable to collect the data. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics as well as factor analysis.

Respondents indicated that interior professionals were seldom, if ever, asked to assist with the design and décor of their homes and that furniture was their most valued interior objects for social, rather than private reasons. Respondents furthermore indicated that they wished to restrict guests to the social zones of their homes as far as possible and that those respondents who resided in their homes for less than five years preferred their social selves to be displayed, while respondents who resided in their homes for more than five years chose to display a limited version of their personal selves as well. Respondents showed an average inkling to express their extended selves in a counter conforming manner, with the creative choice counter conforming motivation being the most popular option. Their buyer behaviour supported their need for uniqueness, in that the objects purchased for the interior of their homes had to be aesthetic and original. The most prominent source of interior inspiration originated from interior shows and thereafter the respondent's family. The majority of interior shows guide and encourage the viewer to attempt the design and décor of their homes themselves, which may serve as an indication on why so few respondents made use of services provided by designers and decorators. The respondents agreed that, due to the fact that the exteriors appear the same or similar, greater attention is given to the interior of their homes, and that more unique products are sought to compensate for the lack of uniqueness in the complex. About half of the respondents did state, however, that presented with the option again, they would still choose to reside in a townhouse complex.

Findings of this study will contribute to existing literature and will be useful to property developers, retail industry, interior designers and decorators in terms of marketing opportunities for their products, be it mass customization (property developers and retailers) or individual customization (interior designers and decorators) to tailor a product that will provide the illusion of uniqueness to potential consumers.

xxXxx

Table of contents

List of tables

List of figures

List of appendices

xxXxx

CHAPTER 1

THE STUDY IN PERSPECTIVE

This chapter sets the context of the study by explicating the research problem and providing an overview of the structure of the dissertation

1.1 CONTEXT OF THE RESEARCH

Purchasing a home is arguably one of the most important consumption decisions an individual or family has to deal with during their lives. Apart from it being a complex, high involvement decision that poses long-term consequences, purchasing a home involves interplay of different types of risk. Financially, buyers have to commit themselves for many years irrespective of future economic prospects (Du Toit, 2009). Socially, a family's home positions them in terms of socio demographics due to the fact that a family's social status is associated with their physical address (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:358). Psychologically, a home influences and portrays residents' sense of belonging, achievement and individuality, because people use possessions such as their home to reflect who they are. These possessions are also instrumental in the development of the self (Belk, 1989). Various diverse factors therefore influence a prospective home-owner's tenure decision and consequent post purchase judgements. Any feature of a house that may obstruct a home-owner's/ resident's positive post purchase judgement could be pre empted and addressed in various ways to reduce risk perception and to prevent negative disconfirmation. In order to reduce social- and security risk perception, prospective buyers could for example opt for an alternative housing decision.

One such option that could reduce social and security risk perception is to invest in a townhouse that is located in a security development in an upmarket suburb, rather than purchasing a larger home elsewhere. Townhouses are classified as attached structures (Carliner, 2001) that offer highly sought after advantages, such as providing social security based on its location in a well-to-do suburb, greater affordability, as well as reduced safety risk, based on its configuration in a security estate (Blandy, 2006; Morgan, 2009). Residing in a townhouse does, however, also imply pertinent negative consequences. Especially limiting is the fact that the exterior character of townhouses in a specific estate is bound by the architectural style of the complex that may not

be altered. Similarly, the main gardens are generally landscaped and maintained by an elected Home Owners' Association or so called Body Corporation (Hook & Vrdolijak, 2002), leaving little opportunity for home-owners to reflect their individuality and extended selves (Jürgens & Gnad, 2002) through any element of the exterior of their homes. Research indicates that most people in society have a need to be unique (Tian & Mckenzie, 2001), and to express that uniqueness or identity through possessions. When residents in townhouses are restricted in terms of how they may alter the exterior of their homes to reflect who they are, the only option to do so inevitably diverts to the interior of their homes.

Research indicates that the home is a projection of the occupants' personalities, by communicating to society who the occupants are and where they belong within the social hierarchy (Moore, 2000). Gunter (2000:4,16) states that the home is an embodiment of the residents' aspirations, needs and personalities. The home is thus an extension of the self through which people project their personalities. Wouters (in Van Gorp, 2005) states that everyone wants to be different in some kind of way, in order to give meaning and value to one's life. This need to be unique serves as the motivation to express one's self. The home can be used as a method to clarify and reinforce a person's self-identity. In order to transform a house into a home, the occupant will personify the home, externally and/or internally. Owners of townhouses are not allowed to alter or personify their homes externally, which inevitably implies that a stronger emphasis is placed on the interior of their homes. The only opportunity that owners of townhouses have to utilize their homes as an extension of the self and to distinguish their homes (thus themselves) from those of their neighbours', would therefore be to focus on the interiors of their homes.

As a combination of art, science and technology, interior design manipulates space, form, texture, colour and light to enhance the quality of human life. Since people are spending an ever-increasing amount of time indoors, it is imperative that interior spaces should contribute to a person's well being and should have a positive influence on individuals' socialization and learning processes (Kilmer & Kilmer, 1992:2). Widespread research concerning possession attachment and consumers' relationships with psychologically appropriate material objects (Kleine & Baker in Fernandez, 2008) indicate that people express their extended selves through concrete possessions and that they actually incorporate possessions into the self by appropriating its use (Ahuvia, 2005; Belk, 1988; Fernandez, 2008). It is therefore highly likely that owners of townhouses would be particularly concerned with the interiors of their homes and attempt to personify their homes to embody their extended selves in order to feel comfortable and emotionally satisfied with their living environment (Gunter, 2000:4,10).

When a person is satisfied that the space that they have created is a representation of their selves, they develop a bond that is attached to that place through the objects. This results in a place identity that is a representation of the person's self-categorization and social processes, and whereby the person is symbolically and emotionally connected with a space (Kempen & Ozaki, 2006; Knez, 2005; Mannarini, Tartaglia, Fedi & Greganti, 2006). Place identity as a concept can be seen as a substructure of self-identity, and is related to place attachment. This place identity communicate to others the social identity of a person, as defined by the space. Place attachment is therefore defined as a bond people establish with a specific environment (in this instance the home), where people have the inclination to remain since they feel comfortable and safe in this environment (Kopec, 2006:61-62; Rollero & De Piccoli, 2010).

1.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM

Due to security problems, an increase in demand for property and soaring property prices, townhouses have become a highly attractive option as a type of tenure during the past decade in South Africa. Townhouses provide individuals or families an opportunity to afford housing in a secure upmarket neighbourhood. Unfortunately, townhouses also pose negative consequences. In terms of exterior design, exterior finishes and even garden designs, residents have limited or no option to personify their homes. Empirical evidence exists that the home is used as a tool through which residents express their extended selves as either individuals or as a family unit to onlookers, similar to what clothing does for an individual. School uniforms are, for example, used as a tool to symbolize a cohesive image, but simultaneously, it constrains students' expressiveness and their identity exposure (DaCosta, 2006; Tamura, 2007), which is similar to what occurs with residents of townhouses in townhouse complexes. A townhouse complex where all the units appear the same or identical, promotes the image of the complex as a whole, while restricting the expression of individual identity. When the opportunity to individualize the exterior of their home and their garden is constrained, residents of townhouses may feel obliged to place more emphasis on the interior of their homes, and may purposefully attempt to distinguish their units from the many others in the same complex. One should also keep in mind that floor plans and finishes used for the individual units in the same townhouse complex are very similar or identical. Through place attachment and the subsequent choice and display of interior objects in the social zones of their townhouse units, residents can, however, differentiate themselves from others. Their extended selves can therefore be embodied by the interiors of their homes and displayed to onlookers. The only option that owners of townhouses have to

satisfy their need to be unique would thus be to focus on the interiors of their homes and to choose and display interior goods in such a manner that it serves as an extension of their selves.

1.3 CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

Compared to clothing literature, empirical evidence of townhouse residents' need to express their extended selves through the interior of their homes is severely limited. Research concerning place identity within the context of a home (Knez, 2005; Mannarini *et al.*, 2006; Manzo, 2003; Moore, 2000), fails to address the importance of residents' need to express their uniqueness and/or extended selves through the interiors of their homes. While residents of freestanding homes in residential suburbs have several options to fulfil such needs, residents of townhouses are limited to the interiors of their homes.

This study will extend existing evidence of individuals' reliance on the extended self to maintain and uphold their identities in society and will expand on literature on place attachment and our consequent understanding of possession attachment. It will also relay the importance for the need to express an individual's identity through other significant avenues, other than clothing. It specifically adds to the analogy of home interior as clothing for the human body (Belk 1988) - an area that is still under researched and that would be invaluable for professionals in interior design to gain an understanding of their potential clients' needs and to tailor their interiors to match their identities. Furthermore, proprietors as well as estate agents could benefit if they provide opportunity for prospective buyers to personalize their townhouses, e.g. by choosing their own finishes, lighting and fixed appliances before construction is complete, to enhance the appeal of new townhouse developments. Lastly, the interior merchandise retail sector can also benefit: findings could be used to augment their service offering, by offering products and presenting merchandise that are more appealing to this market segment.

1.4 RESEARCH AIM

This research aims to investigate and describe owners[1] of townhouse complexes in the Tshwane region of the Republic of South Africa's attention to, and use of the interiors of their homes as a

[1] Owners: For the purpose of this study owners will refer to both people who own, and to those who are renting their townhouse units.

tool to express their extended selves, considering lack of opportunity to do so through the exteriors of their townhouse units.

1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Specifically referring to owners of townhouse complexes in the Tshwane region of the Republic of South Africa, the following objectives were formulated for the research:

1. To investigate and describe their attention to the interiors of their homes, i.e.:
   1.1 whether townhouse owners discriminate between the social and private zones of their homes, in terms of the allocation of their budget for interior related expenses, i.e. to design and decorate the areas.
   1.2 whether townhouse owners discriminate between the social and private zones of their homes, in terms of effort to design and decorate the areas.
   1.3 whether the interior objects that are displayed in the social zones of their homes are representative of their public selves, and/or their private selves.

2. To determine which source of interaction mostly influences residents of townhouse complexes' interior décor decisions, namely
   2.1 significant others
   2.2 reference group others
   2.3 generalized others.

3. To investigate and describe their need for uniqueness or counter-conformity, i.e. to distinguish themselves from others in the same townhouse complex through their choice of interior products for the social zones of their homes and if so, to identify which form of counter-conformity is most prevalent, namely:
   3.1 creative choice counter-conformity
   3.2 unpopular choice counter-conformity
   3.3 avoidance of similarity.

4. To investigate and describe townhouse owners' buyer behaviour pertaining to interior related objects that are used in the social zones of their homes and to determine which characteristics dominate their buying decisions.

5. To identify and explicate the interior products in the social zones of their homes that are most valued as an attempt to portray their extended selves during their interaction with others.

1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The research was exploratory and descriptive in kind. The survey involved a structured questionnaire that consisted of eight sections, namely: Section A: Demographics; Section B: Interior decision responsibility; Section C: Identification of valued possessions; Section D: Distinction of zones in the homes, and the self on display in the social zone of the home; Section E: Need for uniqueness; Section F: Buyer behaviour; Section G: Interior inspiration; Section H: Townhouse living. An additional section was included to collect qualitative, exploratory data. In this section respondents were asked to name their most valued possessions and to provide reasons why these objects were regarded valuable. The researcher and two trained assistants collected primary data through the convenient snowball sampling method during June to November 2010. The cross-sectional study reflected the situation of how residents of townhouse complexes expressed their extended selves in the social zones of their homes during a specific period of time, i.e. in 2010 in South Africa. The investigation of this specific phenomenon followed a deductive approach, which involved an intense investigation of extant literature pertaining to housing; interior design; identity formation; need for uniqueness; place attachment; all framed within the assumptions of the symbolic interactionist perspective.

The sample framework consisted of respondents who owned or rented townhouses in Tshwane, RSA. It involved males or females, between the ages of 22 and 75 years of age in the upper income categories, i.e. LSM 8-10. Data collection involved a process where the researcher, along with two trained assistants, collected the questionnaires by means of a drop-off-collect-later procedure. Data collection was difficult because it was hard to gain access to townhouse complexes and even more difficult to collect the questionnaires later on because questionnaires were completed voluntarily and anonymously and people were therefore not compelled to make an effort to return the questionnaires. The questionnaires were formulated in English only.

1.7 DATA ANALYSIS

Descriptive statistics, t-tests, Anova and factor analysis were used to analyse data. Frequencies, means and percentages were calculated. Where relevant, in terms of the presentation of the findings, results are depicted in the form of tables and figures (graphs).

1.8 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

Symbolic interactionism was chosen as a suitable theoretical framework, since it provided an explication of how people communicate and interact with others within a social context (Charon, 1979:22; Sandstrom, Martin & Fine, 2006:1; Nussbaumer, 2009:28-29). Furthermore this perspective focuses on how meanings are constructed and reconstructed in everyday life through various social processes that include interior objects (Kaiser, 1998:23). Symbolic interactionism is based on the fact that people use symbols and objects to communicate to others in a social context. Additionally it describes the way in which people maintain social meanings within their environment. In order to express a person's extended self he/she will therefore make use of social objects to display an identity that is then portrayed to onlookers. This identity will ultimately communicate a person's extended self to others. Identities are constructed and upheld through social interaction and therefore people will constantly be aware of and interested in social feedback from relevant group others. Identities are not static entities, but are negotiated in social situations in order to form a concept of the self that a person wishes to reveal to others. A person's identity formation and the display thereof, e.g. through the interior of one's home, relies on the interaction with other people and the ability to construct intended interpretations. Blumer (in Kaiser, 1998:23, 322-323) also stated that people share meanings through a process of interaction, which implies that the Symbolic Interactionism perspective would be an appropriate perspective to identify and describe if a person's interior is used to reflect that person's extended self.

1.9 PRESENTATION AND STRUCTURE OF THE DISSERTATION

The dissertation is presented in the subsequent chapters that address the following:

Chapter 1 sets the context of the study by explicating the research problem and providing an overview of the structure of the dissertation.

Chapter 2 describes the changes in the housing industry in South Africa during recent years; describes housing as a means to satisfy man's higher order needs and highlights townhouse living as a means to fulfil those needs

Chapter 3 highlights the importance of interior planning and design beyond the functional utility of the merchandise.

Chapter 4 examines the need of residents to create a unique identity, and to express their extended selves in the social zones of their townhouses through special attention to the design and decoration of specific interior spaces.

Chapter 5 introduces the theoretical perspective, namely symbolic interactionism that was used to structure and interpret the research and to organize the conceptual framework.

Chapter 6 explicates the research design and the research methodology in accordance with the objectives of the research.

Chapter 7 presents the results in accordance with the objectives for the study with inclusion of graphs and tables to aid the interpretation of the findings.

Chapter 8 presents the discussion and implications of the findings, as well as further research possibilities.

xxXxx

CHAPTER 2

HOUSING AN OVERVIEW

This chapter describes the changes in the housing industry in South Africa during recent years; describes housing as a means to satisfy man's higher order needs and highlights townhouse living as a means to fulfil those needs

2.1 CHANGES IN HOUSING ALTERNATIVES IN SOUTH AFRICA IN RECENT YEARS

In the world, housing represents the largest use of urban land, and therefore has bearing on every person on this planet (Adams, 1984). In South Africa, housing has increased rapidly to accommodate the growing population (Jenkins, 1997) and the new socio political dispensation that was introduced in 1994 has fuelled the demand for housing and brought about a significantly larger middle and higher upper socio economic group that can now afford housing. South African citizens have not always had the opportunity to reside where they wanted. The choice only became a reality after the eradication of the Group Areas Act in the early 1990's (Jürgens & Gnad, 2002). Due to several apartheid policies, races in South Africa were segregated and until the political unrest in Soweto in 1976, securing private properties was relatively unheard of (Jürgens & Gnad, 2002). Since the Democratic Elections in 1994, the demand for security in the home, and ultimately security villages, have increased significantly. Although the transition into the new government did not provide the great political unrest that was predicted, people nevertheless preferred to move to security estates in order to subdue their fear of crime (Bowers & Manzi, 2006; Jürgens & Gnad, 2002). To date the fear of crime - especially in urban areas in South Africa - remains significant and due to the annual release of crime statistics, the need for securing one's home is reaffirmed (Esterhuyse & Tubbs, 2006). When making the decision on safe living, it can be concluded that security complexes such as townhouse complexes offer a highly desirable housing alternative.

The more recent deteriorating economic conditions worldwide - including South Africa - have unfortunately slowed down new housing projects. Even though the residential sector has

experienced a decline, property remains a highly valued asset (Du Toit, 2009) and the demand for housing in South Africa remains high. In 2006 the MEC for Housing in Gauteng, Ms Nomvula Mokonyane reported that there were approximately seven buyers for every house, which included already established homes as well as new developments (Internet: South African Government Report, 2006). High density housing such as townhouse complexes will therefore continue to grow in popularity.

2.2 HOUSING NEEDS ON A PERSONAL LEVEL

Consumer demand and consumption is based on the fulfilment of needs, and property is a commodity that satisfies human needs (Delport, 2002:48; Gunter, 2000:7). A distinction should however be made between a want and a need. A want is a feeling of deficiency, a lack of something that a person desires, that is not necessarily a necessity. A want is therefore psychogenic, while a need can be described as biogenic. A need is therefore a strong desire to gain or achieve something. It will create an uncomfortable feeling until the need is satisfied (Nieman & Bennett, 2002:5; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:97). One of the foremost theories that are used to explicate human needs was compiled by Abraham Maslow (Gunter, 2000:7-9; Lamb, Hair, McDaniel, Boshoff & Terblanche, 2004:84-85; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:97-100; Tikkanen, 2009) and his needs hierarchy will be used to explain that housing can satisfy a person's needs on various levels.

At the most basic level, man's *physiological* needs can be satisfied through housing that *provides shelter.* Thereafter a person's focus shifts to *safety* i.e. the need for a shelter that is also safe, secure and that will protect one from environmental forces. Within the South African context, security has become a major concern in recent years. This concern has given rise to distinct types of residential housing developments such as gated communities and security complexes that have elevated townhouse living to a very acceptable housing alternative (Jürgens & Gnad, 2002). Since the need for safety represents a desire to be free from danger, one's fulfilment of this need will offer peace of mind even more so for those who have had bad encounters in the past. Through the type of housing chosen, one may also attempt to address *social* needs. Housing is for example used as a tool or classification system into the social networks of life, which includes some people and excludes others that are not part of the same social standing (Adams, 1984). Housing that categorizes a person through type, size and geographical area, will create a feeling of belonging in a specific social group. Housing is therefore also used as an indicator to identify a person's socio economic status (Galobardes, Shaw, Lawlor, Lynch & Smith,

2006; Yoon, Oh & Cho, 2010). In many security developments the architectural style of the house is for example prescribed to ensure that all the houses fit a certain image. Fulfilment of this need is imperative in reaching one's needs on the next level, namely *esteem* needs. This need represents a desire to feel adequate and self-confident in society. A person can for example gain admiration and the respect of his/her peers by displaying status and wealth through the home he/she owns (Lamb *et al*., 2004:84-85). This is also done through one's possessions that will provide a form of psychological surety to the home-owner. This implies that a person will demonstrate where he/she fits into the social order of society, including a select few, while excluding most others (Fernandez, 2008). Lastly a home can fulfil a need for *self-actualization*. Maslow believed that a person aspires to satisfy his/her self-actualization needs (Lamb *et al*., 2004:85), i.e. a need to reach one's full potential. This can for example be achieved through owning one's 'dream' home in terms of location, style, size, etc.

At the highest level of the needs hierarchy, the home thus becomes a commodity that symbolizes realization of personal goals and self-fulfilment (Gunter, 2000:9; Nieman & Bennett, 2002:6; Tikkanen, 2009). For various reasons, home-owners' housing needs are seldomly satisfied on all five levels: shelter, safety, social, esteem and self-actualization. Home-owners are therefore continually trying to address these shortcomings through changes in location (relocation), by acquiring another housing type or to change the architectural style and the interior of their homes.

2.3 HOUSING MARKETS AND THE ECONOMY

2.3.1 Implications for policies and the economy

Housing does not only satisfy man's needs on a personal level, but contributes to the economy of a country as well. Housing holds two major advantages for the economy. Firstly, housing is used by the economists and policy makers as an indicator of the status and direction of the economy (Lindamood & Hanna, 1979:9). If homes are being built, it not only implies that credit is available to consumers, but also that several jobs will be created in the construction process. If the economy is declining, however, the housing industry will also slow down, which has implications for the entire construction sector. Secondly, housing can be used as a tool to stimulate the economy. During periods of high unemployment, government provides funds to consumers in the form of home loans. More employment will then be created, helping the economy to rise out of the economic slump. Housing, housing finance and related economic activities have for years been important in the understanding of the behaviour of the economy and will continue to be a

key factor in trying to anticipate economic and financial developments (Bernake in Meullbauer & Murphy, 2008; Lindamood & Hanna, 1979:9-10).

Housing as a tool for controlling part of the economy is, however, not as simple in practice as in theory because the construction costs of housing vary according to different zones in which houses are built. Housing involves the erection of durable structures, implying that homes are not replaced often and that the supply of housing will be inelastic in areas where the rent or sales are not high enough to justify new construction. On the other hand, when the demand is sufficiently high, the cost of housing will be determined by the cost of construction. This includes all costs associated with the new construction (physically) as well as costs arising from natural or regulatory barriers to the housing supply (Glaeser, Gyourko & Saks, 2006). One way to cut costs and to make housing more affordable is to design and erect high-density complexes such as townhouses, even in upmarket areas. Townhouse living has therefore become popular despite negative attributes, because townhouses provide a more affordable option of residing in upmarket geographic areas.

2.3.2 Economic conditions

According to statistics released by Statistics South Africa, the residential building sector seems to be recovering from the decline in industry that resulted from the recession period in 2008 and 2009 (Du Toit, 2010). The amount of building plans approved for new houses, flats and townhouses increased by 22,8% year on year in July 2010. Du Toit (2010), from ABSA Home Loans, further states that the trends over the past few months have been encouraging, and that a continuation of this trend will have a positive impact on the construction sector at a later stage.

2.4 HOUSING IN SOUTH AFRICA: A GROWING SECURITY CONCERN

2.4.1 Introduction

Securing private houses was a rather unknown phenomenon in South Africa until the 1976 unrest in Soweto. The apartheid policies were responsible for the segregation of the races in South Africa, and so the Caucasian population lived in homes that separated residential areas through linear buffer zones. These residential areas were thus politically and police enforced gated communities. After the eradication of the Group Areas Act in the early 1990s, a change in the population structure took place, and people of all races were allowed to reside in previously exclusively ‘white’ areas. The change that this brought was a shift from the original European living style, towards a more integrated African urban environment. Along with this development

came a transition in society, as well as a fear of crime and falling real estate prices (Jürgens & Gnad, 2002).

The increase of politically motivated unrest in the 1980s and breaching of the apartheid rules (which began in the 1970s), resulted in an increased awareness of personal safety and the accompanying security measures that were implemented to protect white inhabitants of major cities. From the mid-1980s, the security sector developed into the fastest growing business sector in the South African economy (Hook & Vrdoljak, 2002). The social perception of the threat to personal safety, however, had a bigger influence on this sector than the actual criminal activities did (Coy & Pöhler, 2001; Jürgens & Gnad, 2002).

In 1991, all apartheid laws were finally abolished, and the control over the mobility of non-white people was terminated (Jürgens & Gnad, 2002). Consequently the predominantly white police force no longer focussed on protecting and patrolling residential areas, which resulted in a sharp increase in crime. After the democratic elections in 1994, the demand for security villages increased significantly. Although the new government was stable and the integration thereof did not provide political turmoil, people who could afford it (people of all races, but especially the Caucasian population), withdrew into security estates, since these estates represented the avoidance of fear and risk of crime (Bowers & Manzi, 2006; Jürgens & Gnad, 2002).

2.4.2 Urbanization and growth of cities

Urbanization is a worldwide phenomenon. It was estimated that in the year 2000, there would be at least twenty-one mega-cities worldwide, with eighteen of them found in developing countries. A mega-city can be classified as a city that consists of 10 million or more people. More than half of the world's 7 billion people are currently living in cities and metropolitan areas. This is a staggering number since only five percent of people lived in cities during 1900 (Schneider & Woodcock, 2008; World population by country: UN guesses the shape of the world by 2100, 2011). The major cities that experienced urbanization, such as New York, did so over a period of 150 years. Within that period the population grew to about eight million people. South Africa, on the other hand, is growing at an unprecedented pace due to a highly attractive urban infrastructure and the possibility of job opportunities that South Africa's cities offer. Gauteng's population was expected to double in size from seven million to thirteen or fourteen million people between 1997 and 2011 (Jenkins, 1997). Statistics published by Statistics South Africa (2011), indicates that this number is closer to eleven million people, but this number still indicates that

high-density housing options such as townhouse complexes may become even more common and more popular.

A city's expansion carries a high demand for development sites. These may require the reorganization of already existing infrastructure and the development and/or shift in residential property. Two approaches are used to understand the social objectives of the distribution of population and the economic activities of a city's development. One of the first attempts to explain urban patterns was formulated by Walter Christaller in the early 1930s by means of the *location approach*, which concentrates on finding locations for given activities. These locations can be determined by region, metropolitan area, zones, neighbourhoods or individual sites. The so-called *land use approach* was developed by Johann von Thünen in the 1820s. According to Ghisholm (2009:107) evidence of Von Thünen's approach is visible in the African continent - especially the city of Durban. This approach bases decisions on what activities should be carried out at what locations (Lee, 2003; Internet: Walter Christaller, 2009).

Four theories attempt to explain the growth in a city, regardless of using either one of the two approaches that attempt to identify the developmental distribution of populations, namely concentric circle-, axial central-, sector- and the multiple nuclei theory (Agan & Luchsinger, 1965:54-55; Floyd & Allen, 1994:54-60; Lee, 2003; Sivitanides, 2006). In the current state that Tshwane finds itself, the multiple nuclei core concept is being implemented, which concludes with the idea that multiple cores are created in the city to create multiple points for the concentric circle pattern to evolve (Agan & Luchsinger, 1965:54; Floyd & Allen, 1994:59-60; Lee, 2003; Sivitanides, 2006). These cores are developed in the outskirts of residential areas mainly through townhouse complexes.

Since space and security have steered the building industry into the direction of building complexes rather than individual housing units, developments in the housing industry have evolved to accommodate such components. Some security villages even offer 'self-sufficiency of amenities'. By providing all services such as schools, post offices, shops and sewage removal to the residents, a centralized, secure surrounding is created for a community. This offers residents the comfort of urban or town living in a secure environment (Bowers & Manzi, 2006; Jürgens & Gnad, 2002; Renski, 2009).

2.4.3 Residential mobility

As urbanization takes place, people move to cities and move around in cities. This is known as residential mobility and implies an adjustment in housing consumption. These adjustments do not rely solely on the changes within the family life cycle, but can also be influenced by changes in the social, political and economic environment and can reflect an increase or decrease in income. Housing demand is therefore associated with the family life cycle and associated income and wealth in every stage, as well as major economic and socio political forces (Clark & Onaka, 1983).

As a city grows, housing demand is withdrawn from certain areas and transferred to others, usually from the inner city to a more desirable neighbourhood and housing structure on the outskirts of the city. This has been evident in Tshwane in recent years, for example major high-density townhouse developments in the east as well as the south of the city. This relocation of demand for housing has implications such as stimulation of high demand residential areas and the depression of real prices in low demand areas (Lee, 2003). This creates a disparity between the high real appreciation rates in the value of houses in fast growing areas, and the low or negative changes in the values in other areas where equity values are extracted (Adams, 1984). Living in a high demand area such as a townhouse complex in the east or south of Tshwane may therefore not always be a cheap alternative.

Housing is associated with a family's status, social position, power and personal identity and divides people into groups within the social hierarchy (Archer, Gatzlaff & Ling, 1996; Yoon *et al*., 2010). Housing landscapes have meanings that are coherent and intentional, and will provide a display that can be understood by onlookers. Housing and residential areas are used to classify populations into socio-economic status categories. *Where* a house is situated may therefore initially be a more important consideration than the *features* of the home during the consumer decision-making process (Archer *et al*., 1996). Home-owners could then make alterations to the house in order to modify the house into what is aesthetically pleasing to them later on. With townhouses however, the only alterations possible would be in terms of the interior of the homes because restrictions in terms of the exterior of units are enforced to ensure a coherent image and to protect the value of adjacent houses.

2.4.4 Definitions and classification of houses

The type of house that people reside in can be categorized as either a detached or an attached structure. A detached structure has open spaces on all the outside walls of the structure, which

includes an attached single unit structure, for instance an adjoining private garage. An attached structure, on the other hand, will have one or more of the outer vertical walls dividing that unit from adjoining units. In townhouses, double houses, row houses, or houses attached to non-residential structures, a house will be classified as a separate attached structure if the vertical firewall separating the two units stretches from the foundation to the roof with no shared facilities. When that structure consists of only one housing unit, it is a single-unit structure. When two or more units are attached, it becomes a multi-unit structure that doesn't meet the separation criteria defining a single-family townhouse unit (Carliner, 2001; Nussbaumer, 2009:239). Townhouses are therefore defined as clusters of individual or private houses that are attached and surrounded by common walls (Roth, 2006:20).

Houses are further classified as having either sectional or full title rights. A *full title* property is also referred to as a freehold property, and includes a house, cluster houses, a smallholding, or any residential property that is used for business purposes. The term full title describes the transfer of full ownership rights when the consumer purchases the home (Internet: Freehold vs. Sectional titles, 2009). A person will become the owner of the home along with the property it is built on and all permanent fixtures on the land (for example a borehole). The Sectional Titles Act 95 of 1986 makes it possible for several people to own a separate portion of a complex, along with communal ownership of a shared portion of the complex, known as common property. It is possible for a complex to consist of freestanding units, full or sectional title, as is the case with townhouses. The only requirement is that the building must be permanent in nature and situated on land that falls in an area of local authority (Delport, 2002:28). A *sectional title* describes separate ownership of units or sections in a development or complex. When the consumer purchases a sectional title, he or she purchases only a part of, as well as an undivided share of the community property. Sectional titles are divided into many categories, which include mini subtype houses, semi-detached houses, townhouses or flats and duet houses (Internet: Freehold vs. Sectional titles: 2009). Within the South African context, many people choose to reside in townhouse communities, due to the safety these communities offer. This makes home-ownership of gated communities an extremely popular choice.

2.5 GATED COMMUNITIES

2.5.1. Relevant definitions

Gated communities or enclaves date as far back as Ancient Roman times (McKenzie, 2005). It is the process whereby communities form a spatial fortification of a smaller community through

restricting access to residential areas that were previously considered as public space and that was open to any person who wished to enter. It is characterized by surrounding walls or fences (Blandy, 2006; Bowers & Manzi, 2006; Hook & Vrdoljak, 2002). Throughout medieval and ancient times, walled fortresses like feudal castles or medieval walled towns were erected as a means of offering security by the monarch or ruling government. This transformed European citizens' residential areas into walled estates or manors with perceived power and control. In the eighteenth and nineteenth century in London, land owners began to subdivide these large estates and to lease parts of it in order to accommodate suburban growth, while still keeping the ownership of the streets and infrastructure. A wall was built around the estate to prevent the public from using the maintained roads and to uphold peace in the community (Luymes, 1997). Freehold land was seen as an economic asset, which could be exploited to meet the demand of the expanding population in the 18th century. The rapid population growth once again resulted in an increase in crime since many people were unemployed. This in turn created a preference for home-owners to reside in gated communities in order to protect themselves from criminal activities (Blandy, 2006; Bowers & Manzi, 2006; Hook & Vrdoljak, 2002).

2.5.2 Types of gated communities

Gated communities refer to walled communities, fortified villages or fortified enclaves, enclosed neighbourhoods, and security villages. Access is privatized to these communities, and controlled by various physical barriers, like walls, fences, gates and security guards. There are three types of gated communities namely:

- Lifestyle communities (offering leisure activities and aspects of personal comfort that are divorced from the surrounding city, for instance retirement and golf or leisure communities);
- Prestige communities (offering elitist social standings through sets of enclosed residential subdivisions, that are located close to, or in a city);
- Security zone communities (an inner city or suburban area that offers various security measures implemented by residents, rather than developers) (Blandy, 2006; Bowers & Manzi, 2006; Coy & Pöhler, 2001; Jürgens & Gnad, 2002).

For the purpose of this paper the specific type of gated community that will be focused on, is townhouse complexes which can be seen as a subset of the prestige community, since a social standing is achieved by association with the complex, while providing a certain level of security to the residents. Bowers and Manzi (2006) state that the term gated residential development or "townhouse complex" should be used rather than gated communities. These terms do not carry

the same negative social connotation that the term "gated communities" does and will therefore be viewed more positively.

2.5.3 Gated residential developments and townhouse complexes in South Africa

The first townhouse complexes in South Africa that were enclosed by walls were erected in 1978 by selling plots of land. Fourways Gardens (Johannesburg) comprised of 913 plots on which standardized homes were built. Most of the homes were built to resemble one another, but there were exceptions where some homes were individually designed. Other residential areas soon mimicked this idea, which resulted in what we identify as townhouse complexes today (Jürgens & Gnad, 2002).

A townhouse owner would normally own the home after he/she had purchased it and will be able to access a general communal area that is owned by a corporation of all the individual owners, which forms the Body Corporate. Usually the home-owner will have to pay a fixed monthly levy in order to make use of this common property. A levy can be defined as the costs incurred in running the complex and is payable to the body corporate. Insurance premiums, repairs, maintenance of the common property, wages and salaries of general staff, water and electricity used on the common property are all paid for by income generated from these levies (Internet: Freehold vs Sectional titles, 2009).

Mandatory membership fees, along with restrictions placed on the home-owner by the body corporate create a sense of having a private government. This 'government' can control the infrastructure of the streets, the upkeep of the resort facilities, etc. The body corporate or Home-owners association (H.O.A.) can be defined as an organization that represents the governance in the management of residents' interests. The H.O.A consists of the townhouse owners that may be all or only a representative portion, or an outsider management group that was appointed by the owners. The H.O.A is thus responsible for the control, administration and management of the common property (Bowers & Manzi, 2006; Delport, 2002:57; Internet: Freehold vs. Sectional titles: 2009; Luymes, 1997).

The H.O.A is appointed to protect property values. This is done through ensuring uniformity of the complex, for instance by not allowing any alterations to the exterior of the units, and through maintaining set standards, whether under threat from home-owners, or government. Some local governments support the idea of such complexes, since the H.O.A acts as local governments, developing the infrastructure of the complex, taking on the monetary responsibility of such

developments, instead of relying on government to provide these facilities (Hook & Vrdoljak, 2002). Other government bodies, however, see this as an authoritarian and an undemocratic manner in which such complexes destabilize the local government structures (Bowers & Manzi, 2006).

2.5.4 Benefits of townhouse living

Housing (including townhouses), in terms of its location, value and type is associated with a family's social status, power and personal identity and segregates people into groups within the social hierarchy (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:358-359). The social significance of housing is confirmed by the fact that housing and residential areas provide a relatively easy concrete measurement that is often used as a single item index to classify populations into socio economic status categories (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:363-368; Yoon *et al*., 2010). Housing landscapes therefore have meanings that are coherent and intentional, and provide a display that can be interpreted and understood by onlookers. The geographic location of a house may therefore initially be more important than any of the other prominent features during the decision-making process (Archer *et al*., 1996).

The benefits of townhouse living include security, status, lifestyle, financial and mobility factors. According to Sanchez, Lang and Dhavale (2005), security is arguably the most frequent motivating force behind the trend to live in gated communities. Walls and gates are physical barriers that prevent intrusion from unwanted elements such as crime, vandalism, drug trafficking and those who have disregard for private property (Blandy, 2006; Coy & Pöhler, 2001; Delport, 2002:56; Morgan, 2009). People who reside in townhouse complexes are often concerned with a 'good' address, and are willing to accept a smaller living space to achieve this. This market segment mostly comprises young couples, while singles, single parents, and married elderly couples without children often also prefer townhouse living due to lower maintenance, security and additional facilities to be enjoyed (Jürgens & Gnad, 2002).

Gated communities signal a higher level of amenity and status than other communities or houses would portray through connecting the home to an immediate social environment. Such complexes function as a powerful economic indicator of affluence, by excluding others that are not of the same social and economic segregation. These complexes offer additional facilities such as recreational areas, entertainment areas and areas designed for their functionality, for example laundromats and parking bays (Bowers & Manzi, 2006; Delport, 2002:56; Hook & Vrdoljak, 2002; Jürgens & Gnad, 2002; Morgan, 2009; Sanchez *et al*., 2005).

The idea that these communities have resort-like offerings and the practicality of maintenance staff make the move towards townhouse living a *lifestyle choice*, rather than a reaction towards a need for security. When such complexes are portrayed as 'rustic' escapes, the promise of a relaxing, safe lifestyle is made (Blandy, 2006; Delport, 2002:56; Hook & Vrdoljak, 2002; Sanchez *et al*., 2005). The fact that these houses share common walls and more units are built on one lot make these homes cheaper to build than a freestanding house, resulting in a more affordable housing option, considering the additional offerings, compared to a conventional freestanding home (Sanchez *et al*., 2005).

The central location of townhouses is also beneficial to home-owners in the complex. Townhouses are usually within close proximity to schools, motorways, shopping centres and the workplace, which makes it an even more attractive option to invest in (Blandy, 2006; Coy & Pöhler, 2001; Jürgens & Gnad, 2002; Morgan, 2009).

2.5.5 Disadvantages of townhouse living

Townhouse living inevitably also involves certain drawbacks such as the exploitation of the home-owner's anxiety. Developers of gated communities often exaggerate safety issues in order to market their projects. Neighbour disputes are also common, since townhouse living implies that many people live within close proximity. Rule violation in a complex can also lead to disputes since people may feel that the whole community must uphold all the rules while they do not always abide (Luymes, 1997). Such disputes could result in an unfriendly living environment, and can impact the residents in an unfavourable manner. The lack of privacy in a townhouse is another issue that townhouse owners have to deal with. The light construction, the poor acoustic insulation and the narrow space between the homes of some complexes, can result in loss of privacy. This lack of privacy which comes in exchange for security could however be seen as a privilege that other home-owners do not necessarily have (Hook & Vrdoljak, 2002; Jürgens & Gnad, 2002). Limited surrounding space as well as smaller homes at most townhouse complexes could, however, also be viewed negatively (Jürgens & Gnad, 2002).

Probably the most crucial negative aspect of townhouse living is the fact that, in accordance with the Sectional Titles Act of 1986, the H.O.A prohibits the alteration of the exterior of the units, resulting in no differentiation among the units in a complex (Jürgens & Gnad, 2002). Historically, a home's physical identity was highly valued and used to communicate the occupants' identity to onlookers (Kopec, 2006:128). With no real distinction to be made between the exterior of the units (and in some complexes there may even be more than 100 units), the only option to express

townhouse owners' uniqueness and to distinguish themselves, lies with the interiors of the homes. This elevates the importance of the interiors for residents in town house complexes.

2.6 THE IMPORTANCE OF HOME OWNERSHIP

2.6.1 Introduction and relevant definitions

Owning a property provides a person with the right to use and enjoy the property as he/she sees fit. Owning a property further affords a person with a sense of belonging to a community as well as security within that community. This is especially true in a townhouse complex since an immediate social environment exists. Along with these advantages, owning a home can also be seen as an investment (Delport, 2002:28). Research has found that home-owners are generally more satisfied with life than people that do not own their own homes. Home ownership enhances stability in society, because home-owners are also more likely to participate in voluntary and political activities and are more committed to the upkeep of their communities (Restinas & Belskey, 2002:376).

Definitions popularly used when referring to where a person resides are house, housing and the home. *House* can refer to a shelter, which is the structure and building style that provides protection for its occupants to address a basic need. *Home* on the other hand, has connotations to domestic comforts, which tie the home to emotions such as relationships with family members, refuge, rest and social comforts. This is acquired through the addition of personal belongings, e.g. furniture and furnishings, to one's house. Home refers to the process that converts a house into a home, the personification of a shell or structure into what is recognized and characterized by its occupants as personal to them. Home can thus be used metaphorically as an abstract signifier of a wide set of associations and meanings. When the term home is used to capture the essence of an experience in places, it symbolizes social meaning (Adams, 1984; Gunter, 2000:15; Manzo, 2003). *Housing* refers to the process of providing houses in a society.

2.6.2 Factors that Influence home ownership in gated residential communities

Physiological factors affect home ownership (Luymes, 1997). A home provides shelter, and offers a way to safeguard the occupants from various elements. This sense of security is vital for material welfare and personal safety. The size, style and location of the home are also physiological factors, and need to suit the prospective owner before an ideal choice can be made (Adams, 1984). The size of a townhouse, which is generally smaller, is usually seen as a

negative aspect, but the security this type of home offers far outweighs this drawback, making townhouse living an attractive option (Jürgens & Gnad, 2002).

Purchasing a home also has *economic implications* (Luymes, 1997). It can be seen as making an investment in one's future, and is on average the single most important investment a person will make (Galobardes *et al*., 2006). The home therefore gives the owners the incentive to save before and after purchase, i.e. to maintain the home and its contents and thereby increase responsible consumer behaviour. A home can only be purchased if a person has enough disposable income as well as credit available. When a home is bought, people pay for services provided by the housing unit, as well as the unit itself. When the location, physical environment of the surroundings, and the social setting of the home are favourable, the value of the property will increase substantially over time. Purchasing a home can also be used as a method for improving credit ratings, and again, the purchase price of the home can be used as social exclusion. This is due to the fact that not all members of society can afford to purchase a home, especially not a luxury home in a particular area (Adams, 1984; Cocco, 2004; Delport, 2002:50).

Housing is a major indicator of *personal wealth*. A household's consumption patterns are influenced by their social aspirations. The higher up in the social order a person wants to be, the more elaborate his/her home tends to be. In a townhouse complex, no distinction can however be made between the housing units, since they all resemble one another, but townhouse living may offer a family an elevated position within the social hierarchy through its location and image. This distinguishes townhouse owners from others that do not reside in that complex. Townhouses offer a more affordable option when considering what type of home to purchase, but the levies that need to be paid monthly serve as a tool for social and economic exclusion because many may find the levies unaffordable in the long term (Sanchez *et al*., 2005).

Housing is also influenced by *individual factors* (Luymes, 1997), because it satisfies emotional wants that are fundamental in providing psychic welfare. Psychologically, the general appearance of the home, the age of the property, the condition of the property, recreational facilities available, the layout of the home, the amount of privacy and the quality of the home may influence residents' attitudes, mental health, interpersonal relationships and satisfaction with family life (Adams, 1984; Delport, 2002:49). A house can also serve as an extension of one's self, i.e. communicating to society who you are and wish to be, and or where you belong within the social hierarchy.

A person's *culture* will influence the choice of the home greatly (Luymes, 1997). This is due to the socialization process through which a person learns his/her acceptable cultural norms and values. This implies that the norms will prescribe what type of housing structure, tenure, space, neighbourhood etc., are acceptable for different ages and family compositions (Lindamood & Hanna, 1979:87-89). For example, even though an elderly couple who is extremely wealthy, resides in a two bedroom townhouse, they will not be thought of as not conforming to cultural norms, but merely that they do not need the additional space a five bedroom home offers. Residing in a townhouse is apparently acceptable across many cultures, and across different stages of the family life cycle (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:55; Solomon, 2007:426).

Social factors are pertinent during housing decisions (Luymes, 1997). Housing units in themselves are neutral but their uses are social and involve a classification into social categories. Housing sets the stage in which the social events of the home-owner are displayed. Some of the social reasons for home-ownership include stability, security, increased social status and educational influence (Adams, 1984). Stability of owning a home, offers a person an established place in the social hierarchy of society. Success is measured primarily through consumption and one of the most important items of consumption is housing. People view a home as a reward for achievement, and it will thus increase a person's social status. Housing is a way for the home-owner to communicate to society the desired place in the social rankings a consumer wishes to belong to, because housing makes social and cultural categories visible, by including a select few, and excluding the rest of society. According to Adams (1984) a homeless person is seen as being lower in the social hierarchy than a prisoner. The market value in a given location can thus be used as a means of social exclusion. Another form of social exclusion is that of zoning. Zoning was originally used to protect the family-orientated residential neighbourhoods. Zoning divides the upper and middle class members of society, and helps them affirm their claim to membership in a particular stratum of that society, while denying membership to those who cannot afford it. Residing in a particular townhouse complex provides social exclusion, due to the limited access it presents. This is mostly for security reasons, but recently social reasons are included to further this segregation.

Perceived risk also influences housing decisions (Luymes, 1997). It refers to the uncertainty consumers face when they cannot foresee the consequences of their purchasing decisions and that may vary depending on situations and people. The amount of risk a person foresees depends on the subjective interpretation of the level of uncertainty (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:187; Van Greuning, 1993). Several types of risk are involved in purchasing a home. Purchasing a home can be seen as making an investment in one's future and is on average the

single most important investment a person will make (Galobardes *et al*., 2006). Purchasing a home therefore poses pertinent financial risk for a buyer, since a large amount of money is committed over a long period of time without being sure of personal - or the family's future financial prospects (Floyd & Allen, 1994:276-278). Purchasing a home can also be used as a method for improving credit ratings, and the purchase price of the home is significant in terms of income level and social exclusion. This is due to the fact that not all members of society can afford to purchase a home in a particular area (Adams, 1984; Cocco, 2004). A household's consumption patterns are influenced by their social aspirations. This implies that social risk is also involved in the purchasing decision of one's home. The higher up in the social order a person wants to be, the more elaborate his/her home tends to be. Although no distinction can be made between the housing units in a townhouse complex because they all resemble one another, the area in which the specific complex is located may offer an elevated position within the social hierarchy (Sanchez *et al*., 2005). Psychological risk will also influence the decision, since a person's sense of belonging, achievement and individuality will be affected by the type of home one can afford. People use their homes as an extension of the 'self' and a home that seems unsuitable may affect one's self-concept negatively.

2.7 SUMMARY

Housing addresses human needs on various levels, namely physiological-, safety-, social-, esteem- and self-actualization levels (Lamb *et al.,* 2004:84). Housing alternatives have changed considerably in South Africa since the 1990s, due to socio political changes in the country as well as changes in the economy. On the one hand a fear of crime has motivated an increased preference to reside in security complexes, while increased urbanisation and changes in the global economy have changed housing types. The erection of multiple townhouse complexes has also changed the growth of cities. In Tshwane in particular, the multiple nuclei core concept is implemented, especially on the outskirts of the city and especially through the erection of townhouse complexes. Townhouse complexes have become a popular form of tenure, and are classified as clusters of individual or private houses that are attached to and surrounded by common walls. Despite multiple advantages, i.e. security, status, lifestyle, financial and mobility factors, townhouse complexes unfortunately also pose negative consequences such as exploitation of anxiety, exposure to neighbour disputes, lack of privacy and the inability for the home owner to alter the exterior appearance of their homes. This study focuses on one of these disadvantages, namely the fact that the different units in a townhouse complex look identical or are similar in terms of their exterior façade. While a house provides shelter, it also serves as an

extension of one's self but, considering this restriction, the interior has to suffice in order to communicate to onlookers where the residents fit into society, their social standing and who they wish to be. The interior of one's home may hence be optimized to allow the personification of a space to express a person's extended self and to counteract lack of opportunity to do so through the exterior of one's home.

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CHAPTER 3

THE HOME AND ITS INTERIOR

This chapter highlights the importance of interior planning and design beyond the functional utility of the merchandise

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Since one's home provides the ideal place to portray a home-owner's extended self (Fernandez, 2008), the design of the home's interior may require much attention. The personification of the home's interior implies that some effort is made to enhance the quality and aesthetics of the space, i.e. to optimise interior spaces and to make them more beautiful. Historically as well as in our current society, interiors are changed to fit in with social norms (Ireland, 2009:1). The home becomes an embodiment of the owner's personality and a refuge from everyday life. Winston Churchill once said that people shape their environments, where after the environments shape them (Nielson & Taylor, 2007:4). It is therefore important that a home reflects a person's extended self, so that a person or family feels comfortable on a social and psychological level, namely to fulfil higher order needs, and that it provides a place of physical comfort and security, namely to fulfil basic needs of the occupants.

Research conducted in recent years suggests that the home could be a projection of the occupants' personality, by communicating to society who the occupants are and where they belong within the social hierarchy (Kempen & Ozaki, 2006; Moore, 2000). The home is therefore often regarded as an embodiment of the residents' aspirations, needs and personality (Gunter, 2000:157; Kempen & Ozaki, 2006), and an extension of the self. In order to express one's extended self through the interior of one's home, a person uses various props (Rengel, 2007:258-259), such as furniture, furnishings and additional interior accessories that would support the relevant "self" (Ireland, 2009:13-14).

The expression of the self is mostly driven by a need to be unique. Wouters (in Van Gorp, 2005) explains that most individuals want to be different in some way, in order to give meaning and

value to their lives. This need should however not be viewed as a desire for isolation from others and non-conformist behaviour with regard to a society that seems monotone, but rather as a balance between individual identity and interdependence of important others. The home fulfils a pivotal role in creating this balance and can be used as a method to clarify and reinforce a person's self-identity. In order to transform a house into a home however, the occupant has to personify the home externally and/or internally (Arnold & Graessch, 2002).

In terms of the exterior of the home the personification of one's home would involve attention to elements such as its architectural design, significant features such as finishes used, attention to the entrance of the home, design of the garden etcetera. The exterior of the home can reveal much about the home's residents. Although the home's exterior is a symbol with regard to style, size and location it can generally not be altered easily. Although expression of individuality with regard to the exterior of a residence might be an option for people who live in full title freestanding homes it is not for owners of townhouses, as previously stated. The Home Owners Association of a townhouse complex prohibits the owner of a unit from altering the exterior of his or her home. All the units in a complex are therefore usually similar and non-distinguishable. These restrictions leave the occupants with no alternative other than to personalise the interiors of their homes if they wish to reflect their extended selves.

In terms of expressing an extended self in the interior of the home, it may involve attention to the spatial design and a meticulous selection and application of wall treatments, furniture, furnishings as well as accessories, such as paintings, to create an image that is in accordance with what home-owners wish to obtain and to portray to others (Ireland, 2009:14). The interior of one's home is easier to change and offers a way in which a person can develop and express his/her identity over a period of time (Arnold & Graessch, 2002; Gram-Hanssen & Bech-Danielsen, 2004).

3.2 THE GROWING IMPORTANCE OF INTERIOR DESIGN

As a blend of various disciplines, interior design refers to the manipulation of space, form, texture, colour and light in interior spaces to enhance the quality of human life. Since people are spending an ever-increasing amount of time indoors, it is imperative that interior spaces should contribute to a person's well being and have a positive influence on people's socialization and learning processes (Kilmer & Kilmer, 1992:2).

The origin of interior design is unknown. What is known, however, is that before the nineteenth century, developing civilizations created shelters to protect themselves from the elements and other threats (Whiton & Abercrombe, 2002:1-2). As people became less nomadic, they started to erect more permanent structures. Farming gradually replaced hunting and therefore people started to gather into communities to build structures for shelter, storage and protection. The Egyptians developed the idea of differentiating interior space. Their large production of crop harvests needed to be hoarded, and so buildings were erected exclusively for storage purposes (Ireland, 2009:46; Kilmer & Kilmer, 1992:3-4). As civilization developed further, they began to build structures such as temples, ceremonial spaces and their famous tombs (Blakemore, 2006:2). Greek and Roman civilizations took inspiration from Egyptian architecture but developed it further, creating more elaborate and specialized spaces such as temples, bathhouses and arenas. Their buildings projected a search for meaning and beauty in design (Kilmer & Kilmer, 1992:4).

As materials and building methods improved over time, in accordance with geographical locations, so did the personalization of the built environments. By the eighteenth century interior spaces served as more than mere function. It became the embodiment of taste, décor and embellishment (Blakemore, 2006:2-3; Kilmer & Kilmer, 1992:4).

3.3 INTERIOR DESIGN - AN ART OF EXPRESSION

3.3.1 Introduction

As can be gathered from the previous discussion, the interior of buildings from the 18th century onwards was and is still used as an appropriate location to overtly display the extended selves of the persons who live in these environments. Goffman (1969:19) refers to such a display as a "front", i.e. expressive objects that are intentionally or unwittingly used by persons during their interaction with others. It therefore involves the setting for interaction within a social context. Applicable to this study is the interior of townhouses, namely the use of furniture, furnishings and additional decorative interior objects to create a desirable environment for interaction. In order to form and express an identity within such a "front" that symbolizes a person's extended self, an individual communicates symbolically with others through the use of interior objects in their homes. People "learn" how to do this through interaction with others, namely that symbols become a "quasi" language. They therefore need to recognize and acknowledge or interpret the symbolic meanings that would be relevant and appropriate and how it may be used for identity expression.

3.3.2 The history of interior design

According to Hutchinson and Demirbilek (2005), architecture comprises two major facets, namely the exterior expression of a building, and the complimentary interior. Interior design is concerned with the form, function and functionality of an interior space, and was greatly influenced by the Bauhaus movement. During this period, emphasis was placed on the integration of design, art and science in the built environment. This means that the elements of interior design comprise aesthetics and technology, which coherently create a home that is aesthetically pleasing and that functions optimally (Allen, Jones & Stimpson, 2004:10-11; Binggeli, 2007:3; Hutchinson and Demirbilek, 2005).

The meaning of domestic interiors is not fixed. From the mid-nineteenth century to the twentieth century it became synonymous with ideas generated by, and for women. Men inhabited the home, but the home was predominantly feminine, with a select number of rooms represented as masculine. It was custom for men to gradually allow their wives to dominate the aesthetic decisions relating to the household (Binggeli, 2007:7; Sharp, 2004:11; Sparke, 2004:72). The implication of this relationship between women and their homes resulted in an increased effort by women to instil meaning into their homes by means of the products they selected and purchased (Sparke, 2004:72). Through the process of personification, women found a means to represent themselves in terms of cultural domains, family life, social class etc. This was done to display their personal identities through possessions (Girlilng-Bud, 2004:27; Sparke 2004:72-73). Professionalized interior decorating by women, as an element of fashion, was therefore considered as a respectable means of generating an income. At this point in the nineteenth century emphasis was placed on the interior of homes as an indication of social status (Binggeli, 2007:7; Sparke, 2004:73). Educational programs were developed to train people in the field of interior decorating in the late 1800s. By the 1930s, interior decorating and interior design began to emerge as a more serious professional commitment, and by the 1960s, interior design became an important force in residential and commercial design. By the 1970s interior design was established as an entity on its own apart from the field of architecture.

The differences between an interior designer and an interior decorator are as follows: the designer is qualified by education, experience and examination and is concerned with the interaction of people with their interior spaces to enhance the function and quality thereof. Furthermore designers are concerned with using interior spaces optimally in a manner that is also aesthetically appealing for the purpose of improving the quality of life, increasing productivity and protecting health, safety and welfare of people. Interior decorators, on the other hand, are concerned with the selection and combination of decorative materials and objects that will add to

the aesthetics of a space only. In other words, decorators are responsible for adorning an interior with fashionable and aesthetic elements and although this is a valued component of interiors, it is not necessarily concerned with human interaction (Binggeli, 2007:7-10; Pitrowski, 2004:3-4).

3.3.3 Fundamentals of interior design

3.3.3.1 Interior design and interior decoration

According to Kilmer and Kilmer (1992:89), all fields of design utilize theories of design compilation to create a desired visual effect. Several types of designs can be created, such as structural, decorative or applied, naturalistic, organic, geometric, abstract or metamorphic design. Regardless of the type of design selected, certain design elements and design principles will apply. Design elements refer to space, line, form, shape, texture, time, colour and light, while design principles refer to the use of design elements to create balance, rhythm, emphasis, proportion, scale, unity, harmony and variety. Design elements and design principles are integrated to enhance the aesthetics and functioning of, for example, an interior space (Allen *et al.*, 2004:76-93; Kilmer & Kilmer, 1992:89-96). Fundamental to the design of an interior space, are the layout of the rooms i.e. space planning, selection of colours, materials and products as well as the aesthetic embellishment that will establish the theme or ambience (Binggeli, 2007:6).

3.3.3.2 Important components of the interior design process

There are five key components or tasks in interior design processes. The first is the programming phase where client needs are determined and the goal of the project is set out. The second phase involves schematic design, where the initial space planning and furniture planning is drawn up. The third phase is design development, where the schematic design is redefined and materials are chosen. The fourth phase involves the contract of documents and drawing of sketches while in the last phase of contract administration, the plans are executed and overseen (Pitrowski, 2004:39-51).

In this study, the focus will be on the combination of the second and third phases of the process, thus when space planning is done and where certain activities are allocated to certain zones in the home, incorporating the furniture and fixtures that will allow for such activities (Pitrowski, 2004:43-46). As any other home, townhouse residents firstly have to plan a space to accommodate certain activities. Furniture therefore has to be suitable for such activities and the space has to adhere to certain aesthetic qualities for the residents. In a townhouse complex residents are presented with a “canvas” where the floor and wall finishes have been pre-selected.

Apart from re-painting the walls, the furniture, soft furnishings and accessories of residents are the only features that will distinguish the style of the home from that of their neighbouring townhouses.

The floor finishes of a home are selected based on their aesthetic quality, structural aspects, durability and maintenance. Each type of finish has a unique symbolic attribute, and contributes to a room's grandeur and formality. Several considerations apply when selecting a flooring option for one's home. Residents of townhouse complexes do, however, not necessarily have that option available to them and mostly all the units' flooring is the same. Residents would then have to lay loose area rugs on existing floors to create the visual idea or impression they prefer (Allen *et al.*, 2004:302-310; Binggeli, 2007:423-435; Kilmer & Kilmer, 1992:428). Wall finishes may be a fundamental part of the wall, or it may be an applied layer that does not affect the structure of the wall. Wall finishes provide the backdrop or canvas for the interior of a home and the type of finish can even be determined by pertinent trends, e.g. wall paper or wooden panelling or paint techniques (Binggeli, 2007:436-446; Kilmer & Kilmer, 1992:444-449).

The furniture of a home has a big influence on aesthetics and can be used as an extension of the self for the residents of that home. Psychological theorist Carl Jung stated (in Yoon *et al*., 2010) that a person's self can be expressed in built form, i.e. a house symbolizes the external shell for this expression. Furniture is then used to further the image of the self that a person wishes to portray to others. Furniture fulfils physical and psychological functions and therefore without furniture a home is just an empty shell or house. Furniture is used for more than their physical attributes. With the use of furniture and the arrangement thereof, a person can achieve aesthetic pleasure and convey symbolic meaning (Gunter, 2000:131; Kilmer & Kilmer, 1992:486; Yoon *et al*., 2010). Even though changing furniture to express an extended self would be a more affordable option than to purchase a new home, furniture consumption is generally the second largest expenditure a household has to make (Lihra & Graf in Yoon *et al*., 2010). Living room furniture is generally the most expensive and frequently purchased.

Furniture can be used for impression management (Goffman in Gunter, 2000:132). By placing furniture in certain arrangements, it can be used as a tool to indicate how people should behave in that particular setting, e.g. if two chairs are placed alongside each other in a 90 degree angle, an intimate conversation area is created. Several factors influence a person's choice of furniture, e.g. cost, style, colour, material, construction quality, durability, or current stage of the family life cycle. Historically, however, the nature of the furniture and size and materials used were the main considerations when people purchased furniture (Leslie & Reimer, 2003; Yoon *et al*., 2010).

The three main considerations when choosing furniture in our current society are function, aesthetics and cost (Yoon *et al*., 2010). Aesthetics are then further subject to meaning, for example antique furniture or modern furniture that reflect a person's style and extended self.

The addition of soft furnishings to a room enhances the environment (Gunter, 2000:132-133; Internet: Soft furnishings, 2010; Internet: Interior Design, Soft furnishings, 2010). Soft furnishings refer to linens, such as draperies, curtains, cushions, valances, tiebacks, wall panels and upholstery work. Smaller items are known as *passementere* and refer to items that add a decorative element to the fabrics, such as trims and braids (Allen *et al.*, 2004:289; Internet: Soft furnishings, 2010). These may be part of pertinent trends or interior styles.

As with soft furnishings, additional interior objects are displayed to further personify an interior space through expressing the individual's character (Creusen & Schoormans, 2005; Kilmer & Kilmer, 1992:520). Furnishings should be suited to the interior in terms of space, form, style, texture, colour and scale, while keeping in mind that it should enhance the overall design feel of the space. Accessories are used for enhancement of the aesthetic quality of the space, but are not essential. Accessories may be functional or aesthetic or both. Functional accessories include objects such as lamps, glassware, coat racks and letter trays. Decorative accessories can provide a sense of uniqueness to a room and are used purely for visual impact, e.g. figurines, baskets, personal collections, clocks, artwork, plants, signage, lamps, books, mirrors and graphics. Some of these items will be discussed in the section to follow (Allen *et al*., 2004:265-270; Kilmer & Kilmer, 1992: 521-524).

3.3.4 How interior design is incorporated into the self

The interior of a home represents a space where people express who they are through various objects and décor methods. Thorstein Veblen (in Girling-Budd, 2004:27) maintained that objects are used in a competitive manner, in order to display status and wealth, the more conspicuous the objects, the wealthier the purchaser. His theory was adapted to not only apply to the values of the higher-class consumer, but also to incorporate those further down the social hierarchy.

As with the dimensions of a person's self, a home can also be divided into public and private spaces that characterize areas where people are received and entertained, or are excluded entirely. According to Gunter (2000:96-97), the interior of a home, especially public spaces, will certainly be characterized by the occupant's personal touches. The resident's extended self (personal touches) can be indicated in various ways, for example through furniture choice, choice

of furnishings and incorporating additional decorative accessories. The style in which someone's home is decorated represents their current lifestyle as well as their inspirational lifestyle. Possessions are therefore used as a tool to communicate the home-owner's extended self (Kempen & Ozaki, 2006; Van Gorp, 2005; Gunter, 2000:116).

Various needs are satisfied through the decoration of an interior space. One such a need is the satisfaction of displaying a person's extended self through personalizing the interior living environment. The room must therefore not only be physically comfortable, but physiologically comfortable as well. The interior design and choice of the interior décor is therefore characteristic of the residents. It is also important that the home is aesthetically pleasing to the occupants, since a beautiful home provides the occupants with a sense of well being. The home's interior is therefore truly used as a medium through which the occupant's extended self is projected (Gunter, 2000:58, 157-161).

3.3.4.1 Interior related purchase decisions

Interior purchase decisions are multifaceted, because they reflect the complexity of social structures and value systems of people. The main motivations with conspicuous consumption are an emulation of influences by one's reference group and its affiliations (Girling-Budd, 2004:27-37). Six roles of product appearance can be distinguished when making an interior purchase decision. Firstly, aesthetic value pertains to the visual pleasure an object provides, without considering the utility of the object (Holbrook in Creusen & Schoormans, 2005). Aesthetic responses are mainly connected to a person's emotions, implying that they reflect personal information about people. Intrinsic preferences are imperative in aesthetic value and include factors such as unity, proportion, symmetry and colour. The aesthetic judgement of a product is controlled by the perceived aesthetic fit of that particular object in the environment where that object will be used. The second role of product appearance is the symbolic value. Objects communicate symbolic value to people, but what is communicated depends on the context of the object (Creusen & Schoormans, 2005; Van Gorp, 2005), for example an object may be used to suggest status (through the use of brands) or individuality (through the use of unique design). The third role is concerned with the functional value of a product, which concerns the utilitarian functions an object has to perform (Veryzer, 1995). This function of an object can be visible in its appearance and therefore it can be used to give onlookers a specific impression about the functional value of the item, i.e. a chair that is suitable for a dining table. The fourth role of product appearance involves the adjustment of an object to human qualities, or ergonomic values (Creusen & Schoormans, 2005; Veryzer, 1995). Ergonomics refers to the comprehensibility and

usability of an object, which implies that if a person owns a standing lamp, but uses it for reading, the light should be adjustable so that enough light can reach the person to successfully and comfortably fulfil such a task. The fifth factor people consider when purchasing interior objects is the object's attention drawing ability. Attention refers to the information processing ability of stimuli. Stated more simply, it is the ability of an object to draw your interest (Engel, Blackwell & Miniard in Creusen & Schoormans, 2005). People react to objects that stand out from their surroundings and that are unusual or different. These objects can also be classified as counter-conforming objects. The last role of product appearance is the ability to categorize objects. Objects that are categorized are visually typical. It is the ability of the object to be associated and blend with a certain style or category. If a person residing in a townhouse complex, however, wants to display objects where prestige, exclusivity or counter-conformity is highly important, objects should be atypical, i.e. different to the norm (Creusen & Schoormans, 2005).

3.3.4.2 Professional help in terms of interior design projects

A difference exists between an interior designer and a decorator, therefore the services offered by these two parties will vary. An interior decorator would assist a person with the embellishment of the interior finishes and will assist the client with selecting and arranging fabrics and furnishings in terms of a particular theme or scheme. On the other hand, an interior designer will analyze a client's needs and requirements, and will then integrate these findings with existing knowledge to formulate a preliminary design. After a discussion with the client, a final version of the design will be drawn up and presented with the appropriate considerations taken into account. Thereafter working drawings and specifications will be compiled and the designer will collaborate with other professionals who are also working on the project. The designer will oversee the administration concerning the project and will evaluate the design solution upon completion (Allen *et al*., 2004:2). An interior designer would also assist his/her client to select and purchase appropriate pieces of furniture and other decorative elements, since the designer should have knowledge of sourcing strategies, and availabilities of styles, combined with the ability to build on a concept that the client has presented or desired. Furthermore interior designers should have a good understanding of the quality of products and their construction, as well as a good understanding of scale and proportion. Interior designers consider the ergonomic fit, applicable health and safety codes and also the environmental impact of their designs, all while taking into consideration the budget of the client (Binggeli, 2007:461). An interior space that is designed by an interior designer would thus acknowledge the relevant functional, financial, ergonomic, aesthetic and durability needs and requirements of a client. Professionals, however, also need to

draw up a client profile first to ensure that the interior decisions would match or support a client's personality and qualities, namely their extended selves.

3.4 SUMMARY

Literature states that the home is ideally used as an indication of the residents' social standings and is therefore an appropriate avenue in which to portray their extended selves. To accomplish this, people make use of various props regarding the exterior as well as in the interior of a home. Altering the exterior appearance of a home may be an option for people who do not reside in townhouse units, however, the H.O.A of a townhouse complex prohibits this for the residents of said complex. The interior of a townhouse unit is therefore the only suitable option for such an expression of the self. Interior design, i.e. the manipulation of interior objects in a functional and ergonomical manner that is conducive to the lifestyle of the residents, and interior decorating, i.e. adorning the home in an aesthetical manner, are therefore key components in the transformation of a blank canvas (house) into something that symbolizes the residents' extended self (home). Interior design and décor have changed over recent decades into separate respected professions. In order for a home to be associated with a person, the interior should be representative of the home-owner's extended self and that could be achieved through choice and acquisition of interior objects and the display thereof in a particular way in one's home. This can be accomplished with the assistance of an interior designer and or decorator, providing a client profile is drawn up to ensure that the interior solution supports a client's extended self, or might even be attempted by the home owner himself.

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CHAPTER 4

EXPRESSION OF ONE'S EXTENDED SELF THROUGH THE INTERIOR OF YOUR HOME

This chapter examines residents' need for uniqueness, and to express their extended selves in the social zones of their townhouses through special attention to the design and decoration of specific interior spaces

4.1 EXPRESSION OF A PERSON'S EXTENDED SELF

For the purpose of this study, a person's need for uniqueness should be seen as the urge to create an identity, social or personal, that will distinguish him/her from other people in such a manner that is revealing of what that person wishes to represent through their extended self, as well as what he/she would like others to associate them with. It can be classified as the pursuit of creating an individual identity that represents a person's extended self, through the acquisition, utilization and character of consumer goods and encompasses the tendencies to engage in acceptable counter-conformist behaviour (Tian & McKenzie, 2001). A person's extended self can thus be reflected through the objects (that is representative of the self) that a person consumes in order to represent and/or support his/her identity (Solomon, 2007:162).

An identity is formed through a self-categorization or identification process. The consequence of the self-categorization is that a person will be perceived as belonging to a certain social group. Social comparison, on the other hand, will accentuate the differences between individuals in a reference group. This further underlines the idea that a person wants to portray a unique identity in a particular reference group (Kempern & Ozaki, 2006; Stets and Burke, 2000). The need for uniqueness is a trait of pursuing being different relative to others. This is done through the acquisition, utilization and nature of consumer goods in order to develop and enhance a person's self-image and social image. The consumer goods used to satisfy these motivations are found in various categories, brands and styles (Tian, Bearden and Hunter, 2001).

Identity should not be seen as a fixed entity, but rather as an ongoing process of construction (Van Gorp, 2005). Identity was not an issue in historical times, where people were assigned identities, rather than it being selected or adopted by themselves. In current times, however, identity should be seen as the need one has to decipher who one is within a constant changing environment (social contexts). This identity can either be social or personal in nature. Social or public identity can be defined as the extent to which the individual identifies him/herself in terms of group memberships, whereas personal or private identity consists of the particular attributes that distinguish a person from others. Public and private identities should not be seen as opposites from one another but as an interrelated concept, since public identities provides status, and either enhances self-esteem or criticizes a person's private identity (Howard, 2000).

This need to be different can be driven by an independent motivation to feel unique, but for the purpose of this study, the focus will fall on a motivation to display counter-conforming behaviour. A need for counter conformity arises when people feel a threat towards their identity, which is displayed through their extended self. It occurs in situations where individuals perceive that they are highly similar to others, for instance the similar appearances of townhouse units in a specific complex will drive a person to counter-conforming behaviour. People will thus tend to deviate from the norm in such instances in order to alleviate the threat to their extended selves (Tian *et al.*, 2001).

Individual identity (including that of public identity) is characterized by patterns of thoughts, emotions and behaviours that distinguish a person and that are related to personality. Personality in turn, is the combination of traits that is innate to a person and is therefore consistent and predictable. A person's possessions and clothing, for example, are seen as a reflection of an individual's personality, and ultimately his/her extended self (Leslie & Reimer, 2003; Rengel, 2005:258; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:141). A person has not only one, but multiple selves, which reflect several possibilities of extended selves that might be portrayed in the interior environment (Rengel, 2005:258; Solomon, 2007:157). Social relationships are therefore fundamental in the development of a personality (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:116), which further emphasizes the importance of the social aspect of a person's extended self.

In most societies there is a need to stratify or to categorise people. In these societies, the higher strata are almost always idealized. This is evident in the fact that people who find themselves in the lower strata usually strive to better themselves, and to ultimately belong to the idealized group (Goffman, 1969:30-44). This implies that people will attempt to express their ideal selves in their

interiors, in order to gain respect and association with their current social group, or a group that is situated higher in the social hierarchy.

4.2 EXPRESSION OF PLACE IDENTITY

Inevitably all aspects of a person's extended self will in some way have place related implications: individuals develop a bond that is attached to a certain place through emotional content, and will therefore construct place identities that bind them symbolically and emotionally to a specific place (Knez, 2005). Place identity is inevitably connected to an individual's sense of self and should be looked upon as a cognitive structure that contributes to an individual's self-categorization and social processes (Kempen & Ozaki, 2006; Mannarini *et al.*, 2006). Identity is the embodiment of qualities expressed in tangible ways that distinguishes a person from others (Rengel, 2007:257). Place identity as a development of the extended self is therefore not restricted to distinction between a person's self and significant others, but is rather extended to include objects and the places in which they are found (Kempen & Ozaki, 2006; Knez, 2005; Kopec, 2006:62). Belk (2010) emphasizes that the home therefore serves as the locus of the extended self.

A distinction should however be made between a sense of place, place attachment, place dependence and a place identity. A *sense of place* is merely an experimental process that is created by a setting, combined with what a person brings to such a place. A sense of place creates a feeling of belonging. *Place attachment* is known as the bonding of people with various places through identity related aspects as well as objective criteria (Kempen & Ozaki, 2006; Kopec, 2006:62; Moore, 2000, Nussbaumer, 2009:31) and *place dependence* is the perceived strength between the association of a person and a specific place. *Place identity,* on the other hand, is the development of the dimensions of the self, in relation to the physical environment (Manzo, 2003; Nussbaumer, 2009:31). Place identity can thus be classified as the interpretation of the self that provokes a sense of being at home. Furthermore it is the interpretation of the self, which is represented through environmental meaning to symbolize identity (Cuba & Hummon, 1993). Acknowledging the differences among these concepts, it is necessary to note that place attachment and place identity are closely related, since both are concerned with the bonds between people and places. Place identity stems from an initial attachment to a certain place. This attachment evolves and adjusts to enable a continuity of identity across environmental changes (Mannarini *et al*., 2006; Moore, 2000).

Identity, in general terms, is the internal subjective concept a person has of him/herself and connects the own personality with the social environment over a period of time (Van Gorp, 2005). Identity is the embodiment of qualities expressed in tangible ways that distinguishes a person from others (Rengel, 2007:257). Place identity as a development of the extended self is therefore not restricted to distinction between a person's self and significant others, but is rather extended to include objects and the places in which they are found (Kempen & Ozaki, 2006; Knez, 2005). Place identities, just like a person's extended self, are not static, they change as peoples' activities or processes change in relation to places. The relationship to places reflects the on-going process through which people affirm and re-affirm their extended selves (Gram-Hanssen & Bech-Danielsen, 2004). This relationship to places can be both a conscious and an unconscious process, but will only be a conscious process if objects (such as the attributes of a house and/or the interior) are specifically chosen to communicate the occupant's extended self (Van Gorp, 2005; Manzo, 2003). Because meaning is attached to the interior and the objects that are characteristic of the residents of a home, the interior of the home can be used to establish the identities of the residents and reflect their extended selves (Kempen & Ozaki, 2006). Olson (1981, 1985 in Belk, 1988) explains that young couples would for example choose objects for their home to reflect their future plans and goals (e.g. status objects to indicate that they are upwardly mobile) while older people would most likely refer to possessions in terms of social power and status. Parents in general tend to be more possessive and materialistic than their children due to an accumulation of possessions over time.

4.3 UTILISING PRIVATE AND PUBLIC ZONES IN A HOME TO EXPRESS ONE'S EXTENDED SELF

The home, just as a person's extended self, can further be divided into public and private spaces. Within this study, the focus will be placed on the public zones or *front region* of a home. The social zones of one's home are the general entertainment areas and should reflect the family's lifestyle, values and identity (Allen *et al*., 2004:205; Kempen & Ozaki, 2006; Kilmer & Kilmer, 1992:205; Nielson & Taylor, 2007:129). It represents the area where guests are received and entertained and provide the ideal "canvas" for displaying and categorizing the home-owner's extended self. These zones refer to the living and dining rooms of the home and may include the kitchen area in an open plan home. The so-called *back region* can be defined as a place where actions within social contexts are knowingly contradicted. These are known as private areas and represent a place where the residents do not have to adhere to the set social norms that

accompany their social position. Such places are bedrooms and bathrooms (Goffman in Sandstrom *et al.,* 2006:108).

Limiting the use of one part of the home for social occasions, allows the owners the opportunity to display objects in a conspicuous manner that is representative of the owner's extended self. This will enable visitors to gain a better understanding of the occupants, since gathering information of the home-owners is made easier (Gunter, 2000:95-97).

The dining room is part of the social zone of the home, but has changed in function over recent years. This room was considered the Victorian parlour, but in our current society the dining room is considered multi-functional (Gunter, 2000:106). The room, especially in smaller homes where the functions of rooms are shared, has now become a place of dual purpose and should be decorated to fill all the functions that will be carried out in that space. This implies that dining rooms that function as a study should have the available space for documents and a personal computer, etcetera. The living room was originally referred to as a drawing room, since people literally withdrew into the room with their guests. The poorer people merely named it their front room, but also gave great attention to such a room. Both the drawing room and the front room were decorated conspicuously in order to reveal the occupants' public extended selves to onlookers or guests (Gunter, 2000:106-107), and similarly today such rooms are decorated in a specific manner to communicate the same message to onlookers, regardless of the various functions that such rooms have to accommodate.

Since space is generally limited in townhouses, these homes usually offer open plan living areas. This implies that the living and dining rooms are often found as occupying a single shared space, enhancing the importance of this space to allow for both activities.

4.4 DISPLAYING IDENTITY THROUGH CHOICE OF OBJECTS

4.4.1 Objects as a form of communication

When engaging in particular situations people seek to acquire information about others. This is an ongoing process, whereby people will add new information to their existing knowledge of that person (Goffman, 1969:1). A person could for example gain such information by entering a townhouse and depending on the particular interior people would collect cues and derive information. One might learn that someone likes to travel by recognizing artefacts from a specific place in the interior of the home. The information gathered from the décor and interior style, is

then used to create a social climate that is conducive to facilitate conversation amongst people (Gunter, 2000:144).

People consume objects in a meaningful and self-conscious manner. The manipulation of the interior of one's home through the use of objects can communicate information about the owners to onlookers (Kempen & Ozaki, 2006). This implies that objects are bought as an extension of the self, focusing on the 'me', since objects are bought for what they signify based on the meanings attached by society. The reason for this is that objects are visual in nature and carry symbolic meaning to the sender, as well as to the receiver, implying that consumption has become an important part of communication with others (Leigh & Gabel, 1992; Van Gorp, 2005). Objects can communicate personal as well as social messages to others, depending on whether they provide information about someone's personality or their culture or status respectively (Gunter, 2000:116).

People can manipulate their interiors through the use of such objects in order to form a controlled environment that will or can influence the way guests perceive the situation or themselves. Expressing a person's extended self in the interior in a calculated manner, will lay the foundation of the kind of impressions or responses he/she would like to evoke. This process can be conscious or unconscious in nature, but is only unconscious when a person does not intentionally try and manipulate the situation. The interior for example, will be decorated in a certain manner, because it is socially accepted to present the interior in such a manner, and not because a person consciously tried to create an impression (Goffman, 1969:5-6). The effects or messages of these items in the interior space depend on the publicly recognized symbolic meanings thereof (Tian *et al*., 2001). When objects are consumed for not only their material needs but also for that of a person's social needs, those objects can be seen as conspicuous objects. These objects are highly personalized and reflect aspects of a consumer's identity (Elliott, 1997; Shukla, 2008). Objects will only be chosen by an individual if it is accepted in a situation by that person's particular social group. It is therefore acknowledged that the individual's extended self is only formed through social context (Wilska, 2002).

Upon entering another person's home, just like assessing a person's apparel, people are thus interested in acquiring information that will assist them in determining a person's socio-economic status, his/her concept of self, attitude towards others, level of competence, interests, trustworthiness etc. (Goffman, 1969:11-12). This information will help visitors to define situations and will enable them to form certain expectations of situations, as well as to define what is expected of them in that particular situation.

4.4.2 Counter-conformity in the choice of object

Objects that are highly personalised are classified as conspicuous objects. Conspicuous consumption was first noted by Thorstein Veblen (Solomon, 2007:474) and implies consumption of products merely for the sake of consumption to display meaning to others. When decorating a person's home, people tend to prefer objects that are typical and familiar in their social environment (Gunter, 2000:136). These objects are referred to as preference for prototypes. People tend to conform to set norms and standards when faced with difficult choices, and will therefore choose the option that has proved to be successful and accepted in the past. Status groups tend to monopolize styles and genres for their group, and are therefore commonly used as a point of reference. However, when people feel that their identities (extended selves) are threatened, namely that they are perceived as highly similar to others (for example in townhouse living), they may feel the need to counter-conform. This is done in order to alleviate the threat of appearing similar in a situation that is regarded as monotone (Tian *et al*., 2001). Objects that are chosen in order to display an individual's extended self in a counter-confirmative fashion can either be a creative counter-conformity choice, unpopular counter-conformity choice or an avoidance of similarity choice (Tian & McKenzie, 2001). A creative product choice represents an object choice that is acceptable by a person's reference group, yet novel in comparison to product choices made by the group. The unpopular product choice deviates from the acceptable products that the reference group will normally choose and such a choice will therefore carry a significantly higher social risk than the other choices. These products can even be considered as unacceptable, which is why it is rarely used. The last option for an individual is to choose a product that is still accepted by the reference group, but rarely chosen. This choice represents products that deviate from the popular choice in that not many people in a particular social group will possess these products (Tian & McKenzie, 2001; Tian *et al*., 2001).

The idea that a person's extended self can be displayed through home furnishings is appealing regardless of the type of counter-conformity pursued. This is due to the fact that it may be more easily accomplished through possession types that have a broad range of varieties within a product category. Self-expressive objects that are ranging in the lower level price categories can be replaced frequently without major financial losses. Products need to be replaced from time to time, since people are in an ongoing process of self-development and because the popularity of products change over time, making some products more accepted as a commodity and less reflective of the uniqueness of a person. There are several types of possessions, but those products that are used for their expressive value, are bought to emphasize symbolic meaning, rather than for their functionality. Many people own items that are used for practicality merely as a necessity. The products that are most expressive in nature are aesthetic products and are not

actually intended for their functional value (Tian & McKenzie, 2001; Tian *et al.*, 2001). In consumption theories identity is seen as being of immense importance, since consumption has both a self-defining and self-expressive nature (Van Gorp, 2005). A person that wishes to express a private extended self or personal identity, rather than a public extended self or social identity, will favour objects that carry individualistic symbolic meaning instead of objects that are symbolic of group memberships or social status. Status items or products on the other hand, reflect collective individuation, and will be preferred by people that require acceptance from and association with a certain reference group (Tian & McKenzie, 2001).

The symbolic value that objects carry is constructed by society and may change over time. When products are being consumed conspicuously, they communicate through symbolic meaning to onlookers (Van Gorp, 2005). It is therefore imperative that consumers understand their various meanings and know what is acceptable to their reference groups and what schemas are applicable. People will therefore purchase products that they believe are congruent with their selves (Kleine, Kleine & Kernan, 1993). Consumer materialism closely relates to conspicuous consumption, but describes the degree to which consumers become attached to possessions (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:128; Solomon, 2007:143-146). Materialism is a construct that is also considered as a personality trait. One's personality involves one's self-concept and inevitably possessions are used to support or enhance your self-concept.

A person develops a self-concept throughout his/her lifetime (Wilska, 2002). This is done through an individual's socialization process, and is then further enhanced by the image that person wishes to portray, namely where one wants to belong within a broader society. The concept a person has of the self is not only the actual idea of the self, but also the idealized idea of what that person would like to portray. In order to display an extended self through home furnishings, an individual must have a clear image of the self-concept that he/she wants to create or confirm, as well where that person wants to fit in with society. When all of these criteria have been established, the individual will start to acquire products that carry significant symbolic meaning. This will help to signify what that person wants to communicate to society, whether it is to belong to a certain reference group (public extended self), or whether a person wishes to display private information about the self (private extended self). When a person is placed in a situation where there is limited distinction available (for instance in a townhouse complex), that person will feel the need to counter-conform, and will do so through the consumption of goods and display of such products to aid the process.

4.5 SUMMARY

Identity is an on-going process and is formed through a self-categorization process. Identity can either be personal in nature, i.e. the personal attributes that distinguish a person from others, or social, i.e. an identity that is indicative of group membership. An identity (irrespective of personal or social identity) is formulated within a social context and is indicative of a person's social group. Literature suggests that all people will to some degree have a need for a unique identity. This need for uniqueness is the pursuit of being different to others, i.e. an identity that will differentiate a person within a particular social group, while still indicating to which social group he/she belongs to, and is achieved through a counter-conformative manner. This counter-conformation can either be creative (consuming acceptable products in a novel manner), unpopular (consuming objects that are rarely chosen within a person's social standing) or avoiding similar objects (consuming objects in a fashion-leading manner). Personal identity will have place related implications since emotional and symbolic bonds are created with places. Place identity, as an extension of the self, will therefore include not only a personal identity, but will also extend to include objects and the places where they are found in; in this instance the interior of a townhouse unit. As with a person's extended self, the home also has private and social zones. Traditionally interaction with guests takes place in the social zones of a home, which allows the resident to adorn these areas of the home in such a manner that is revealing of what that person wishes to communicate about the self, to others, i.e. through conspicuous consumption. Consumption has become an integral part of the communication process, whereby objects transfer personal and social messages to others. What is then communicated about the extended self is expressed through the acquisition, nature and use of interior products in a counter-conformative manner. It is therefore imperative that people understand the underlying meanings of objects, as well as the ability to judge which objects are acceptable in their social surroundings.

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CHAPTER 5

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE, CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This chapter introduces the theoretical perspective namely symbolic interactionism that was used to structure and interpret the research and to organise the conceptual framework.

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The fact that people have the ability to communicate with one another implies that humans are involved in constant interaction and can thereby actively shape their environments. Symbolic Interactionism attempts to explain how people communicate and interact with others in a social environment (Charon, 1979:22; Sandstrom *et al.*, 2006:1). Symbolic Interactionism is focused on human interaction in social situations; it pursues the study of social actions and social objects (Kaiser, 1998:23; Sandstrom *et al*., 2006:4). It centres on the social activities that occur between people and concentrates on the manner in which people create and maintain social meanings in situations. This is done to form and maintain a position within the social hierarchy of a person's environment (Sandstrom *et al*., 2006:6). In order to express a person's extended self an individual will make use of symbols to communicate to onlookers their desired social image, in the same way that people communicate their selves through their clothing and personal appearance (Belk, 1988; Piacentini & Mailer, 2004), it can also be done through the design of the interior of their homes, for example in a townhouse. Intentional choice of interior objects could be used by owners of townhouses to communicate their extended selves to onlookers, especially so because townhouses are very similar to that of others in the same complex.

5.2 THE MEANING OF HOME, DESCRIBED THROUGH SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM

5.2.1 Introduction

Symbolic interactionism is rooted in the fact that humans are set apart from other creatures on earth because of their ability to communicate symbolically with themselves, and with society (Mick, 1986). The ability to use symbols and language as communication tools allows people to interact with society and to determine how behaviour should be structured appropriately. This implies that people are active participants in controlling their existence. Nature and human nature do not, however, remain static, but change constantly, suggesting that humans are involved in an ongoing process of interaction (Charon, 1979:22-23; Leigh & Gabel, 1992).

5.2.2 Basic assumptions of symbolic interactionism

Symbolic interactionism rests on five main assumptions (Kaiser, 1998:39-46). The first is that humans create their own realities. This is done through the nature of human interaction and can be defined as the social activities that occur between people, and is the way in which people create, negotiate and change social meaning in order to build and maintain social order (Charon, 1979:22; Internet: Symbolic Interactionism as defined by Herbert Blumer, 2005; Kaiser, 1998:41; Sandstrom *et al*., 2006:7). The second assumption is that in order to act a certain way, people use symbols (Kaiser, 1998:42). Symbols have shared meaning that is assigned to it by society. Symbols therefore provide cues for behaviour, organize behaviour, and allow people to formulate responses in various situations (Blumer in Kaiser, 1998:24). Thirdly, people act towards objects and other people on the basis of their meaning. People thus use cues provided to them by objects to interpret information and to attempt to organize their actions accordingly (Blumer in Kaiser, 1998:42). This assumptions further state that people act in the present, and although society has constructed opportunity for the use of objects, people may also question these opportunities and develop new frameworks for on-going interaction. The fourth assumption is that meanings associated with symbols emerge from social interaction (Kaiser, 1998:42-44; Van Gorp, 2005). People discover meanings of objects through social experiences. To understand social interactions and meanings, people must take into account the viewpoints of others since meanings change within different contexts. This interaction to differentiate meaning occurs externally, but also requires an internal element namely communication with the self (Kaiser, 1998:44; Van Gorp, 2005). The last assumption is that meaning can be manipulated and modified through interpretive processes. Blumer (in Kaiser, 1998:44) states that even though meaning is connected to symbols, people are likely to either try and maintain or alter meaning as

required by, or in accordance with the situation. Therefore meaning is always provisional and subject to revision or interpretation (Charon, 1979:38-39).

The five main assumptions will be discussed in depth in the following section.

5.2.2.1 The nature of human interaction through the use of symbols

In order to display an identity, which is expressed through a person's extended self, people communicate symbolically to others. Humans convert experiences into images and symbols that carry specific meaning. The process of perception therefore involves the interpretation of information in order to arrive at meaningful situations. People do not merely react to stimuli, for example a brand name, but rather actively seek out stimuli, assessing what is relevant to a particular situation, in order to gain an understanding of a person or the circumstances (Sandstrom *et al*., 2006:8, 28). The process of interpretation of symbols can only occur through meaning that is learned by a person from his/her socialization process, i.e. shared meaning (Kempen & Ozaki, 2006). Through the recognition of specific brands, styles and interior objects, onlookers can therefore deduce another's social status and position within the social hierarchy.

When people enter the home of another person, the interior serves as a tool to communicate symbolic meaning, i.e. messages about the extended self of the home-owner (Belk, Bahn & Mayer, 1982). Material objects are therefore viewed and interpreted in terms of their symbolic meaning and not only on their physical attributes, e.g. being beautiful. These objects communicate more information to onlookers than only functional value (Banister & Hogg, 2004; Clarke, Micken & Hart, 2002). People therefore interact with one another verbally, as well as through material objects.

Human social life and interaction depend on the use of symbols. Through symbols, people engage in a socialization process that aids to understand their cultures as well as the role a person has in relation to others. Social reality depends on the socialization process, i.e. a person's interaction with others and a mutual understanding of people that one is surrounded with and a culmination of knowledge about others, their possessions and their behaviour (Charon, 1979:40-41).

5.2.2.2 People interact through the use of symbols

Even though all items carry meaning, a distinction should be made between signs, objects and symbols. A sign is directly connected to an object or event and requires a response, produced by a person's physical presence that is fixed or habitual (Charon, 1979:50; Mick, 1986; Sandstrom *et al*., 2006:29). Objects are items that do not necessarily carry significant meaning to a person, while symbols are social objects defined in interaction, and are meaningful as well as significant to both the user and the receiver. A symbol becomes an abstract representation of something else whenever it symbolizes a construct of meaning. The meaning is arbitrary, implying that meaning cannot be examined by the nature of the object, but rather through the implications that society has intended for the object (Charon, 1979:35; Denzin, 1969; Kempen & Ozaki, 2006; Sandstrom *et al*., 2006:30). A coffee table that is for, example, meant to be used for its practicality only can also communicate symbolic meaning, e.g. being cheap or uninteresting. A coffee table that is representative of a certain era, for example the Art Deco era, has practical value but moreover its aesthetic nature symbolizes an individual's ability to afford an impressive, scarce object.

Symbols are abstractions that allow a person to understand the experience in the current situation, as well as experiences that transcend the immediate environment, along with communication. Symbols also allow for the creation and acquisition of culture (Sandstrom *et al*., 2006:30-31). Symbols thus provide the basis for categorizing experiences within a larger frame of reference. An object of social meaning provokes a common mode of response from people because meaning is created extrinsically, although it is dependent on time, culture, situations and people, and is thus not set in a fixed position.

The last important issue concerning the meaning of symbols is that it emerges and is transformed through communication as people learn how to define meaning of symbols within a social context (Sandstrom *et al*., 2006:31). People will thus use objects in the interior of their homes to symbolically communicate their social standing, or their desired social standing to others. This communication depends on a mutual understanding of the representative symbolic meaning of the objects in a society, a cultural group or a social structure (Schultz, Kleine & Kernan, 1989; Solomon, 2007:72). If one uses an object in one's home, it can only communicate the intended message if visitors to the home understand the message the same way the owner does.

5.2.2.3 A person acts within his/ her present circumstances

Human behaviour is not static, but evolves continually. A person therefore possesses many selves, due to changing circumstances and environments. An individual has a mind and a self that are always involved in a process of assessing a situation, communicating (with the self, as well as with others), interpreting and judging what actions he or she should follow in a specific social situation. Social situations usually occur in confined interior spaces. Truths, ideas, attitudes, perceptions and perspectives will therefore be derived based on the situation, i.e. the physical environment, in which they occur (Charon, 1979:23). A person is therefore in an on-going process of communication, assessment, interpretation and judgement of his/her surroundings, including the interior of his/her home. This is done in order to identify and consume objects that represent the person's extended self, in terms of his/her social standing and the stage of the life cycle in which that person finds him/herself in. Understanding the meanings of symbols is pivotal in this regard. In terms of interiors, communication takes shape and is done for example through interpretation of brands, furniture styles, prices and scarcity of the interior objects.

5.2.2.4 A person's interactions occur externally as well as internally

A person usually acquires the appropriate skills to communicate effectively through his/her socialization processes. Socialization is an on-going, interactive practice through which people develop identities and learns how to think, feel, act and behave in accordance with the norms of the society in which people find themselves. People are continually and actively engaging in actions that shape and influence the outcome of their socialization process, e.g. conversations, meetings, interactive activities. Through socialization and through the acquisition of various resources and skills that develop over time a person's creativity and autonomy is enhanced. Socialization has multiple purposes and outcomes and can be defined as either primary or secondary. Primary socialization refers to the process through which children's development is shaped in order to learn to become mature, responsible members of society and this type of socialization is acquired from the core social institutions like the family. What a child will learn from primary socialization is their culture and who they are (the self). Secondary socialization, on the other hand, refers to a more specific formal training during one's life (Sandstrom *et al*., 2006:58), for instance learning how to construct an interior environment that communicates the desired message to others.

An important outcome of primary and secondary socialization is the development of the self. The self can be defined as a social object that changes through interaction with others. The self is

further shaped by social forces. Charles Horton Cooley explained that children obtain an idea of who they are through their interaction with others (Jacobs, 2006:68). He developed the concept of the 'Looking-glass self', implying that a child will gain an understanding of him/herself through the 'reflection' of the self, provided by others (Sandstrom *et al*., 2006:59; Solomon, 2007:159-160). First a child will imagine how he/she appears to others, especially important others like family. Thereafter the child will imagine how these others judge him/her. Guided by these interpretations, the child will then develop a self-feeling. If this feeling is good, the child will feel gratified, but if the feeling is bad, the child will gain an undesirable self-image (Solomon, 2007:161-162). This process continues throughout a person's life, and is thus constantly changing. This idea of the self is based on what a person thinks others see in them, and is not based on the others' actual reflections, making these assumptions imagined reflections that are open to misinterpretations (Sandstrom *et al*., 2006:59; Solomon, 2007:159). A person may thus intentionally use objects, e.g. interior objects in the home, to manipulate his/her extended self so that onlookers may make certain inferences about him/her.

While Cooley (Sandstrom *et al*., 2006:59) developed the concept of the looking-glass self, George Herbert Mead proposed that this development happens through the process of role taking during primary socialization. The acquisition of abilities that will ultimately lead to the expression of identity happens in sequential stages, ranging from the preparatory, to the play, to the game, and to the reference group stage and will be discussed in detail in the following section (Sandstrom *et al*., 2006:62). The earliest stage of the self is referred to the *preparatory stage*, i.e. the most primitive state of being when children lack a developed sense of the self and have difficulty to distinguish own roles from those of others. This is merely a stage where imitation of others occurs, without any understanding of meaning and/or symbolic understanding. It is only through repetition of experiences that meanings become clear, and after children learn their names, the capacity of self-reflection emerges and children will have entered the next stage (Charon, 1979:68; Sandstrom *et al*., 2006:62-63). The *play stage* emerges as children learn to master language skills (Charon, 1979:68-69), and develops the ability to label objects based on their shared meaning. An understanding of roles develops as children learn to emulate others through play, for example performing roles fulfilled by significant others like the child's mother or father. Children learn to prepare for future fulfilment of such roles through the anticipatory socialization process, for example a child will form a perception of how a home should be adorned through playing with doll houses. There is also a type of play that does not prepare one directly for future roles, such as fantasy roles. Whether the role is real or imaginary, children respond to the self in the same fashion as others would respond to them. Through these role-takings, children become more socially astute and self-reflexive. As the level of activities

increase, children will evaluate themselves through multiple perspectives, which create a better development of the sense of the self (Sandstrom *et al.*, 2006:63). The *game stage* represents the organization and assuming of the perspectives of several others simultaneously. The 'game' differs from 'play', in that the game stage has an organized set of rules or procedures to which the individual must adhere (Charon, 1979:69-70). This stage requires a person to respond to him/herself in terms of interrelated roles assumed by others. Through the development of these skills, a person starts to look at the self through not just one perspective of the other, but also from the perspective of the group (Sandstrom *et al*., 2006:63-64). Mead does not mention a fourth stage, but Shibutani stated in 1955 (in Charon, 1979:70) that this is an important stage, and uses it to explain the idea that several generalized others exists. A person does not only interact with one group of people, but with several different groups. The perception of the self will then change depending on which company one finds oneself in. When continued interaction with a reference group is maintained successfully, the perspective they have of the person will, at least, temporarily become the perspective of the generalized other. A reference group can be defined as a group of people that serve as a point of comparison for an individual. The reference group provides the foundation on which values, attitudes and behaviour is based (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:312). When assuming this perspective, a person has an understanding of the expectations and standards of the situation, and should behave accordingly. Through internalizing standards and outlooks of generalized others, a person gains a more consistent and unified self. As a person's social experiences become more varied and complex, a more stable self emerges. Mead did however recognize this occurrence and labelled this "a self in the fullest sense" (Charon, 1979:67-71).

A person's self is inevitably reflected through his/her possessions, for example one's clothing and the interior of one's home, which serves as an extension of the self. Through on-going development of the self, a person therefore constantly evaluates and re-evaluates the interior of his/her home, based on the values learned from significant others in constantly changing environments as influenced by the changing circles of reference group others. People will depict themselves through objects that will enhance their self-concept, and will avoid products that will not have the desired effect (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:137). In order for a person to formulate appropriate behaviour in a given situation, or to formulate a proper representation of the self in the interior of their home, it is necessary to understand what is expected of each participant in the situation. Roles enable people to prepare their actions in order to behave in the manner that is appropriate and that will fulfil expectations and obligations relevant to that position in society (Sandstrom *et al.*, 2006:62-64). Role-taking refers to taking the perspective of others in a given situation. This process begins and continues as a person decides how to act in a situation, in

order to determine how others define and experience the situation. A person will evaluate the response of his/her actions, and then either discontinue, adjust, postpone, redirect or pursue the course of action, in order to try and coordinate his/her responses with the reactions and performances with others.

The ability to participate in role-taking relies on three factors. Firstly, the extent of a person's own social experiences, direct experiences, as well as indirect observations; secondly, the conventionality of the roles in a given situation; and lastly the degree of familiarity of the other party. These factors will determine whether or not a person will successfully engage in active role-taking (Sandstrom *et al*., 2006:127-129). Role-taking is important on several levels. Taking the role of others is the starting point for the emergence of the self. The direction of the self in a situation is only possible through the ability to take on the role of others, as well as learning the perspectives of others. Role-taking is also necessary for determining, and coping in social situations. It gives a person control over the interaction in a situation by manipulating, directing or controlling others. Role-taking provides the basis for cooperation between people, human symbolic communication and the ability to love. Lastly role-taking allows a person to see the present situation from past experiences, along with a future perspective (Charon, 1979:103-108). Role-taking provides a person with a vision for the interior of their home. Depending on which role a person wishes to communicate, the interior will vary. If for instance someone wants to reveal to others that he is a successful businessman, the interior of his home will disclose such information through the quality and type of products bought and how and where they are displayed. Through the unspoken meaning of these objects, onlookers will gather that the person holds a specific position/role within the social order of society.

5.2.2.5 People actively shape their environments

Mead (in Sandstrom *et al*., 2006:64) stated that the self is fundamentally social in origin, and will emerge and become established through interaction with others. The self is also a process that is reflexive and communicative in nature. The interaction process is important, because roles of others and of the self are learned, and so a person will gain an understanding of the social world and the interior context in that world. In society it is assumed that people who possess certain social characteristics, have a moral right that others will value and treat them in an appropriate way (Goffman, 1969:11). In order to gain a place within the social hierarchy, a person's extended self has to be shaped appropriately.

The self consists of two key aspects, namely the "I" and the "Me". The 'I' refers to the self as a subject, a person's self-concept and self-identity (Mittal, 2006). It encompasses the spontaneous, impulsive and initiating tendencies of a person and can never be fully socialized or controlled by society or the person self. The "Me" refers to the self as an object, the internalized attitudes of others through which one views oneself. The internal conversations between the self as the subject and the object, provides the self with the basis for organizing and controlling one's behaviour (Charon, 1979:84-85; Internet: Symbolic Interactionism as defined by Herbert Blumer, 2005; Sandstrom *et al*., 2006:65). An individual does not merely act towards others, but towards him/herself, implying that a person can be the object of his or her own actions. There are several actions a person takes towards the self namely, self-communication, self-perception, and self-control or self-direction (Charon, 1979:73-80). These actions will determine the concepts that are most important to the self.

Herbert Blumer proposed that because a person possesses a sense of the self, he/she is provided with the ability of self-interaction (Sandstrom *et al*., 2006:95-96). This will form and guide a person's actions in society. Mead explained that the self is cognitive, thus conversations are internalized (process of thinking or rationalization). With the process of self-indication (to define and make sense of the situation at hand) a person sees, evaluates, assigns meaning, and considers actions based on this meaning through an internal process. Information on how to act is communicated with the self, in order to communicate information about the self to others. For people to communicate effectively with others, whether verbally or through the use of an interior space and the use of objects, one must have a clear understanding of what needs to be communicated. This makes the process of self-indication very important (Charon, 1979:73).

With self-communication, a person analyzes and defines a situation, which may specifically relate to his/her interior surroundings. Information is gathered concerning the whole situation, including information on how the self is perceived in the situation. This assessment allows a person to determine how the circumstances affect the self, as well as providing possible routes of action available to the person. This assessment can include the evaluation of, for example, furnishings in an interior environment in a home. If the interior represents the owners' self-concept, that person will uphold the status quo. However, if the interior does not reflect the resident's' desired extended self, alternative actions or coping strategies must be taken. Ideas about the self are labelled the self-concept, which represents the picture of what a person has of the self, not only the actual idea of the self, but also the ideal idea of the self that the person wishes to portray to others. The idealized self forms a big part in a person's self-concept, and forms the basis for self-judgement and eventually the judgement of others. There are several key components that

contribute to a person's self-concept, namely that of the physical self, referring to a person's actual physical characteristics; social self, responses linking to a person's social roles; reflective self, abstract constructs transcended to specific social situations and the oceanic self, vague statements about the self that does not conclude what form of behaviour is to follow (Charon: 1979:74; Sandstrom *et al.,* 2006:99).

Rengel (2005:258) on the other hand states that the self can be divided into five categories, i.e. the *actual self* that signifies what a person actually sees of him/her (Van Gorp, 2005), namely the true or authentic self; the *ideal self*, which is how a person would like to be seen (Lee, 1990); the *social self* is how a person perceives others to view him/her within a social context (Van Gorp, 2005); this differs from the *ideal social* self in that the ideal social self represents the ideal manner in which the person would like others to perceive him/her within a social context, and not how a person is seen in the light of the social self (Solomon, 2007:157; Van Gorp, 2005); and lastly the *expected self*. It is important for a person not to be associated with only one of these selves so that one could adjust and respond favourably to as many circumstances as possible (Sandstrom *et al*., 2006:115; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:138).

This study focuses on the social self, which refers to a person's social roles and statuses. The expression of a person's extended self in the interior of his/her home could reflect upon a social need to indicate where one belongs within his/her social standing. The interior of one's home is seen in context with people's recent pasts, backgrounds and personalities, and will reflect how a person perceives an event, occasion, degree of affinity, familiarity, demand and control over situational factors. It is often difficult to determine which self should be displayed in the interior. In most instances people tend to display their best qualities, omitting other less desirable qualities. Generally the ideal extended self is reflected because people want to perceive themselves positively (Schmitt, Branscombie, Sylvia, Garcia & Spears, 2006). Identity that is represented through the expression of the extended self in the interior of one's home, therefore becomes an even more complex issue when there is not a single person, but multiple people that need to be acknowledged in a space. Research indicates that in circumstances such as these, a group or a family will display their extended selves as a collective unit (Rengel, 2005:271).

Apart from the above, it is necessary to point to the fact that in creating the perception a person has of the self, an individual has the ability to order, direct and control the self. This implies that a person does not merely act passively to situations, but enables people to direct actions in order to participate in society. These actions are organized and planned intentionally to fulfil a purpose, depending on the situation as well as on the others present. Self-control is thus directed by the

perspectives of others (Charon, 1979:80-82). Since a person has the ability of self-indication, he/she can assign meaning to a situation. This is done to make sense of an interior of a home. A person needs to be able to understand the meaning behind the objects in the interior, in order to communicate the desired meaning to onlookers or guests.

The role of the social zone in the home is therefore aimed at facilitating the expression of the desired extended self of the occupants. This adornment is done through conspicuous consumption, i.e. the consumption of objects, such as interior objects, to impress onlookers (Friedman & Ostrov, 2008).

5.3 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

5.3.1 Conceptual framework

5.3.1.1 A brand choice model

As explained earlier, consumers' personal identities (extended selves) and their personalities can be defined through the products that they consume. A consumer's consumption of products is based on the interaction of the consumer's' self-concept and the image of the specific product. The symbolic meaning of a product could be more important than the product's actual functionality when it comes to consuming products that express identity. When products are purchased for public viewing (conspicuous consumption), the product will inevitably communicate information about the owners to onlookers. This communication occurs through symbolic interaction and is based on the fact that the product has a socially shared meaning (Lee, 1990; Leigh & Gable, 1992).

The conceptual framework compiled by Lee (1990), depicts how a consumer will choose a specific brand that bests represents a person's situational self, i.e. how a consumer wishes others would perceive him/her (Figure 5.1). This model will first be examined, where after an adapted version will be discussed in terms of its application in this study.

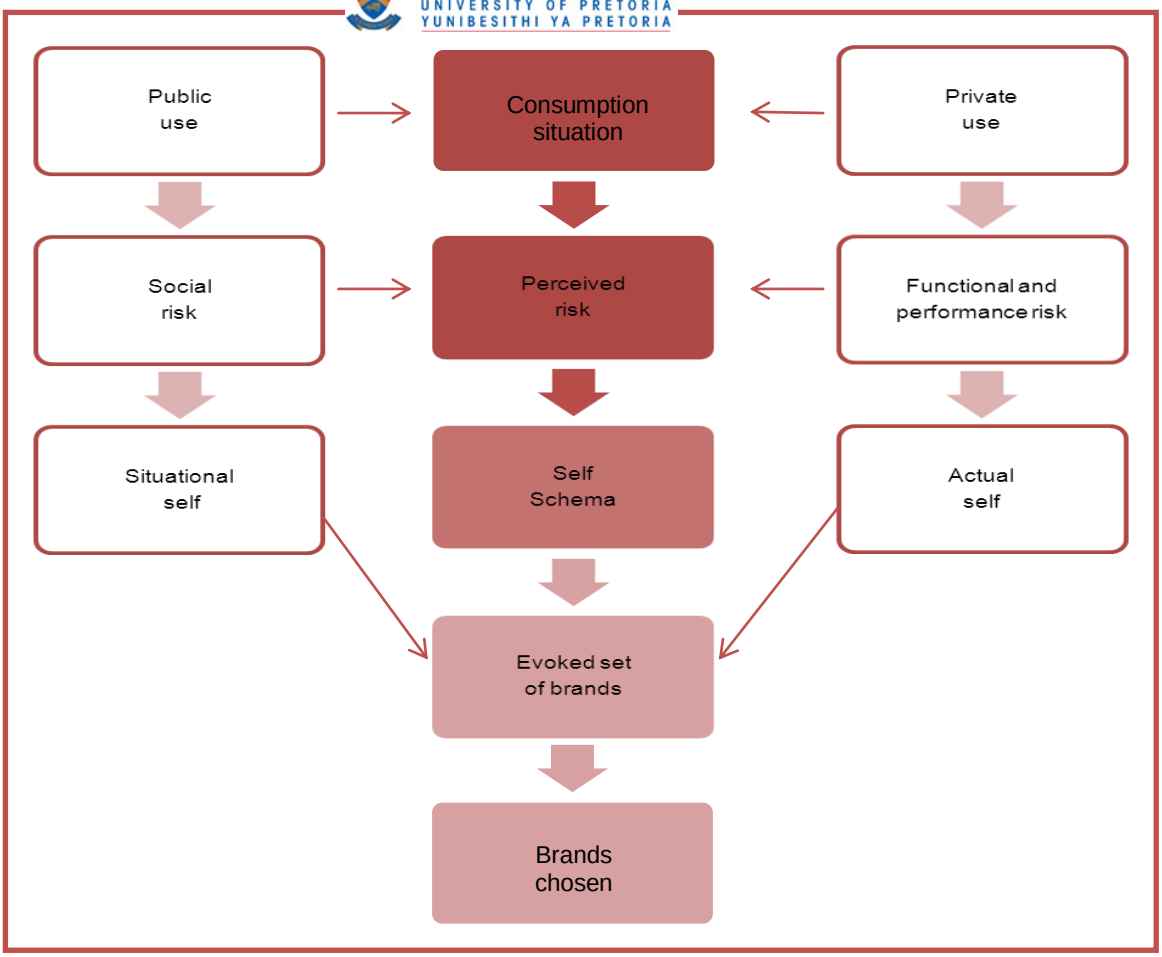

FIGURE 5.1: A BRAND CHOICE MODEL (Lee, 1990)

The first consideration proposed in this model is that one has to determine whether a product is meant for a public or private consumption. Public consumption, for example in the living room of your home, implies a high degree of visibility and conspicuousness and will imply an increase perceived social risk (Lee, 1990), namely that others will judge a person based on the products purchased for consumption and will evaluate the appropriateness thereof, in accordance to social standards that they mutually comprehend. The so-called living room status scale (Solomon, 2007:468) is an example of this application. This social risk that is perceived when a product is consumed for public use signifies a higher degree of risk compared to performance and functional risk, namely whether an object will be able to perform as expected. A person will attempt to anticipate the public consumption situation and will hence establish a situational self through a self-schema. This schema will enable a person to create certain social situations connected to the self that is related to the consumption of products. Through this fictional situation, the consumer will identify the self in relation to the symbolic meaning that the selected product expresses. Through this mediation, communication between the consumer and others occur. Therefore the invoked situational self-concept guides the brand choice process, while the evoked

set of the self compares the brands with one another. After comparing the identified brands as possible or suitable products for consumption, a person will choose the brand of which the image is the closest to the situational self for consumption for the anticipated situation (Lee, 1990).

5.3.1.2 Conceptual framework for the study

The model drawn up by Lee (1990) depicts the influences on a consumer's choice of a product or brand that best represents that person's identity. It was then adapted as conceptual framework for this study (Figure 5.2).

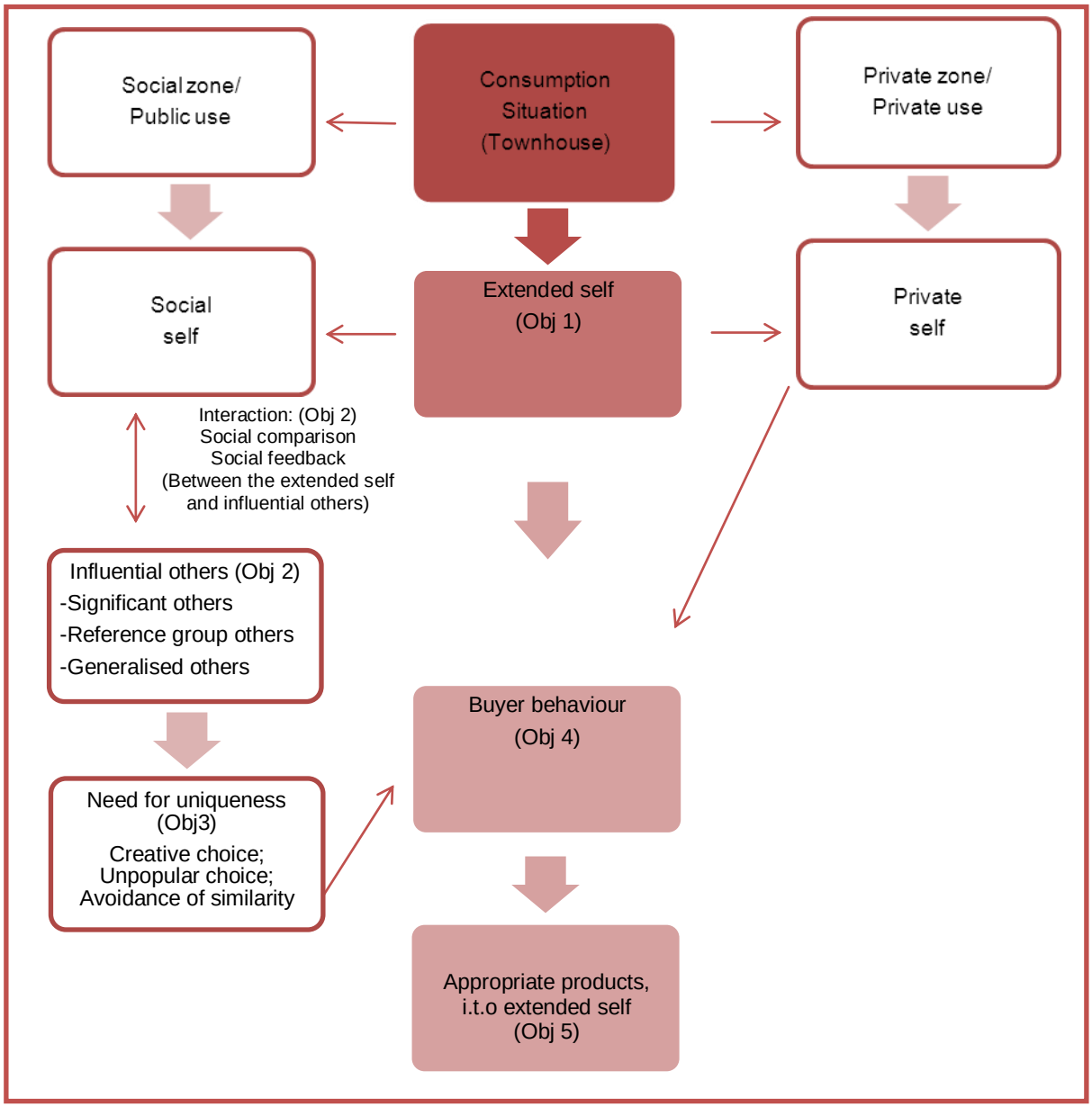

FIGURE 5.2: SCHEMATIC CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

A home can be divided into public or social zones, namely living and dining rooms, as well as kitchen areas in an open plan home, and private zones, namely bedrooms and bathrooms (Goffman in Sandstrom *et al.,* 2006:108). The focus of this study fell on the social zones of the home where guests are received and entertained. Theoretically this area reflects the family's lifestyle, values and identity (Kempen & Ozaki, 2006; Kilmer & Kilmer, 1992:205). By restricting guests to a certain part of the home for social activities it allows a person the opportunity to display objects in a conspicuous manner, where it is of concern to the residents. This restriction provides the resident with a particular "canvas" that will be viewed by guests, further allowing them to better understand the resident's portrayed extended self (Gunter, 2000:96).

As with the interior spaces of the home, a person's self also consists of a private and public self. The private context of the self (private self) encompasses introspection and self-understanding that involves inner dialogue and thought processes with the self, this is the self that is not shared with others, and may also referred to as the secret self. In comparison, a person's public self will include concerns and perceptions other people might have of the self. Cultural expectations regarding age, gender, and occupation are incorporated into this construct of the self (Kaiser, 1998:182-183). Since a person's public self incorporates ideas about the self within a social environment, it implies that this self will be thoughtfully constructed. With regard to the social zone of a person's home, it can be concluded that interior furniture, soft furnishings and decorative objects will be meticulously selected to symbolize a public self that is representative of what a person wishes to portray.

In order to formulate an extended self, a person must be in interaction with the self, and with society. Symbolic interaction is based on how meanings are constructed and reconstructed in everyday life. Interaction, as stated by Mead (in Kaiser, 1998:23) should be seen and studied as a dynamic process, rather than a static entity. Interaction is based within a social context therefore the concept of displaying an extended self can be seen as a means of communication and interaction with others namely significant others, reference group others and generalized others. During the interaction process, two main activities are performed, namely social comparisons are drawn, and social feedback is given to a person in order to evaluate and re-evaluate the self.

Kaiser (1998:171) states that selves do not only exist in relation to other selves, but also to an awareness that these selves differ from one another. Humans have a need to compare their selves to others, especially with regard to their homes, and therefore social comparisons are used in making comprehensive self-evaluations. Through these social comparisons, a person

gains social feedback. Cooley's concept of the looking-glass self defines this process (Kaiser, 1998:165-167). The impression a person gathers from the appearance of his/her townhouse interior is based on reflected appraisal. This means that people see their interiors from the perspective of others. Social feedback (verbal or non-verbal) is evaluated and more attention will be given to feedback from people that a person wishes to impress, as well as to people who pay more attention to detail, and lastly to those who offer positive feedback. The people who supply the feedback have to be present in a resident's environment, and will be discussed next. A person interacts in an environment that consists of three group others namely, significant others, generalized others and reference group others (Kaiser, 1998:159-164;359).

Significant others refer to people whose opinions and attitudes are likely to be particularly important to an individual. These people include others such as parents, teachers, siblings etc. A reference group is known as a group of people who has influence over a person. Individuals may or may not belong to these groups, but they do provide a point of behavioural reference to a person. This influence contributes as a means for self-evaluation as individuals compare the values they have acquired through their socialization process, to that of the reference group others. The influence reference groups have over a person may be regarded as a means for developing a sense of social identity or a feeling of interconnectedness (Kaiser, 1998:159-164; Lamb *et al.,* 2004:95). Generalized others consist of those others whose social norms and values are internalized. The members of this group are for instance a person's cultural group (Kaiser, 1998:159-164,359). During social interaction, a person will only get feedback from their significant others and their reference group others. No feedback can be gained from a person's generalized group others, e.g. people on a television programme that share the same social standing as the individual, since communication with this group involves one-way communication as there is no personal contact with this group other (Kaiser, 1998:164-168).

During interaction with others people draw comparisons, and when individuals feel that their identities (extended selves) are threatened, they create the need to counter-conform (Tian *et al.*, 2001). Objects that are representative of counter-conformity are therefore chosen to display an individual's extended self. Three counter-conformative options are available, namely *creative counter-conformity (CCCC), unpopular counter-conformity (UCCC)* or an *avoidance of similarity (AOS)* choice (Tian & McKenzie, 2001). A creative product choice is still considered acceptable by a person's reference group, yet unique in comparison to product choices made by the group. The unpopular product choice can be considered as unacceptable, and deviates from the norm of products that reference group others will normally choose. This results in a significantly higher social risk than the other choices. Lastly, a person can choose a product that is still accepted by

the reference group, but rarely chosen. This choice represents products that deviate from the popular choice in that not many people in a particular social group will have such a possession, but the type of object will not be viewed as unfavourable (Tian & McKenzie, 2001; Tian *et al*., 2001).

People's buyer and consumption behaviour will be influenced by several group others. A person's reference group others will be of particular importance. Through this group an individual establishes social group norms and gathers information on what one has to adhere to (Sandstrom *et al.,* 2006:67). People can therefore enhance their image as belonging to a certain group through the acquisition and use of certain interior products and interior objects of their townhouses. According to Tian *et al.,* (2001), when people perceive that they are highly similar to others (as is the case with people residing in townhouse complexes), they will actively strive to purchase products and objects in such a manner that they will develop a distinctive extended self. This act is known as counter-conformity and should therefore be visible in a person's buyer behaviour, i.e. it should show that such people view the choice of objects displayed in their interior as highly important, for example that they purchase scarce, valuable or unique objects from a variety of retail outlets and that they continuously replace and or renovate their objects and furniture. Objects that are purchased may therefore symbolize the buyer's need for exclusivity, or the fact that he/she seeks to purchase valuable objects, or objects that are scarce and will therefore not be seen in the homes of other people, or this behaviour may lead residents to buy objects that are impressive to onlookers.

Through the choices made by residents during the purchase phase of the cycle, several interior objects are therefore displayed in the home. Since the social zone of the home may be regarded as a facade for the display of selected valuable objects (for monetary, personal or social reasons), it may be assumed that the objects that are exhibited, are representative of a person's extended self (Goffman, 1969:19). The motivations behind the selection of objects also carry social meaning to onlookers.

5.3.2 Aim of the study and research objectives

5.3.2.1 Aim of the study

The aim of this study was to determine how townhouse owners in a major urban area in Tshwane, South Africa (where townhouse living has become exceedingly popular) use the interior

of the social zones of their homes to express their extended selves, in order to distinguish themselves in a surrounding where the homes of their neighbours are visually highly similar.

5.3.1.3 Research objectives and sub-objectives

Specifically referring to owners of townhouse complexes the following objectives were formulated for the research:

1. To investigate and describe their attention to the interiors of their homes, i.e.:
   1.1 whether townhouse owners discriminate between the social and private zones of their homes, in terms of the allocation of their budget for interior related expenses, i.e. to design and decorate these areas.
   1.2 whether townhouse owners discriminate between the social and private zones of their homes, in terms of effort to design and decorate these areas.
   1.3 whether the interior objects that are displayed in the social zones of their homes are representative of their public self, and/or their private self.

2. To determine which source of interaction mostly influences residents of townhouse complexes' interior décor decisions, namely
   2.1 significant others
   2.2 reference group others
   2.3 generalized others.

3. To investigate and describe their need for uniqueness or counter- conformity, i.e. to distinguish themselves from others in the same townhouse complex through their choice of interior products for the social zones of their homes, and if so, to identify which form of counter-conformity is most prevalent, namely:
   3.1 creative choice counter-conformity
   3.2 unpopular choice counter-conformity
   3.3 avoidance of similarity.

4. To investigate and describe townhouse owners' buyer behaviour pertaining to interior related objects that are used in the social zones of their homes and to determine which characteristics dominate their buying decisions.

5. To identify and explicate the interior products in the social zones of their homes that are most valued as an attempt to portray their extended selves during their interaction with others.

5.4 SUMMARY

People actively shape their environments through interaction with others to create and maintain a position within a social hierarchy. The process is aided by the ability of people to communicate to others in the conventional manner, as well as through the intentional use of symbols or products. Therefore the symbolic interactionism perspective was used in this study to guide the research and interpretation of the findings. The basic assumptions of the perspective are that people create their own realities by seeking out relevant stimuli and portraying that to onlookers; people use symbols as a communicative tool to aid in the categorization of experiences within a larger frame of reference; people act towards objects and others in their present circumstances, based on the meaning those objects or situations hold for them; meanings associated with objects or symbols originate from social interaction, which occurs internally as well as externally, and lastly that meaning can be modified or manipulated through the interpretive process so that people may actively shape their environments so that they may find it favourable. This implies that people actively form and shape their interiors in such a manner that it reveals to others the residents' values, lifestyles and attitude, for example a person can choose to display environmentally friendly interior objects, second hand furniture and recycled objects to display an extended self that is indicative of a conscious effort to leave a carbon footprint as small as possible. Along with the theoretical perspective, a conceptual framework was derived from the model drawn up by Lee (1990), and research objectives were formulated.

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CHAPTER 6

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter explicates the research design and the research methodology in accordance with the objectives of the research

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Research implies a process of scientific enquiry about the world people live in (Fouché & Delport, 2005:71). All forms of empirical research therefore go through several stages from problem recognition, research design, empirical evidence and lastly the formulation of conclusions (Babbie & Mouton in Fouché & Delport, 2005:72-73). The stage that explicates the problem recognition has already been discussed in the previous chapters. The research design will now be discussed to indicate how the process was executed.

6.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

6.2.1 Research style

The study was both exploratory and descriptive in nature. According to Fouché and De Vos (2005:106), exploratory research is conducted in order to gain insight into a community, situation or phenomenon and is used where there is a lack of information available. In this regard, insight will be gathered into how residents of a townhouse complex express their uniqueness in an environment that does not allow for such differentiation, by using possibly the only option available to them, namely the interior of their homes (townhouses). Descriptive research is closely related to exploratory research, but differs in the sense that it depicts specific details of a situation, social setting or relationships. Descriptive research observes a situation and explains these observations. With regard to the exploratory, descriptive investigation, the aim was therefore to gain a better understanding of how townhouse residents use the interiors of their social zone of their homes to portray their extended selves. During the description phase of the study, specific topics were described in detail, i.e. the home owners' awareness and differentiation of a social zone in their homes; their need for uniqueness, specifically which form

of counter-conformity was more relevant, townhouse residents' choice of interior objects for the social zones of their homes; and lastly the source of social interaction that has the biggest influence on their interior design and décor decisions. Empirical evidence of this nature is lacking while the popularity of townhouse living as a type of tenure is increasing significantly in urban areas of South Africa (Internet: Lightstone).

This research was predominantly quantitative in nature, but included a qualitative section that identified reasons why consumers valued specific interior objects. According to Mcvilly, Stancliffe, Parmenter and Burton-Smith (2008), quantitative research is concerned with the inquiry into observable facts, with the aim to acquire quantifiable information. Observations that are made are converted into discrete units of data, which is determined by the researcher, for example through the use of a questionnaire. Statistical analysis of the data obtained is then reported in numerical values (descriptive statistics), which are used for further statistical procedures. Qualitative research on the other hand is based on the understanding that multiple realities exist and the researcher therefore tries to uncover information from those people who are experiencing a particular reality. It is concerned with deciphering the meaning of a social phenomenon, and not to predict them. This strategy is thus concerned with the meaning that events or objects holds for the people experiencing it, as well as discovering content, rather than verifying it (Mcvilly et al., 2008; Ambert, Adler, Adler & Detzner, 1995).

Primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire, since questionnaires provide opportunity to gather individual responses that are quantifiable (Nussbaumer, 2009:42), in order to answer specific research questions. The questionnaire consisted of eight sections. Seven of these sections aimed at gathering quantitative data while one section was an open-ended section that was structured in such a manner that qualitative data was gathered. A combination of both quantitative and qualitative data was gathered in order to retrieve quantifiable information, as well as to gain a better understanding of the situation in which residents of townhouse complexes find themselves in. The study was also completed within a cross-sectional time frame, during June to November 2010, in Tshwane, South Africa, i.e. findings will reflect on people who resided in townhouse complexes in a more affluent part of Tshwane, during a specific period of time.

6.2.2 Sampling plan

6.2.2.1 Unit of analysis

The unit of analysis was people residing in townhouse complexes in the Tshwane region of Gauteng. The sample frame consisted of the residents in complexes that met the selection criteria for inclusion, namely

- location (the southern and eastern more affluent parts of Tshwane where multiple townhouse complexes were erected in recent years); type of accommodation (townhouse complexes that are specifically units similar or identical in appearance to the rest of the units in the complex)
- age (adults between 22 and 75 years of age, irrespective of gender, population group or marital status) and
- income (involving LSM 8-10 households).

The following complexes were targeted: Home @ Nature, Nature View, Nature Ridge, Monte Lofts, Mount Grace, Bellevue, Wapadrand Park, Deco Credo, Salem, Lone Rock, Die Wilge, Valle Verde, Villa Ancke, Berg Karee, Langeberg, Baldomero, Maple Mews, Villa Monique, Winterwood, Sussex, La Residence, Palm Springs, Wondersig, Tamarisk, La Perla, Six Fountains, Fish Eagle Creek, Pilgrims Place, Golf Gardens, Masonic Haven and Chancliff Estates. The choices were made based on the townhouses' location; exterior design (all of the units appearing similar or the same with regard to the exterior of the homes); estimated market value (approximately R600 000- R900 000 to involve the LSM 8-10 group); age and income of the potential participants, irrespective of gender, population group or marital status (Du Plessis & Rousseau, 2003:89-92). It was assumed that the LSM 8-10 groups would at least have the financial ability to attend to the interior design and décor of the interiors of their homes.

6.2.2.2 Sampling

Sampling involves a procedure that draws conclusions based on the measurement of a portion of a population (Zikmund & Babin, 2007:55). A *stratified probability* sample was initially used for the questionnaire. In a *probability* sample, each person has the same prospect of being selected. The odds of a specific individual being selected are known and can be calculated. The type of sampling procedure implemented in the probability sampling was *stratified* sampling. This method is suitable for heterogeneous populations that have a homogeneous characteristic (Van der Walt in Strydom, 2005:200; Zikmund & Babin, 2007:277). The reason stratified sampling was used in combination with the probability sample, was to ensure that the right type of townhouse complexes would be selected so that the sample would accurately reflect the population based on

the criterion used for the stratification. After implementing the combined stratified probability sampling method, the data collection commenced. After exhausting this method of data collection, convenient snowball sampling was used to recruit more respondents. The process of snowball sampling can be defined as building up a sample through participant referrals (O'Leary, 2004:110; Zikmund & Babin, 2007:275). This was implemented since it was extremely difficult to get access to the townhouse complexes, and once inside the complex it was also very difficult to get residents to participate in the study or to collect the completed questionnaires. This was due to the fact that the respondents completed questionnaires anonymously. It was therefore difficult to repeatedly ask respondents to return their questionnaires as no record was kept about their contact details. Furthermore, participants had the option to withdraw from the study at any point, should they wish to do so and therefore repetitive contacts would not have made sense.

During the first recruitment phase the Body Corporate of each of the aforementioned complexes was contacted, and permission was requested for the administration of questionnaires in the respective complexes. Due to the nature of a security complex, the importance of the study was clearly communicated, along with the objectives and proposed outcomes. The anonymity of the respondents and the fact that only willing residents would be involved was ensured. The questionnaires were handed out to the participants by the researcher and two trained assistants. With the assistance of the statistician it was determined that at least 100 questionnaires were needed for the study. Due to the complexity surrounding access to the townhouse units, and the fact that it was not easy to repeatedly enter the complexes to retrieve the questionnaires, either a collection box was placed at the main security gate of the complex, or a house was identified with permission of the owner, where the respondents could drop off their questionnaires upon completion. The questionnaires were then collected a week after the initial distribution. Responses were however very slow. Convenient snowball sampling was therefore the only way in which a sizeable sample could be recruited.

6.2.3 Data collection

Primary data was collected since it is concerned with the original account of the events in question (Robinson & Parman, 2010:115). The data gathering stage begins once the sampling plan has been formalized, and is the process of collecting information (Zikmund & Babin, 2007:55). The data collection took six months to complete due to difficulty to access townhouse complexes.

This study made use of a structured questionnaire that could be completed through a drop-off-collect-later method with the aid of two trained assistants. The respondents who agreed to involve other residents of townhouse units (snowball sampling) were given additional questionnaires and a collection agreement was made with them. The questionnaires were dropped off on weekdays after hours (since this was the time when most residents were at home) or as otherwise arranged with the H.O.A. The data collection material (questionnaires placed inside an envelope) included a cover letter where the research was explained in a matter that was not leading with regard to the completion thereof, but stated the purpose of the study, as well as guaranteeing respondents' anonymity and confidentiality and stating that the respondent may withdraw from the study at any point, should they wish to do so. The telephone number of the researcher was also included, should the respondents have any queries during the process or thereafter. It was also stated on the cover page that completion of the questionnaire would only take about 15 minutes.

The different townhouse complexes were all approached in the same manner, i.e. through prior arrangement with the Body Corporate and thereafter with a door-to-door approach. The respondents were given approximately one week to complete the questionnaires, whereafter they were collected at the entrance to the estate or at a specific addresses as per prior arrangement. In some instances after repeatedly trying to retrieve questionnaires via several means, to no avail, it was decided that those questionnaires were not retrievable. Some questionnaires were also distributed per e-mail, because several of the respondents preferred such a method due to the difficulty of making repeat calls to collect the completed questionnaires. A total of 460 questionnaires were handed out during June to November 2010, but only 182 of the retrieved questionnaires met all the specified criteria.

6.2.3.1 Structured questionnaire

A structured self-administered questionnaire was distributed to gather information regarding how people residing in townhouses use the social zones of their homes to express their extended selves. The objective of the questionnaire was to obtain facts and opinions about a phenomenon from people who are experiencing or have experienced such a situation (Delport, 2005:166; Robinson & Parman, 2010:169). In order to eliminate possible errors, the questionnaire was subjected to a pilot test before being administered to the respondents. Ten questionnaires were distributed to people with various areas of interest in the pilot test, for instance people who would meet the selection criteria (seven questionnaires were distributed to possible respondents), a language specialist, a person in the interior merchandise field and to an established researcher.

This was done to ensure ease of completion, that the wording was correct and easily understood, that the questionnaire followed a chronological order and that there were no technical errors in the questionnaire. After the pilot test was completed, recommendations were attended to and changed as required. On request of the language specialist, four of the statements were reworded: three to simplify the statements, and one to avoid addressing two different aspects in one statement. On recommendation of the specialist in the field (a lecturer in the Consumer Science department currently completing her PhD and with several years of retail experience), two additional statements were added to the demographic section of the questionnaire. To further eliminate any possible errors, a statistician was consulted to help identify any other possible complications. Six of the sections involved Likert-type scales. One of the sections consisted of a three point Likert-type scale, since it gathered information on the demographics of the respondents (Never, Seldom, Mostly), but on the recommendation of the statistician, four of the sections that implemented a five point Likert-type scale were reduced to four options only (Disagree strongly, Disagree slightly, Agree slightly and Agree strongly). The possibility of a neutral answer was eliminated, due to the fact that answers that were decisive (either agree or disagree) would be of more relevance and use in the study. One section did however remain on a five point Likert scale (Disagree strongly, Disagree slightly, Neither agree or disagree, Agree slightly and Agree strongly), since this was an already established scale that could not be tampered with. It was therefore retained in the same format used by the originators of the scale. After the recommendations were implemented, the questionnaire that consisted of eight sections was administered in the form of either a hard copy or in an e-mail format to the respondents.

- **Section: Demographic information**

This section consisted of twelve statements/questions that described the respondents in terms of their gender, age, number of occupants in the home, tenure status, income, population group, level of education, time they resided in the home (townhouse), money spent on the interiors of their home and marital status.

- **Section B: Decisions regarding the interior of their homes**

This section consisted of eight statements on a three point Likert-type scale (with the options being Never, Seldom, Mostly) that addressed decisions concerning the interior design responsibility of the home, in order to identify who was responsible for the design and décor of their homes. It included six options namely, the person self, partner, whole family, interior designer, interior decorator and friends, as well as an additional option in case someone else, other than the options provided, was responsible for the interior design and décor of the home.

- **Section C: Home owners' most valued possessions**

This was the only section that involved a qualitative investigation that required of the respondents to indicate their five most valued interior possessions and to provide a reason why it was valued. Respondents were then asked to rank the objects mentioned in descending order. By providing the information, the researcher was able to identify the type of objects that were most valued in the social zones of the homes of the respondents, as well the reason why it was regarded as such, for example a dining room table (classified as furniture), that was valued because it was an heirloom (classified as personal reasoning), or because it was practical (functional).

- **Section D: Interior of the home**

This section consisted of ten statements. A four point Likert-type scale (with the options being Disagree strongly, Disagree slightly, Agree slightly and Agree strongly) investigated whether or not the respondents were aware of different zones in their homes, and to identify which form of the self (i.e. public self or private self) was displayed in the social zones of their homes.

- **Section E: Need for uniqueness**

This section consisted of 31 statements that represented an adapted version of the already established Need for Uniqueness scale. The scale was originally developed by Snyder and Fromkin in 1977 within a behavioural context but has been used in various other fields as well (clothing, activities and hobbies) (Ruvio, Shoham & Brenčič, 2008; Simonson & Nowlis, 2000; Tepper & Hoyle, 1996; Tian & McKenzie, 2001; Tian *et al.,* 2001; Tepper & Hoyle, 1996). The particular scale of interest was previously used by Tian *et al.* (2001) in a clothing context, and was adapted for this study to reflect on consumers' need for uniqueness within an interior context, based on the postulation that clothing does for the human body what the interior does for the home (Belk, 1988). Eleven of the 31 statements pertained to the creative choice counter-conformity, a further eleven statements to the unpopular choice counter-conformity and the last nine statements pertained to avoidance of similarity. The statements were arranged in random order to avoid bias. Statements were rated on a five point Likert-type scale, instead of a four point scale, to retain the format of the original version (Disagree strongly, Disagree slightly, Neither agree or disagree, Agree slightly and Agree strongly). Along with an investigation of respondents' level of need for uniqueness, the scale also measured which form of counter-conformity was most prevalent among the respondents.

- **Section F: Buyer behaviour**

The 18 statements that investigated the respondents' buyer behaviour were also indicated on a four point Likert-type scale (with the options being Disagree strongly, Disagree slightly, Agree

slightly and Agree strongly). The statements aimed at identifying the reasoning behind the objects purchased.

- **Section G: Interior inspiration**

This section consisted of five statements that addressed issues regarding the source of inspiration for the respondents' interior decisions. The options available were also indicated on a four point Likert scale (with the options being Disagree strongly, Disagree slightly, Agree slightly and Agree strongly). This section aimed at identifying whether non-personal sources or personal contacts were mostly used for interior inspiration. Their responses indicated the contribution made by popular printed media, television programmes, non-formal social contacts and professionals.

- **Section H: Townhouse living**

This section consisted of three statements that aimed to provide information on residents' satisfaction with townhouse living in general. The statements were also indicated on a four point Likert-type scale (with the options being Disagree strongly, Disagree slightly, Agree slightly and Agree strongly) and provided evidence on issues such as the similarity of the units and therefore the amount of attention to the interiors, their need for uniqueness and lastly whether or not the residents would, presented with the option again, still choose to reside in a townhouse complex.

6.3 OPERATIONALIZATION

The operationalization of the questionnaire was formulated, keeping the objectives of the study in consideration. The sections of the questionnaire were designed to address several research objectives indicated in Table 6.1.

TABLE 6.1: OPERATIONALIZATION

	Objective	Applicable Section	Variables	Statistical Analysis
1	To investigate and describe their attention to the interiors of their homes, i.e.: 1.1 whether townhouse owners discriminate between the social and private zones of their homes, in terms of the allocation of their budget for interior related expenses, i.e. to design and decorate the areas. 1.2 whether townhouse owners discriminate between the social and private zones of their homes, in terms of effort to design and decorate the areas. 1.3 whether the interior objects that are displayed in the social zones of their homes are representative of their public self, and/or their private self.	D	V37 – V46	Descriptive statistics: percentages, frequencies, means, standard deviations. T-tests ($p \leq 0.05$) Anova ($p \leq 0.05$)
2	To determine which source of interaction mostly influences residents of townhouse complexes' interior décor decisions, namely 2.1 significant others 2.2 reference group others 2.3 generalized others.	G	V96- V100	Descriptive statistics: percentages, frequencies, medians, means, standard deviations. T-tests ($p<0.05$) Anova ($p<0.05$)
3	To investigate and describe their need for uniqueness or counter conformity i.e. to distinguish themselves from others in the same townhouse complex through their choice of interior products for the social zones of their homes and if so, to identify which form of counter-conformity is most prevalent, namely: 3.1 creative choice counter-conformity 3.2 unpopular choice counter-conformity 3.3 avoidance of similarity.	E	V47- V77	Descriptive statistics: percentages, frequencies, medians, means, standard deviations. T-tests ($p<0.05$) Anova ($p<0.05$)
4	To investigate and describe townhouse owners' buyer behaviour pertaining to interior related objects that are used in the social zones of their homes and to determine which characteristics dominate their buying decisions.	F	V78- V95	Descriptive statistics: percentages, frequencies, means, standard deviations. Factor analysis T-tests ($p<0.05$) Anova ($p<0.05$)
5	To identify and explicate the interior products in the social zones of their homes that are most valued as an attempt to portray their extended selves during their interaction with others.	C	V22- V36	Descriptive statistics: percentages, frequencies

The following sections did not reflect on a specific objective, but were needed for the description and interpretation of the results for the particular sample namely, Section A (Demographics),

Section B (Person responsible for the interior decisions in the home) and Section H (General questions on townhouse living). These sections provided important information that could be used to draw inferences.

6.4 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis is the application of reasoning in order to understand the data that has been collected. It involves determining patterns and summarizing the relevant information concerning the data collected (Zikmund & Babin, 2007:56).

Directly after the questionnaires were collected, they were coded in the correct format for the data-capturing phase. Open-ended questions were coded after content analysis. This open-ended section was then re-coded by an independent party (a Masters student who also specializes in the interior field of study) without prior knowledge of the existing code values and categories. Inter rater reliability was calculated. The data set was then checked to identify and eliminate possible errors. Thereafter the researcher and the statistician proceeded with the statistical procedures and analysis.

The data was summarized by means of descriptive statistics, i.e. frequencies, means, standard deviations, standard errors, medians and percentages, which were presented in the form of tables, graphs and figures. Descriptive statistics are generally used to summarize, present and describe findings of a study. These methods are usually graphical in nature and include graphs, charts, histograms, scatter plots etc. Descriptive methods can also include the calculation of numerical summary measures, such as means, standard deviations, correlation coefficients etc. (Devore, 2008:3-4). Since the outcome of the study was to explore and describe, descriptive statistics were important. The open-ended question, which was qualitative in nature, was coded by hand in order to identify the relevant concepts correctly. The concepts of all of the questionnaires that were used were then captured in the relevant definitions through open coding, whereafter axial coding was implemented. The findings were used to explain the results obtained through the quantitative analysis. These findings are discussed in detail in Chapter 7.

6.5 QUALITY OF THE DATA

6.5.1 Validity

Validity refers to the extent to which empirical measures accurately reflect the concepts it was intended to measure (Babbie in Delport, 2005:160). There are two key components of validity, namely, internal and external validity. Internal validity is concerned with whether the results are a true measure of the phenomenon, or whether it was influenced or confounded by other factors. External validity implies the accuracy of the generalizability of the results, beyond the experimental respondents (Zikmund & Babin, 2007:187-189). In order to ensure validity, several subcategories can be identified and executed in order to eliminate possible errors, namely, theoretical, measurement and inferential validity. In order to ensure overall validity within the study, the researcher aimed to collect appropriate data by means of suitable procedures, so that the data would be as accurate as possible. The sub-categories of validity, along with its application to this study, are presented in the sections to follow.

6.5.1.1 Theoretical validity

Theoretical validity is concerned with the theoretical explanations of the concepts under investigation, i.e. whether the concepts are clear and defined correctly in the literature, and whether those concepts translate to the findings of the data. Theoretical validity should ensure that data is credible, trustworthy and defensible (Maxwell in Onwuebuzie & Leech, 2007). After an extensive scrutiny of literature, the relevant concepts were clearly defined and were used in an unambiguous manner in the questionnaire, so that the respondents would not be confused in any way.

6.5.1.2 Measurement validity

There are four subcategories that should be considered when measurement validity is taken into account, namely:

- **Content validity:** this is concerned with the sampling adequacy of the content of the instrument, for instance the topics. It should therefore be representative of all the relevant concepts within the theory, and should not omit items (Delport, 2005:160-161). To ensure content validity, Cronbach Alpha Coefficients were calculated. The sections in the questionnaire also correlates directly to the objectives of the study, ensuring that the correct concepts were measured.

- **Face validity:** this type of validity asks whether the instrument appears, on a superficial level, to measure the concepts that it is supposed to measure (Delport, 2005:161). The questionnaire was presented in sections, and these sections appeared as if they would measure a specific objective as formulated in the original aim of the study. The statements in the questionnaire were formulated using the conceptual framework, and no concepts within the framework were omitted.
- **Criterion validity:** this involves multiple measurements and is achieved by comparing scores on an instrument with an established external criterion (measuring the same concepts) (Delport, 2005:161). For the need for uniqueness investigation, residuals were tested and the distributions were found to be normal. The Cronbach Alphas were also calculated for the various sections, and the results all indicated a satisfactory measurement. This was done to ensure that the scale was relevant in the interior domain, since its former applications were primarily in the clothing field.
- **Construct validity:** this involves determining the degree to which an instrument has successfully measured a theoretical construct (Delport, 2005:162). To ensure validity construct throughout the literature, the constructs were clearly defined and then confirmed. The questionnaire made use of layman's language to facilitate understanding, and constructs were measured using several statements and/or more than one indicator in order to ensure construct validity.

6.5.1.3 Inferential validity

Inferential validity refers to the validity of logical inferences drawn during execution of a research project (Moshman & Franks, 1986). The goal of this study was, however, not to generalize the findings to an entire population, but merely to explore and describe the phenomenon at hand.

6.5.2 Reliability

According to Delport (2005:162), the reliability of a measurement reflects on the consistency of the measurement. This implies that, through incorporating reliable procedures, the same results should be gathered if the measurement was done under the same circumstances again. According to Neuman and Kreuger (in Delport, 2005:163) the following concepts can increase reliability:

- **Clearly conceptualized constructs:** implying that unambiguous theoretical definitions are required for each construct to be measured. This was achieved by a thorough scrutiny of literature.

- **Increase level of measurement:** the levels of measurement should be calculated at the most precise level possible. The statisticians assisted the researcher in this procedure.
- **Use pre-tests, pilot studies and replications:** several measures must be taken before the final version of the instrument is used, in order to ensure the application of the final version is without fault. The questionnaire was pre-tested beforehand, after specialists in the field of study read it.

The three procedures mentioned were all followed in this study and it is proposed that, should the study be repeated under the same circumstances again, it is highly likely that the same results will be found.

6.6 ETHICS

According to Strydom (2005:57) ethics is a set of moral principles, which is suggested by society or an individual that is widely accepted as an appropriate standard of behaviour. This set of ethical behaviour guidelines offers rules and behavioural expectations in situations concerning experimental subjects or respondents, employers, sponsors, other researchers, assistants and students. These guidelines furthermore serve as a standard on which a researcher should evaluate his/her own conduct. Several principles should be followed in order to ensure ethical behaviour, namely:

- **Avoidance of harm:** Subjects should not be harmed either in a physical manner or in an emotional manner (Strydom, 2005:58). Care was taken to ensure that respondents did not endure any physical and or emotional discomfort while completing and handing in the questionnaires, by carefully analyzing all possible questions and or tasks necessary to complete the questionnaire making it as 'user friendly' as possible and ensuring that the questionnaire was not too lengthy.
- **Informed consent:** This implies that all possible information regarding the goal of the investigation, procedures, advantages, disadvantages and dangers the respondents might be exposed to, as well as the credibility of the researcher, be rendered to the possible respondents or their legal representatives (Strydom, 2005:59). The aim of the study was communicated to the respondents, and opportunity was given for them to withdraw or to present or query any part of the study.
- **Deception of respondents:** This implies that facts were deliberately misrepresented in order to make a person believe what is not true (Loewnberg & Dolgoff in Strydom, 2005:60). In no instance were respondents made to believe any fact as the truth,

therefore resulting in no deception of any kind, i.e. the real goal of the study was not hidden, the real functions and actions of respondents were not hidden and the experiences the subjects had to go through were not hidden.

- **Violation of anonymity:** The anonymity of a person is viewed as that which is not intended for others to observe or analyze (Strydom, 2005:61). The anonymity of respondents was guaranteed, and in no way could a questionnaire be traced back to a respondent. The townhouse complexes in which the respondents reside are mentioned in the study, but respondents' details are not available and therefore cannot be traced back to the particular respondents.
- **Competence of researcher:** This implies that the researcher and co-researchers should be adequately skilled to undertake the investigation (Strydom, 2005:63). This study is done in order to fulfil the requirements for the degree Masters in Consumer Science at the University of Pretoria, and could only be undertaken once a series of modules have been completed, thus qualifying the researcher for this particular study, while the research assistants were trained, in order to ensure that they also perform at the level that is acceptable in an ethical manner. During the entire process the study leader acted in a supervisory capacity.
- **Cooperation with contributors:** Contributors to a study can be seen as sponsors and colleagues (formally or informally) (Strydom, 2005:64). The contributors to this study are acknowledged for their contributions. The main contributors in this study are the study leader and statisticians at the University of Pretoria.
- **Release of findings:** This implies the accurate compilation of a report on the findings of the study (Strydom, 2005:65). As a part of the fulfilment of obligations for the degree, a report has to be submitted along with the dissertation. This will ensure that the study was completed with no intention to mislead any person involved.
- **Debriefing of respondents:** The debriefing of respondents involves a session in which subjects get the opportunity to work through their experiences while participating in the study (Strydom, 2005:66). Since this study involved a questionnaire, and not focus group discussions or in depth interviews etc., this step of the process in ensuring ethical procedures was not relevant.

In conjunction with the aforementioned precautions, the questionnaire was sent to the Ethical Committee of the University of Pretoria for approval, and without which, the study would not have progressed. Furthermore, effort was made to prevent plagiarism.

xxXxx

Chapter 7

Results

This chapter presents the results in accordance with the objectives for the study with inclusion of graphs and tables to aid the interpretation of the findings

7.1 DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

The demographic information is presented first to introduce the characteristics of the sample and to explain subsets of the sample. The data collection was more difficult than initially anticipated. It was very hard to gain access to the townhouse complexes, even when the data collection method was switched to convenient snowball sampling. In these complexes, security and especially privacy is apparently highly regarded. Residents were very hesitant to participate in this study. Residents were also not very cooperative in general and although many promised to complete a questionnaire, they failed to do so. Because the cover letter clearly stipulated that they could withdraw if they wished to do so, no further pressure was exerted. The research involved questions about the interior of the respondents' homes and that may have given the impression that it would infringe on their privacy, although none of the questions were threatening. During the initial pilot test phase, this did not surface as a pertinent problem or point of concern. A total of 460 questionnaires were distributed by the researcher with the aid of two trained assistants, of which only 236 completed questionnaires were retrieved. After scrutiny of the completed questionnaires only 182 were eligible because some were incomplete. Furthermore some of the questionnaires had to be discarded since important sections were not completed or due to non-compliance with inclusion criteria, e.g. age or income.

7.1.1 Gender

Out of the total number of questionnaires that were retrieved (N=182), the majority of the respondents were females (n=120; 65.9%), although a reasonable percentage of the sample were males (n=62; 34.1%). In dual households, the request was for those individuals who were mostly involved or interested in the choice of interior goods for their homes to complete the questionnaires. That probably explains the predominance of female respondents.

7.1.2 Age categories

Almost half of the respondents (n=89; 48.9%) were younger than 35 years of age. Of the remaining respondents, the majority were between the ages of 35 and 55 years of age (n=69; 37.9%) with a limited number of respondents older than 55 years (n=24; 13.2%). Details about the age distribution are presented in Table 7.1.

TABLE 7.1: THE AGE OF THE RESPONDENTS (N=182)

Age (in years)	n	%
<25	10	5.5
≥25 – <35	79	43.4
≥35 – <55	69	37.9
≥55	24	13.2

The information concerning the age of the respondents is also visually represented in Figure 7.1.

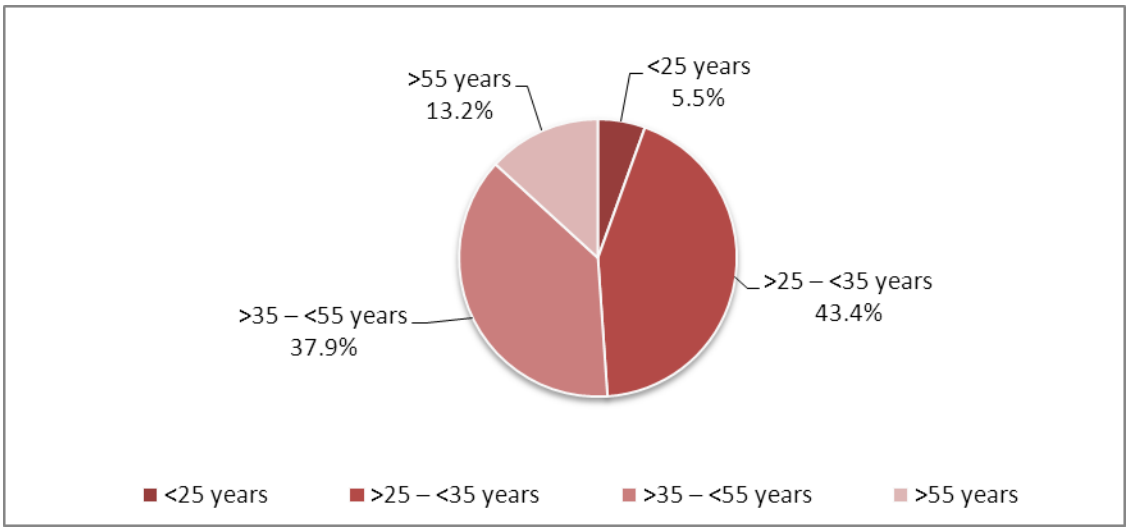

FIGURE 7.1: AGE REPRESENTATION OF RESPONDENTS (N=182)

The era that a consumer grows up in, creates an association or cultural bond with other consumers of the same age group. This is referred to as a person's age cohort. A consumer's age therefore exerts a significant influence over his/her identity. According to literature the categories of respondents of this study can broadly be associated with *Generation Y (*Gen Y) i.e. <25 years, *Young professionals* i.e. double income with no children; ≥25 – <35 years of age, *Families* ≥35 – <55 years of age and the *Zoomers* ≥55 years (Solomon, 2007:512). Middle-aged people generally earn the highest income, which allows them to spend more in the retail environment (Solomon, 2007:512-513). In this study, age groups were more or less clustered similar to the segments distinguished by Solomon (2007:512-513), with the exception of the *Family* category. In this study, people aged 35, were included with the *Young professionals*,

instead of the *Family* category, which is in accordance with Schiffman and Kanuk (2007:48) who distinguish between consumers in their early thirties and those in their late thirties to forties. People ranging in age from 35 to late forties, will probably invest in products that will potentially offer them long-term benefits, while persons older than 55 years tend to be more cautious when purchasing products, focussing on qualities they have identified over the years through experience and possible intermediate gain, instead of products' long term benefits because they may wish to scale down at some point if they have not done so already (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:48). For the purpose of investigating significant differences regarding the respondents' age categories against various other factors (such as their level of need for uniqueness), the age categories of the respondents were eventually divided into two segments which included respondents younger than 35 years (n=89; 48.9%) and those who were 35 years of age and older (n=93; 51.1%). Reasons for consumers' purchases are investigated and described in the section following.

7.1.3 Household composition of respondents

Questionnaires were completed by 38 heads of single households; 87 individuals who were part of a dual household and 31 individuals who headed households that consisted of three or more members (Figure 7.2). A large majority of the sample therefore represented households where individuals often had to consider others e.g. husbands / wives / partners or dependants when making decisions regarding the interiors of their homes.

TABLE 7.2: RESPONDENTS' HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION (N=182)

Household size	n	%
Single member	38	20.9
2 Members	87	47.8
3 Members	33	18.1
4 Members	18	9.9
5 Members	5	2.7
Missing	1	0.5

Although the respondents were recruited on a convenient basis and it is not at all assumed that the sample was representative of all townhouse owners, it seems as if townhouses are occupied by smaller families. The composition of the households is indicated visually in Figure 7.2.

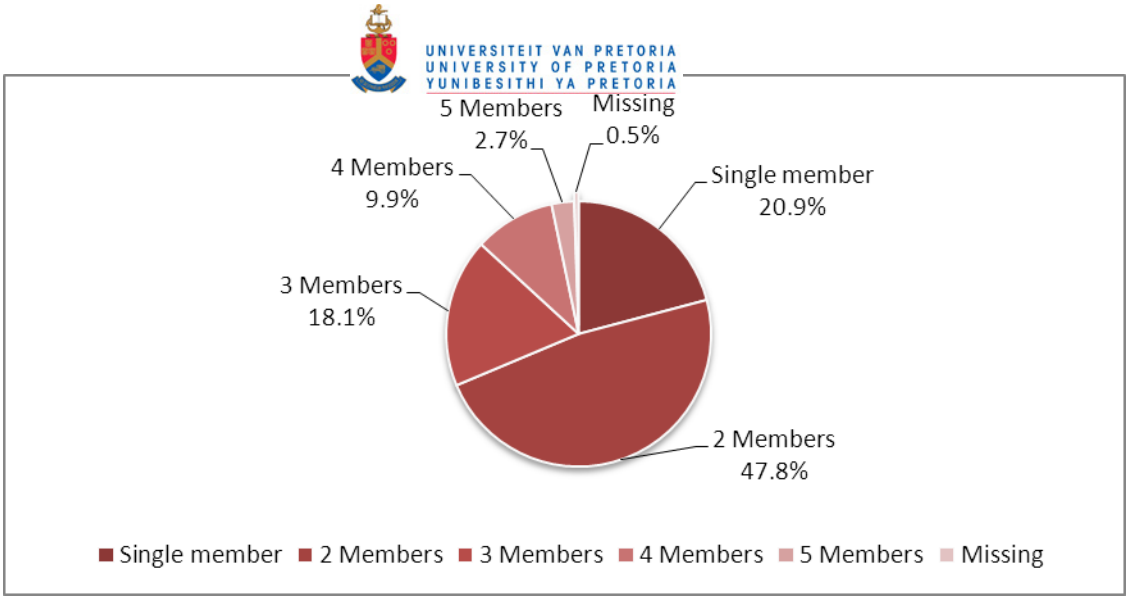

FIGURE 7.2: RESPONDENTS' HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION (N=182)

The family life cycle segmentation is based on the premise that families will follow a similar pattern concerning their formation, growth and dissolution. Furthermore it is accepted that during the different stages of the family life cycle, the needs of families change. The stages of the family life cycle progress through bachelorhood, honeymooners, parenthood, post-parenthood and dissolution. During the different stages of the life cycle families' needs change - especially with regard to their home and assets, for example young single people will need basic furniture to furnish their homes, while people in the empty nest phase may purchase more expensive and elaborate furniture where the emphasis on aesthetics exceeds practical issues (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:55; Solomon, 2007:426). Literature proposes that a typical family that resides in a townhouse mostly constitutes of singles or couples without children (Nussbaumer, 2009:239). This probably explains why this sample included a larger representation of dual households of young newly married couples and elderly couples without children (Table 7.3). The number of people in each household was also reduced in number of categories in order to facilitate further comparative statistical procedures. The categories were reduced from five to three, namely households who only consisted of single members (n= 38; 21.0%), those who consisted of dual members (n=87; 48.1%) and lastly those that consisted of three or more members (n=56; 30.9%).

7.1.4 Marital status of respondents

The majority of respondents were either married or living with a partner (n=111; 61.0%), while the remainder (n=70; 38.5%) comprised single, divorced, separated or widowed individuals (Table 7.3).

TABLE 7.3: MARITAL STATUS OF RESPONDENTS (N=182)

Marital status	n	%
Married/partner	111	61.0
Single/divorced/separtated/widow(er)	70	38.5
Missing	1	0.5

"Family" has become increasingly difficult to define in terms of family composition, structure and roles in the family in recent decades. Traditionally a family was defined as consisting of two or more members, related by blood, marriage or adoption and who reside together. The simplest type of family is a married couple (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:326-327; Solomon, 2007:420). In this particular study, a married couple and partners were grouped into the same category because it meant that another person's needs had to be considered during the planning of the interior of their homes. Of the respondents who were part of a larger household, 23 respondents had children or other individuals to acknowledge other than their spouses when it came to choices concerning interior goods for their homes.

7.1.5 Tenure status in townhouse complexes

Most of the respondents owned the townhouses they were residing in (n=110; 60.4%) (Table 7.4). This information was eventually used to establish whether or not people who owned their homes differed with regard to product choices for the various zones of their homes, and whether they exhibited a higher need for uniqueness than those who rented their homes; as well as to describe possible differences in their buyer behaviour.

TABLE 7.4: TENURE STATUS (N=182)

Tenure status	n	%
Own	110	60.4
Rent	71	39.0
Missing	1	0.6

Literature poses that the form of tenure a person occupies is taken as a primary social signal. It distinguishes a person in terms of his/her personal attributes and social esteem. It further determines the spatial arrangements in the housing development, the building codes governed by occupancy and connection with matters concerning the law (Adams, 1984). Research suggests that people who own their homes are generally more content with life than those who do not own the homes they reside in (Restinas & Belskey, 2002:376). One may thus assume that young people would strive to acquire their own property as soon as possible. This probably explains why townhouses that are more affordable in upmarket suburbs are so popular amongst younger

people. Effort to acquire property and to own it, has been a pertinent part of the socio political struggle that was driven by black people in South Africa in recent decades (Levin & Weiner, 1993). Townhouses, that are often more affordable than free standing homes in open suburbs or in security estates, have thus become a very popular form of tenure in South Africa in recent years across all population groups.

7.1.6 Duration of tenure in their current homes

Approximately half of the sample had resided in the specific townhouses they occupied at the time of the study for three years or less (n=81; 52.6%). The rest (n=63; 47.4%) had stayed in their homes for a more extensive period of which 28 (24.7%) had been living in their townhouses for more than five years (Table 7.5; Figure 7.3). Some of the townhouse complexes were relatively new and that may have influenced this data in particular.

TABLE 7.5: DURATION OF TENURE IN THEIR CURRENT TOWNHOUSES (N=182)

Time lived in home (years)	n	%
< 3 years	59	32.4
≥3- <5 years	57	31.3
≥ 5 years	38	20.9
Missing	28	15.4

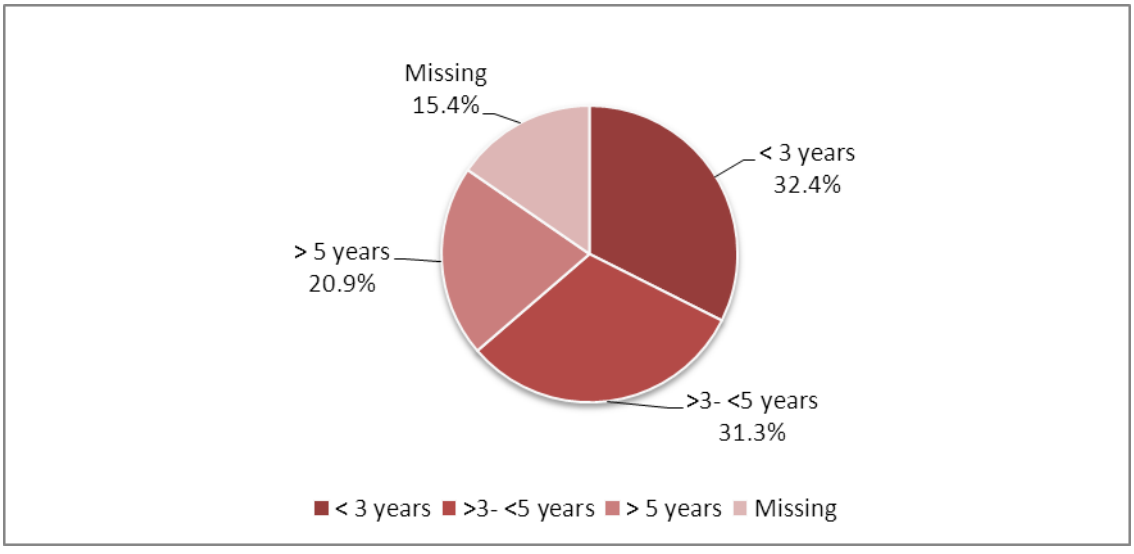

FIGURE 7.3: YEARS OF TENURE IN THEIR CURRENT TOWNHOUSES (N=182)

Certain tenure categories are considered acceptable in specific stages of the family life cycle. Social order in conventional terms should be reflected through sequence of the life cycle phases in a chronological order. It is apparently acceptable to rent an apartment, townhouse or duplex home, where after owning one of these becomes suitable and after which owning a detached

single family home is expected (Adams, 1984). However, in recent years with the growth in development of security estates, owning a detached home is not necessarily the ultimate goal anymore and ownership of townhouses and duplex homes have become increasingly popular (Lightstone, 2011).

Out of the total number of respondents in this study (N=182), 53.3% could be classified as *Generation Y and Young Professionals* (Solomon, 2007:512). According to Adams (1984), these people should be at the stage of renting or having just purchased one of their first housing options, and would therefore not necessarily have been living in their homes for an extended period of time. That probably explains the 64.3% of respondents who resided in their homes for less than 5 years. Once again these categories were condensed into two main categories; respondents who lived in their homes for ≤3 years (n=81; 52.6%) and those who have stayed in their homes for > 3 years (n=73; 47.4%) to facilitate statistical comparisons.

7.1.7 Monthly household income

The monthly household incomes of respondents are reflected in Table 7.6. The entire sample could be categorized as LSM 8-10, which represent the higher income categories in South Africa (Du Plessis & Rousseau, 2003:91). An annual report concerning the LSM groups of South Africa, states that in 2009, 7.6% of South Africa's population fell in the LSM 8 category, with 8.4% and 6.3% belonging to the LSM 9 and LSM 10 groups respectively. The LSM 8-10 categories represented 22.3% of the population in South Africa and statistics indicate that this number is increasing annually (Internet: Annual Report, 2010). This information was used as a criterion to select respondents, in order to ensure that respondents could afford to be selective and even meticulous in terms of their expenditure on the interiors of their homes.

TABLE 7.6: RESPONDENTS' MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD INCOMES (N=182)

Household monthly income (Rands)	n	%
≤15 000	65	35.7
>15 000-≤19 000	12	6.6
>19 000-≤30 000	53	29.1
>30 000-≤40 000	13	7.1
>40 000	14	7.7
Missing[2]	25	13.7

[2] Missing information is unfortunate – respondents may have refrained from providing their income as it has always been a highly sensitive issue

Respondents' monthly household incomes are visually represented in Figure 7.4.

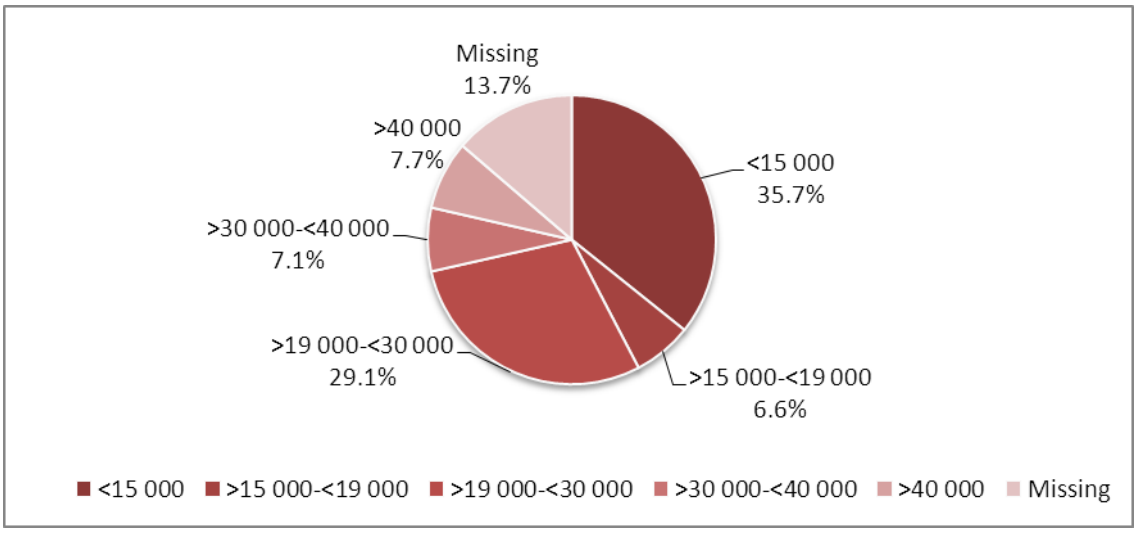

FIGURE 7.4: RESPONDENTS' MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD INCOMES (N=182)

The LSM scales are used to measure social class or living standards of people, regardless of income, race or education, however income in combination with age has been identified as correlating variables within the scale (Du Plessis & Rousseau, 2003:87-91). The two most prosperous categories should be seen as the affluent elderly segment also known as *Zoomers* (≥55 years) and the so-called yuppie segment (*Young Professionals*, 25-34 years of age) (Nussbaumer, 2009:237; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:53). Education is also an interrelated concept, since it is assumed that high-level occupation (due to high level of education and advanced training), will earn a person a higher income (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:53) and entry into a higher socio economic category.

7.1.8 Cultural group representation

The majority of respondents (n=171; 94.0%) were white. Only 6% (n=11) represented people from other racial groups. This study did not aim to infer differences in the buyer and choice behaviour among different racial categories. Any willing household could participate. The higher representation of white people is therefore coincidental but could be attributed to the sampling method. A description of the sample is nevertheless included (Table 7.7).

TABLE 7.7: CULTURAL GROUP REPRESENTATION IN THE SAMPLE (N=182)

Racial category	n	%
White people	171	94.0
Black	4	2.2
Coloured	4	2.2
Indian	2	1.1
Missing	1	0.5

South Africa is known as a rainbow nation that consists of people from multiple racial backgrounds. One reason for the majority of the respondents being white (Caucasian) may also be that consumers of colour are still taking their time to move into previously exclusive 'white' areas (Jürgens & Gnad, 2002). Nieftagodien (2005) also explains that after 1994 the black population in South Africa has started to increase their purchasing power and means. This resulted in previously disadvantaged population now having the means of securing assets. Spending on housing per se however did not increase with the same ratio as income did. The black population used (and are still using) their income to satisfy a so-called asset deficit that exists between the culture groups in South Africa (Van der Berg, Nieftagodien & Burger in Nieftagodien, 2005), but a discrepancy still exists especially in terms of their acquisition of housing.

7.1.9 Level of education

Most of the respondents were well educated, with 77.5% (n=141) in possession of post matric qualifications. Almost half of the respondents were university graduates i.e. those who were in possession of a degree (n=44; 24.2%), or those who possessed a post graduate degree or diploma (n=44; 24.4%) (Table 7.8; Figure 7.5). This information was used in particular to correlate consumers' level of education and their need for uniqueness, since the study done by Tian and McKenzie (2001) suggests that higher educated people are less concerned about so-called uniqueness. This study involved respondents who fell in the higher LSM 8-10 categories, which coincidentally involved higher educated respondents. Literature suggests however that more affluent people would mostly have higher levels of education (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:53).

TABLE 7.8: RESPONDENTS' LEVEL OF EDUCATION (N=182)

Qualification	n	%
Up to matric	41	22.5
Diploma/Certificate	53	29.1
University degree	44	24.2
Post graduate degree/Diploma	44	24.2

A visual representation of the data is offered in Figure 7.5.

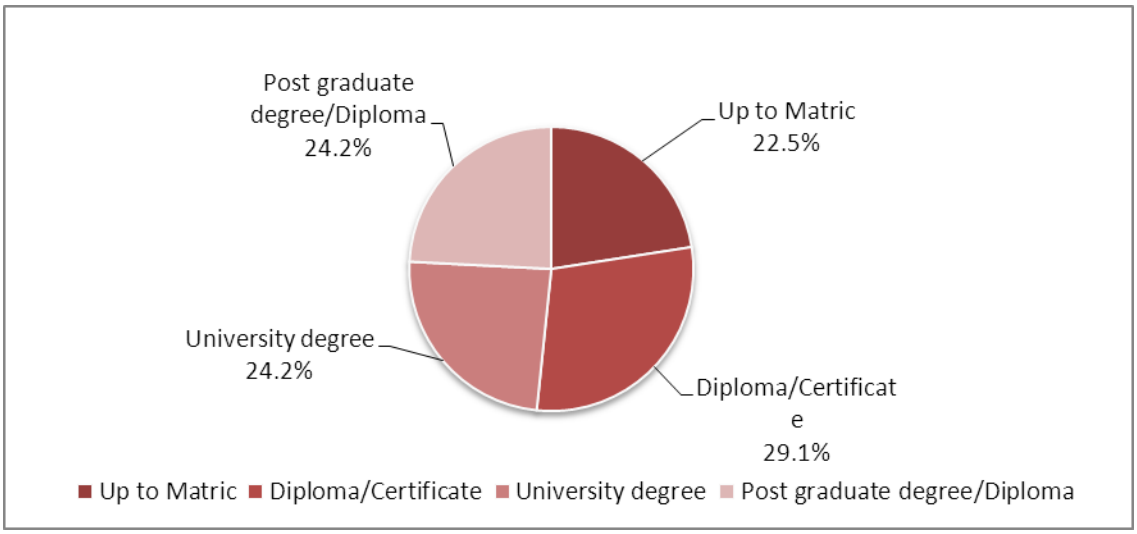

FIGURE 7.5: RESPONDENTS' LEVEL OF EDUCATION (N=182)

Despite varying levels of education, all the respondents could be categorised as being part of the LSM 8-10 categories, i.e. more affluent households. Studies have found that college or university graduates generally earn more than people who only possess a matric qualification (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:53, 453). A predominant 77.5% of respondents possessed a post matric qualification, which confirmed the probability of higher incomes. A person's standing in society is determined through a complex set of variables, of which income, education and occupation are important determinants. In order to be placed on a higher level within the social hierarchy, individuals generally strive to improve these variables (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:456). For statistical purposes the respondents' level of education was also compressed from the categories seen in Table 7.8, into three main groups, namely those who only had an education up to matric (n=41; 22.5%), those who received further education up to a university degree (n=97; 53.3%), and lastly those who received a post graduate degree or diploma (n=44; 24.2).

7.1.10 Summary

Demographic characteristics that were applicable for this investigation were gender, age, household composition, marital status, tenure status, duration of tenure in the current townhouse, monthly household income, racial representation and the level of education of the various respondents. The questionnaires were completed by 182 willing individuals who owned or rented townhouses in more affluent suburbs in the east and south of Tshwane, RSA. In dual households, the person mostly involved with the interior décor decisions completed the questionnaire, which resulted in the majority of respondents being female (65.9%). Various

demographic characteristics were compressed into smaller categories in order to allow for further investigation. This included the age categories of the respondents that were eventually divided into individuals younger than 35 years of age (n=89; 48.9%), those who were 35 years of age and older, but younger than 50 (n=52; 28.6%), and those respondents who were 50 years of age and older (n=41; 22.5%). This was done in order to distinguish the decisions of younger consumers and 'start-ups' from more established consumers in terms of income and security of employment. The next demographic that was compressed was that of the number of members living in each household and was categorised into single person households (n=38; 21.0%), dual member households (n=87; 48.1%) and households that consisted of three or more members (n=56, 30.9%). The figures suggest that townhouse living is a popular option for younger couples who are in the *Young Professional* phase of the life cycle stage, as well as for older people in the *Zoomer* stage as indicated in extant research (Adams, 1984). In both instances, it can be assumed that the interior objects chosen for consumption purposes would have been done with some care because interior objects carry several types of risk and the perceived risk is high where the failure of the interior objects to perform as intended can result in:

- *Social cost* - risk of social disapproval if a product is considered inappropriate by the social group
- *Financial cost* - risk of financial loss involved if a product is inferior or not suitable
- *Time cost* - time spent on the search and acquisition of the most suitable product
- *Effort cost* - the risk of effort that would have been spent on unproductive acquisitions
- *Physical cost* - the risk of physical harm to a person, e.g. if a chair is unsuitable and causes physical discomfort (Hawkins, Best & Coney, 1998:537).

7.2 RESPONSIBILITY FOR HOUSEHOLDS' INTERIOR DECISIONS

Of the 182 respondents in the sample, the majority indicated that they were either personally responsible for the interior and décor decisions of their homes (56.6%) or the interior decisions represented a joint effort from the entire family (33.0%). It is clear from the results that interior designers and interior decorators were rarely consulted (5.4%) and the opinion of the respondents' families or friends to assist them with their décor decisions was used by only 4.9% of the sample (Figure 7.6).

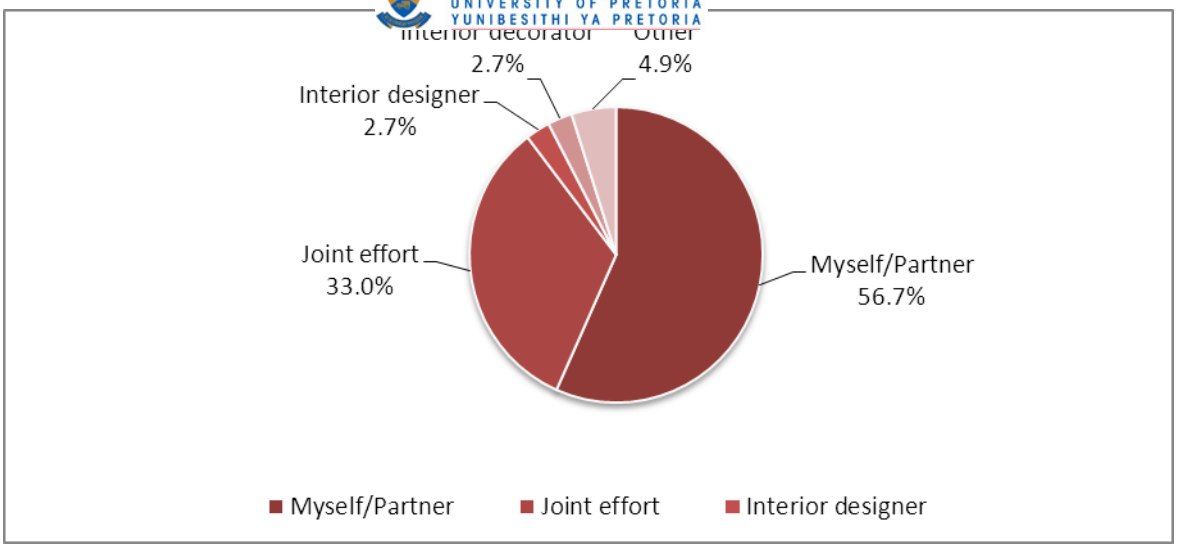

FIGURE 7.6: RESPONSIBILITY TAKEN FOR INTERIOR DECISIONS IN HOUSEHOLDS (N=182)

It is noteworthy that homeowners did not make use of the services offered by interior designers and/or interior decorators. Interior designers generally deal with the experiences, needs and personalities of their clients, and plan and organize interior spaces in accordance with their clients' needs, while interior decorators are mainly concerned with assistance regarding the aesthetic qualities of their clients' homes (Allen *et al.,* 2004:1-2; Kilmer & Kilmer, 1992:8). It is not clear why only such a small percentage of the sample consulted professionals. It may be that people's perception of interior design and décor services are clouded, e.g. that it is expensive and maybe even unaffordable. People in the interior profession therefore have a chance to optimize opportunities within this particular market segment.

The reason why professionals are not consulted by many households might also be due to the exposure of consumers to multiple excellent décor magazines and television programmes, of which entire networks are dedicated to home improvement, expo's etc. which suggest the importance of interior design (and décor) on society (Smagorinsky, Zoss & Reed, 2006). This may encourage and inspire people to attempt these activities themselves, rather than to enlist the help of a professional. In addition, such sources provide a more affordable option to people than an interior decorator or designer and in most instances these alternative sources of information are also more readily available to the every-day consumer. A survey done by Futurefact (Du Plessis & Rousseau, 2003:83) on living standards and life styles of South African consumers may also clarify the matter. The survey classified the respondents in this particular study (LSM 8-10) as consumers belonging to the CS7 and the CS8 categories. The respondents of this study, however only fall within the CS7 group, since people within the CS8 group live in large suburban homes. Consumers that belong to the CS7 group are classified as outward-looking, affluent

consumers, consisting of nuclear families or couples without children (47.8% of respondents were part of a dual member household). They are concerned with their safety and prefer to live in secure areas (for example in security complexes). As individuals, these people do not buy things that they do not need, and are interested in computers, social occasions, TV, arts and crafts, furthering their education (48.4% of respondents in this study possessed a university degree and/or a post graduate degree or diploma), sport and most importantly to this study, home improvements (Du Plessis & Rousseau, 2003:81-82). Findings of Du Plessis and Rousseau (2003:81-82) state that more educated people are interested in home improvements but do not spend unnecessary money and the findings of this study agree with this and therefore explain why interior designers and interior decorators were not consulted on a larger scale, but rather attempted by the residents themselves.

7.3 HOUSEHOLDS' MOST VALUED INTERIOR OBJECTS

7.3.1 Categorization of most valued interior objects

7.3.1.1 Introduction

An investigation of consumers' regard for specific types of interior objects and their regard for specific zones of their homes required of respondents to specify their most valued interior objects in an open question. They then provided reasons why these objects were valued. Respondents thus first listed five interior objects that they valued highly in random order, where after they provided a reason why they valued each of the objects. Respondents then had to rank the objects in order of importance which gave an indication of the type of interior objects that were valued most. An overview will first be given of the so-called valued interior objects, followed by the ranking and lastly respondents' motivations for valuing these items.

7.3.1.2 Inter rater reliability for most valued interior objects

The process of categorization of interior objects was done by means of axial coding. Axial coding is the process of relating similar constructs into categories. This can also be done for a second time by an independent party to verify the reliability of the categorization. This independent party should have no prior knowledge of the categories that were originally formed by the researcher. This is done in order to ensure that after the individual has repeated the categorization process and comparison of the two individuals' formation of categories are done, the interpretation and

categories would coincide. If not, a discussion has to be entered into until agreement is reached (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:500; Borgatti, S.a.).

The researcher initially coded the objects that were listed by the respondents as well as reasons why they valued the objects. The valued interior objects were grouped by the researcher into 23 categories that were later reduced to five. The coding procedure was repeated independently by a fellow Masters student who is in the same field of study and who is also specializing in Interior Merchandise Management. The categories are depicted in Table 7.9.

TABLE 7.9: CATEGORIZATION OF INTERIOR OBJECTS

Researcher categories[3]	Research assistant categories[4]	Re-categorization after discussion[5]	Final categories[6]
Tv and related items	Electronics Other entertainment/gaming Television	Tv and related items	Household technology
Music and related items	Musical instruments	Music and related items	
Camera	Not classified separately by research assistant	Camera	
Computers	Not classified separately by research assistant	Computers	
Appliances	Electrical appliances Heater/air conditioning	Appliances	
Wine racks	Wine rack	Wine rack	Furniture
Furniture	Other furniture Seating Dining room table/chairs	Furniture	
Fireplace	Construction	Fireplace	
Soft furnishings	Flooring and soft furnishings	Soft furnishings	Textile products
Carpets and rugs	Not classified separately by research assistant	Carpets and rugs	
Art objects	Art objects	Art objects	Decorative objects
Lamps	Lamps and lighting	Lamps	
Candle holders	Not classified separately by research assistant	Candle holders	
Floral objects	Not classified separately by research assistant	Floral objects	
Ornaments and mirrors	Decorative objects Mirrors	Ornaments and mirrors	
Crockery and cutlery	Food/drink serving	Crockery and cutlery	
Flooring	Not classified separately by research assistant	Flooring	
Grandfather clocks	Clocks	Grandfather clocks	
Lighting (other than lamps)	Not classified separately by research assistant	Lighting	
Photos and portraits	Personal items	Photos and portraits	Personal objects
Books	Hobby material	Books	
Pets toys	Not classified separately by research assistant	Pets toys	
Fish tanks	Fish tanks	Fish tanks	

The majority of the differences in the categorization and interpretation of the interior objects by the researcher and the research assistant were in terms of the formation of the various

[3] Researcher categories were drawn up by the researcher and comprised 23 categories

[4] Research assistant categories were drawn up independently by the research assistant and comprised 22 categories

[5] This category is the category that the researcher and the research assistant agreed upon

[6] This is the final compressed categories of the respondents valued interior objects

categories. Several of the categories that were stated separately by the research assistant were grouped into a single category by the researcher for example other furniture such as tables, sideboards etc. were combined with seating and dining room tables or chairs as a single category namely furniture, while the research assistant distinguished these as two separate categories. After discussions, seven of the objects were moved into other categories namely camera, computer and candleholders (were initially placed in their own categories), scratch poles, rugs, wooden floors and sheet music (was removed from the categories as identified by the research assistant, and placed in those that were identified by the researcher).

After discussions were held, categories were compressed into the following main categories namely *household technology*, *furniture*, *textile products*, *decorative objects* and *personal objects* (Allen *et al,.* 2004:272-276; Binggeli, 2007:474; Kilmer & Kilmer, 1992:455-482, 486-512, 521-531, 610-611) (Table 7.9). Out of the possible 823 objects listed the researcher and research assistant only differed in terms of the classifications of 7 of the interior objects that were listed in total (i.e. inter rater reliability: 99.1%). These items were re-examined and discussed to reach an agreement in terms of their categorization

7.3.1.3 Respondents' most valued interior objects

All the items specified by the respondents were firstly categorized in terms of relevant product categories in accordance with established literature (Allen *et al.,* 2004:265-270; Kilmer & Kilmer, 1992:481,492,520-532), which resulted in a reduction of 823 different objects that were listed to 23 categories, for example, a set of handmade curtains, an inherited throw, newly bought scatter cushions etc. were grouped into a single category, namely *Soft furnishings*. These 23 categories were then further condensed into five encompassing categories which were also derived from literature (Allen *et al,.* 2004:272-276; Binggeli, 2007:474; Kilmer & Kilmer, 1992:455-482, 486-512, 521-531, 610-611), for example soft furnishings, carpets and rugs etc. were combined in the *Textile* category (Table 7.10).

TABLE 7.10: CATEGORIES OF VALUED INTERIOR OBJECTS (N=823)

Original objects	Initial categories (23)	n	Final categories (5)	n/%
Televisions; Playstations; Wii; DVD players; DVD's	TV and related accessories	139	Household technology (Kilmer & Kilmer, 1992:610-611)	243/ 29.5%
Stereo; Sound system; CD's; Guitars; Pianos	Music, musical instruments and related accessories	58		
Laptop; Personal computers	Computers	18		
Fridge; Stove; Coffee machines; Dishwashers	Appliances	27		
Cameras	Photographic equipment	1		
Tables; Chairs; Sideboards; Daybeds	Furniture	307	Furniture (Kilmer & Kilmer, 1992:486-512, 455-482, 492)	311/ 37.8%
Wine racks; Wine display cases	Wine racks	1		
Gas and traditional fireplaces	Fireplaces	3		
Curtains; Scatter cushions; Table runners; Drapes	Soft furnishings	26	Textile products (Allen *et a.l.* 2004:276, Binggeli, 2007:474)	58/ 7.0%
Persian carpets; Rugs	Carpets	32		
Paintings; Sculptures; Pictures; Tapestries	Art objects	77	Decorative objects (Allen *et a.l.* 2004:272-275; Kilmer & Kilmer, 1992:521-531)	161/ 19.6%
Desk lamps; Stand lamps, Chandeliers	Lamps	15		
Candle sticks	Candle holders	1		
Potted flowers; Mini indoor gardens; Pot plants	Flowers and plants	7		
Travel objects; Mirrors; Masks; Copper ornaments	Ornaments/mirrors	47		
Grandfather clock	Standing clocks	1		
Bowls; Salad spoons; Tea sets; Silverware	Crockery and cutlery	10		
Laminate wood floors	Flooring	3		
Personal family photos; Family portraits	Photos/portraits	38	Personal objects	50/ 6.1%
Books; Magazines; Sheet music	Books	10		
Scratching poles; Toys; Fish tank accessories	Pets toys	2		

The categorization of objects was done in accordance with literature. Technology, specifically **Household technology,** has advanced rapidly in recent years. Our current society and economy have become more responsive to technological advancements and services that allow for greater information exchange. The television is one of the primary sources of gathering information and has in many instances replaced social interaction after a long day at the office. Understandably television sets were thus mentioned as a highly valued object. Electronic development and telecommunication networks have provided a decentralization of the work environment, allowing consumers the opportunity to use their homes as an extension of their work environment. Computers will therefore become an integral part of a person's everyday life, which also explains their incorporation in the list of most valued interior objects. Appliances have also become intertwined with technological advancement and will therefore fall within the household technology product category (Kilmer & Kilmer, 1992:610-611). Modern appliances signify progression and even status (Erasmus, Boshoff & Rousseau, 2002), and may be central in a

family's planning of open plan interiors, as is typical in most townhouse complexes. Radios or stereos and the accompanying accessories are also concerned with technology and may be important in terms of a family's socialization in general. Sophisticated radios or stereos and sound systems can be quite expensive and as stated by Du Plessis and Rousseau (2003:83-84) this category forms part of the well-equipped homes of these consumers and is therefore appropriately categorized as household technology.

Furniture is an encompassing concept that includes various sub categories. Furniture provides personalization to a space and reflects individual preferences. Furniture styles must therefore be considered for its intended use (functionality), as well as whether or not that piece will fit in with the overall design theme of the space (aesthetics). Furniture may have a modern influence or it can be historical in nature such as antique furniture (considered as such after a century has passed since it was manufactured or produced) (Kilmer & Kilmer, 1992:492). Included in the type of furniture were items that literature suggests are part of this category, such as seating, tabular units, storage units and task units. Items of this nature mentioned by the respondents were therefore classified as such. Other items that could be associated with furniture as well are interior elements that form an integral part of a home such as stairs, windows, doors, cabinetry and fireplaces (Kilmer & Kilmer, 1992:486-512, 455-482). These items formed a single category, namely *built-ins and furniture*. Fireplaces (as is the case with cabinets) can be free-standing or built-in units and similar to cabinets, fireplaces were integrated into the furniture category for the purpose of this study because these items will not be replaced frequently, and therefore involves careful consideration regarding the style, design and use in a home. Wine racks are also manufactured with the purpose similar to that of cabinets, and were therefore also included in this category. In fact, choice of furniture and all the forementioned objects are often done first before other elements are added to the interior, to organize the interior space in accordance with a household's lifestyle and to reflect the style, mood or ambience of the home.

Fabric (linen) is used in a residential environment to improve the aesthetics and appeal of the space. By utilizing fabrics in the form of draperies, shades, blinds, upholstery, slip covers, floor coverings etc. the ambience and overall appeal of a room may be enhanced greatly (Allen *et al.,* 2004:276, Binggeli, 2007:474). All fabrics mentioned in this study were classified as **Textile products.** Even though rugs and carpets are traditionally classified as soft floor coverings, these objects were categorized as soft furnishings in this study based on argumentation of Allen *et a..* (2004:310), as well as Binggeli, (2007:474), namely that these objects are used to enhance the aesthetics of the rooms they are presented in, much in the same manner that curtains are used. Furthermore, according to Elsasser (2004:279) bathroom textile products such as rugs and mats,

fall within the fabric category and therefore Persian (and other) rugs as well as carpets were categorized as textile products.

Furniture and accessories are used as interchangeable concepts when it comes to the décor of a room. These two concepts work together to define the style of a room. Furniture is used to meet and fulfil the range of human activities that people perform in a room and provides the basic style of the room, while accessories are used to enhance the style (Allen *et al.,* 2004:246; Elsasser, 2004:219). Accessories can be functional in nature or purely decorative or both. Respondents were not asked to make a distinction between the functional value and aesthetic value of the objects and therefore they were integrated into a single category, namely **decorative objects**. These objects included lamps, art work, mirrors, clocks and flowers, foliage or plants (Allen *et al.,* 2004:272-275; Kilmer & Kilmer, 1992:521-531). Since crockery and cutlery were sometimes used by the respondents for display purposes, they were also classified as decorative accessories in this study. Three respondents named flooring as a valued possession, since they had recently replaced the existing floor with laminated wood flooring. These choices were made due to personal preference, and not out of a necessity, and since decorative objects can be functional or aesthetic (or a combination of both) this type of flooring option is used to enhance the style of the room and is therefore classified as decorative objects. Books as well as photos and portraits were categorized by relevant literature as decorative objects (Allen *et al.,* 2004:266-267), however, the reasons why these objects were valued according to this particular study, were motivated by personal reasons and they were therefore distinguished as **personal objects**. The fish tanks and pets' toys were also purchased for reasons that did not concern any person other than the respondent and his/her pet, and were therefore also classified as personal objects. The categorization of valued interior objects is visually represented in Figure 7.7.

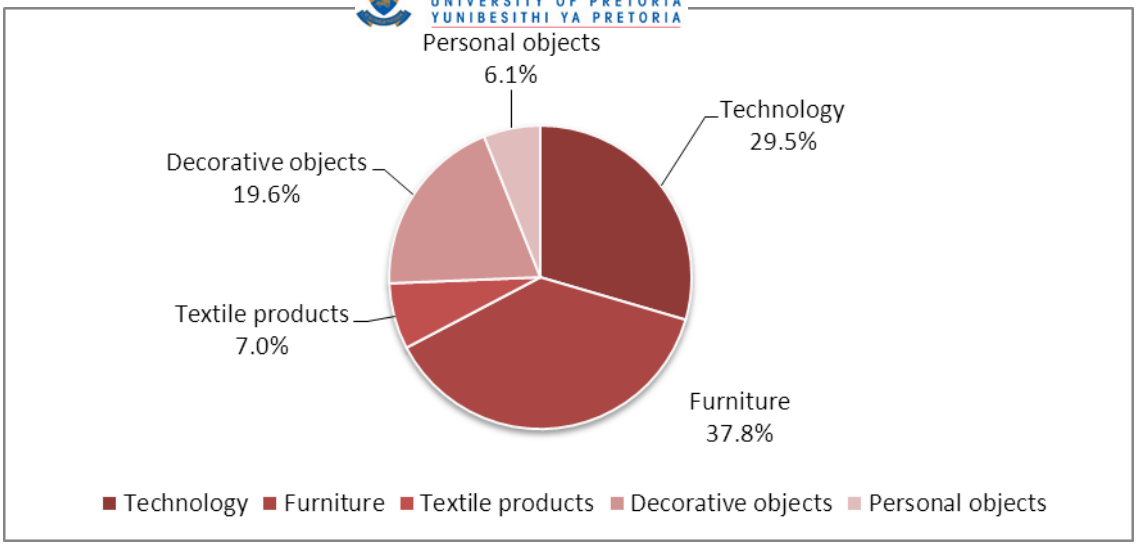

FIGURE 7.7: CATEGORIES OF RESPONDENTS' MOST VALUED INTERIOR OBJECTS (N=182)

Furniture and technology represented the two largest categories of valued objects (37.8% and 29.5% respectively), followed by decorative objects (19.6%), textile products (7.0%) and lastly personal objects (6.1%). These figures merely indicate a listing of the respondents' most valued interior objects and not necessarily a ranking of the importance of these objects.

7.3.1.4 Respondents' ranking of their most valued interior objects

Respondents were also asked to rank their most valued interior objects. It was assumed that fewer respondents might for example have mentioned art objects although they may have regarded them more valuable than other objects that were less frequently mentioned and that those objects may be regarded as more important based on monetary or investment value, sentiment etc. This study was interested in objects that respondents valued the most, and results will therefore only be presented for the objects mentioned as most valuable (Table 7.11). The most valued objects were then classified in accordance with the categories specified in Table 7.10.

TABLE 7.11: RESPONDENTS' MOST VALUED INTERIOR OBJECTS (n=121)

Interior objects	n	%
Furniture	62	51.2
Household technology	25	20.7
Decorative objects	19	15.7
Personal objects	15	12.4
Textile products	0	0.0

Table 7.11 indicates that the respondents' most valued interior objects fell in the *furniture* category (n=62; 51.2%), which included interior objects such as dining room tables, ottomans, sofas, sideboards, rocking chairs, wine racks etc. This was followed by *household technology* (n=25; 20.7%) and included objects such as televisions, DVD's, laptops, coffee machines, guitars, pianos etc., followed by *decorative objects* (n=19; 15.7%) such as paintings, desk lamps, grandfather clock, mirrors etc. and then personal objects (n=15; 12.4%) which included objects such as family photographs, portraits, books etc. Even though *textile products* are used to bring the architecture and furniture of a space together in order to enhance the aesthetics of the space by providing comfort, warmth and softness to a room (Allen *et al.,* 2004:276), none of the respondents ranked textiles(e.g. curtains) as their *most* valued interior object. This does not indicate however that textiles are not important in the interior décor of the respondents' social zones, only that they place a larger value on other objects in the room, for instance furniture. According to Solomon (2007:495) research that was conducted on the interior objects in people's homes showed that the higher social classes (LSM 8-10 groups) placed a large emphasis on furniture selection as well as decorative objects. Studies conducted in Gauteng in a South African context (including the east and south of Tshwane), found that most people have well equipped homes and are interested in (and own) a wide range of technological appliances or objects (Du Plessis & Rousseau, 2003:83-84).

Respondents were asked to list (and rank) their most valued interior objects that could be found in the social zones of their homes. Since the social zone of the home is where guests are received and entertained, it could be assumed that these areas (living and dining rooms) would rather have interior objects that are indicative of a person's social self instead of his/her personal self (Allen *et al*., 2004:205; Kempen & Ozaki, 2006; Kilmer & Kilmer, 1992:205; Nielson & Taylor, 2007:129). Findings revealed that merely 12.4% of the respondents indicated that personal objects were valued the most in the social zones of the interior, which is in accordance with literature that suggests that objects of a more social nature would have been (and is) more predominant.

7.3.1.5 Motivations for valuing specific interior objects

Respondents were asked to motivate why they identified specific objects as so-called valued interior objects in order to distinguish *social* reasons versus *private* reasons. Reasons provided were initially divided into 13 categories based on the distinctions given by the respondents for example 'it reflects my personality', 'it was handmade by my husband', and 'it was passed down from my grandmother'. After this process, these categories were reduced into two distinct

categories, namely *social motivations* and *private motivations,* based on reasons provided by Schiffman and Kanuk (2007:137-142). The 'public' motivations have connotations to the self within a social context, and the motivation behind the value placed on the objects, were thus social in origin, for example, a dining room table was valued for the entertainment opportunities that it provided or because it was impressive. The 'private' motivations on the other hand, were of a more personal nature and did not primarily involve public approval, for example photographs were valued due to sentimental reasons attached and to respondents' family bonds, or a dining room table was an heirloom, which provoked fond memories. The same type of interior object (e.g. dining room table) could therefore have been valued for dissimilar reasons.

7.3.1.6 Inter rater reliability for valuing specific interior objects

As with the process of axial coding for identifying the respondents most valued interior objects, the motivations behind such values were also categorized through the process of axial coding by the researcher and the research assistant. The only differences that existed between the coding of the motivations by the researcher and the research assistant, were that the research assistant identified two additional categories of motivations that were integrated in other categories by the researcher. After discussions, these two categories were integrated with the appropriate categories as identified by the researcher, in order to form single categories, for example 'entertainment' and 'social entertainment' were labelled as 'entertainment' and 'functional' and 'creates order' were placed within a single category, namely 'functional'. The only item that was removed from one category as identified by the research assistant was 'inherited'. It was removed from the 'sentimental value' category and placed into the category that was identified by the researcher as 'heirloom' (Table 7.12).

TABLE 7.12: CATEGORIZATION OF MOTIVATIONS REGARDING THE VALUE OF INTERIOR OBJECTS

Researcher categories[7]	**Research assistant categories**[8]	**Re-categorization after discussion**[9]	**Final category**[10]
Information	Source of information	Information	Public/social
Entertainment	Entertainment Social entertainment	Entertainment	
Gift	Gift	Gift	
Monetary value	Monetary value	Monetary value	
Antique	Antique	Antique	
Aesthetic	Aesthetic value	Aesthetic	
Unique	Unique	Unique	
Sentiment	Sentimental value	Sentiment	Private
Comfort	Comfort	Comfort	
Privacy	Privacy	Privacy	
Relaxation	Other enjoyment	Relaxation	
Functional	Functional Creates order	Functional	
Convenience	Convenience	Convenience	
Heirloom	Not classified separately by research assistant	Heirloom	

After discussions were held, categories were compressed into two single categories, namely *social reasons* and *private reasons* (Table 7.13). Out of the possible 859 motivations listed by the respondents, the researcher and research assistant only differed in terms of the classifications of 17 of the motivations listed in total (i.e. inter rater reliability: 98.0%). These items were re-examined and discussed to reach an agreement in terms of their categorization.

[7] Researcher categories were drawn up by the researcher and comprised 14 categories

[8] Researcher assistant categories were drawn up independently by the research assistant and comprised 16 categories

[9] This category is the category that the researcher and the research assistant agreed upon

[10] This is the final compressed category of the motivations of the respondents

TABLE 7.13: RESPONDENTS' MOTIVATIONS FOR VALUING SPECIFIC INTERIOR OBJECTS (N=859)

Original motivations	Initial categories (13)	n	Final categories (2)	n/%
Source of information, Social networking; TV programmes; News	Information	9	Public/social	408/ 47.5%
Entertaining guests; Music; Socializing tool	Entertainment	147		
Wedding present; Gift form mother/father; Engagement gift	Gift[11]	25		
Expensive painting; Collectors Items; Famous name/Brand; Valuable	Monetary value	72		
Very old; Antique	Antique	12		
Beautiful; Complimentary; Stylish; Compliments the room	Aesthetic	130		
One of a kind; Reflects my personality	Unique	13		
Hand made by husband/father/self; Memories; Emotional connotation	Sentiment	120	Private	451/ 52.5%
Comfortable item e.g. sofa	Comfort	139		
Provides privacy	Privacy	5		
Relaxation	Relaxation	48		
I use it a lot; Necessity; Handy;	Functional	82		
Makes it easier; Do not like doing it another way	Convenience	20		
Passed down through generation; Received it from my parents	Heirloom	37		

Although the findings suggest that public/social and private motivations were almost equally relevant (47.5%; 52.5%), it is noteworthy that social motivations for valuing objects were not predominant (47.5%) (Table 7.13). Since respondents were asked to name and assign value to objects in the social zones of their homes it was expected that people would optimize objects with a social connotation in these zones of their homes in order to communicate to onlookers their desired public self (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:137-142). It was surprising to find that the data suggested otherwise. It is therefore noteworthy that 52.5% of the objects were personal in nature, which means that respondents used objects that were of great personal value, as well as social value. The two types of motivations might have been used in combination to personalize an otherwise non-distinguishable environment (similar to other adjacent townhouses), which could otherwise not have been achieved if only an object of social value was on display. Furthermore, people deem certain objects as irreplaceable and unique based simply on the emotional attachment to such an object. In the case of personal possessions people consider their objects to have greater value than their actual commercial value, due to the sentimentality of

[11] Since gifts are presented in a social context, in accordance to a person's social self that is on display, gifts were regarded as public or social motivations

what they deem such objects worth or what the replacement value of such an object would be (Frazier, Gelman, Wilson & Hood, 2009).

7.4 ZONES OF THEIR HOMES AND SELF AWARENESS

This section of the questionnaire was implemented to firstly gain insight into respondents' cognisance of so-called social and private zones in their homes (in terms of the use and interior planning of specific areas), and secondly whether or not respondents displayed their social or private selves in these zones.

7.4.1 Distinction between private and public zones in their homes

7.4.1.1 Awareness of social zones for the sample

Respondents were asked to rate statements presented on a Likert-type Agreement Scale, regarding their awareness of and restriction to the various zones in their homes. These statements are presented in Table 7.14.

TABLE 7.14: RESPONDENTS' COGNISANCE OF THE ZONES IN THEIR HOMES (N=182)

Description	Disagree: (slightly-strongly)		Agree: (slightly-Strongly)		Mean	Missing
	n	%	n	%		n
I like to restrict guests to the entertainment areas of my home	75	41.2	106	58.2	2.6	1
I prefer that guests do not enter my private bedroom and bathroom areas	58	31.9	124	68.1	2.9	1

The results indicate that the respondents were more hesitant about only restricting guests to the social zones of their homes (mean 2.6) but did wish to do so (mean 2.9). This was probably because guests had to use the respondents' bathrooms and even bedrooms to attend to young babies or children (a large percentage (35.2%) were younger than 35 years and most likely had friends with children) (Figure 7.8).

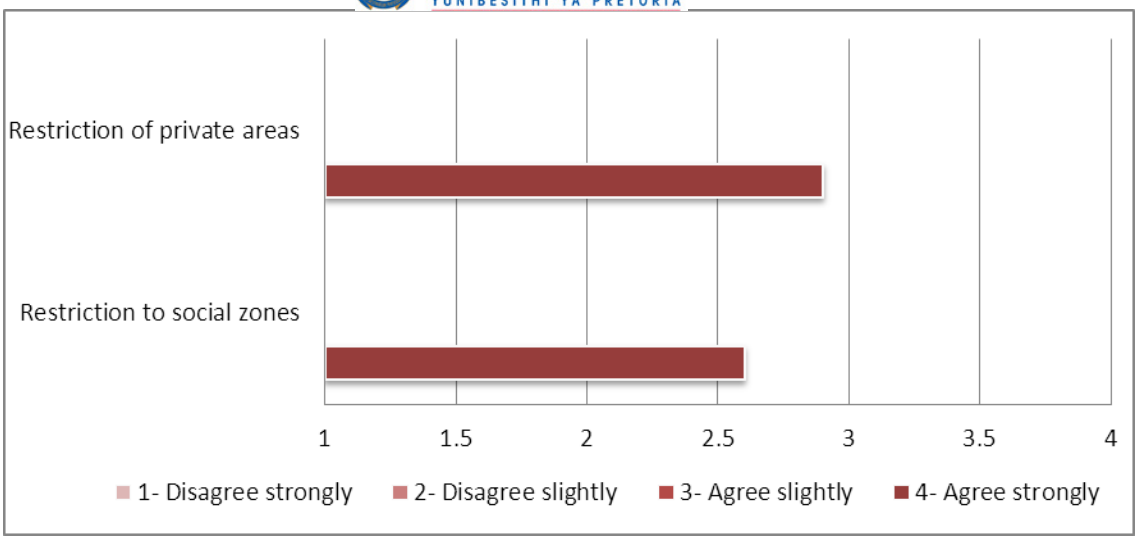

FIGURE 7.8: RESPONDENTS' COGNISANCE OF THE ZONES IN THEIR HOMES (N=182)

The idea that guests should not enter the residents' private bedroom and bathroom areas (68.1%) was anticipated since the private zones in a home should be seen as a refuge for the resident, and represents a place where a person does not have to adhere to norms accompanying his/her social position (Goffman, 1969:11-12). Even though literature suggests that it is preferable that guests are received and entertained in the social zones of a home (Stewart-Pollack & Menconi, 2005:70-71), merely 58.2% of the respondents agreed that they do limit their guests to these zones. Respondents thus clearly differentiated between social and private zones in their homes in terms of activities and allowance of guests in certain areas of their homes. This desire to restrict guests to the social zones of the respondents homes, allows the respondents to organize these zones in such a manner that it is conducive to how the respondents wish to be regarded by others (Goffman in Sandstrom *et al.,* 2006:108).

7.4.1.2 Effort and budget allocated to social zones for the sample

The respondents were asked to indicate whether they agreed or not with statements presented in Table 7.15, on a four-point Likert-type Agreement Scale, as well as in Figure 7.9. These statements referred to the respondents' effort and budget allocation in the social zones of the respondents' homes.

TABLE 7.15: RESPONDENTS' LEVEL OF EFFORT AND BUDGET ALLOCATED TO THE SOCIAL ZONES IN THEIR HOMES (N=182)

Description	Disagree: (slightly-strongly)		Agree: (slightly-Strongly)		Mean	Missing
	n	%	n	%		n
I put more effort into the décor of the entertainment areas in my home	53	30.1	129	70.9	2.9	0
I spend most of my decorating budget on the entertainment areas of my home	73	40.3	108	59.7	2.7	0

An overwhelming majority of the respondents (70.9%) agreed that they put more effort into the décor of their entertainment areas (social zones) of their homes, and that they also spent the bulk of their decorating budget on this zone (59.7%) (Figure 7.9).

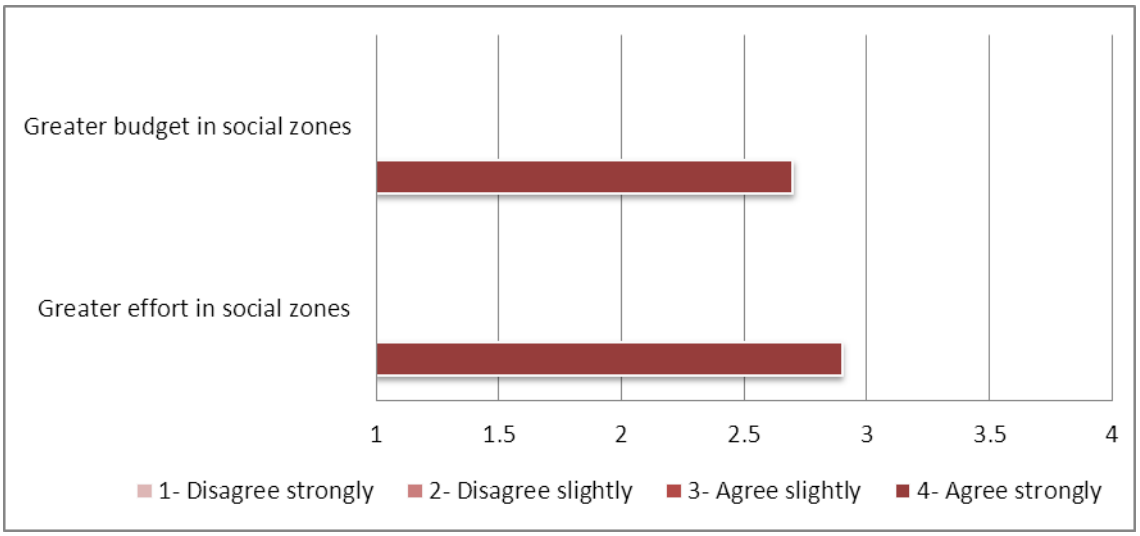

FIGURE 7.9: RESPONDENTS' LEVEL OF EFFORT AND BUDGET ALLOCATED TO THE SOCIAL ZONES IN THEIR HOMES (N=182)

The means (≥2.7) suggest that respondents were generally in agreement with the statements. Respondents agreed that they spent a larger part of their décor budget (although not all) on the social zones of their homes (mean 2.7) and also that they put a greater effort (although not all) in the design and décor of the social zones (mean 2.9). A reason supporting the fact that the greater effort and budget was not exclusively used for social zones, is that in many instances the residents were occupying their first homes, which implies that all areas of the home needed to be furnished and decorated. Another reason why greater effort and a larger part of their budget was allocated to the social zone of the home may be that these areas are seen as a reflection of residents' *values, lifestyle* and *identity* (Allen *et al*., 2004:205; Kempen & Ozaki, 2006; Kilmer & Kilmer, 1992:205; Nielson & Taylor, 2007:129).

Peoples' *values* are closely related to their beliefs and are not situation specific, but rather more broadly accepted enduring concepts that serve as a guide on how people should behave in a cultural context, and that is accepted by peoples' social group. Values in combination with a person's beliefs, i.e. a number of statements that reflect a person's knowledge and assessments of situations or objects, will therefore guide people's product choices and will ultimately be reflected in the interior environment of someone's home (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:394). For example, the choice between products made in South Africa versus imported products with regard to the environmental impact that products have on the world. Therefore effort has to be made when choosing products for these zones, since it is expected that outsiders will enter into this space and deduce the residents' values and beliefs. Secondly a person's *lifestyle* is also revealed to onlookers and expresses shared beliefs, attitudes, activities and behaviours (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:370), for example a person with second hand furniture, natural material objects such as bamboo blinds etc. may be seen as living in an environmentally friendly manner, and the information gathered from such a lifestyle will provide onlookers with more information about the resident. Lastly people's *identities* that are central, enduring and distinctive concepts (Gioia, Schultz & Corley, 2000) of a person can be assumed from their interiors. According to Tian *et al*., 2001, since townhouses are so similar or the same in appearance, people will have some need to express a unique identity in order to alleviate their monotonous surroundings. This need to be unique is therefore an expression of the residents' identity and will especially be reflected in the social zones of their homes.

7.4.1.3 Awareness of social zones per demographic category

Respondents' cognisance of different zones in their homes was also investigated per demographic characteristics of the sample and is presented in Table 7.16. These categories were arranged in terms of the respondents'

- Gender: male; female
- Age: <35; ≥35 –<50; ≥50 years
- Tenure status: own; rent
- Length of tenure: <5 years; ≥5years
- Education: up to matric; post matric qualifications; post graduate degree or diploma.

T-tests were done for the demographic variables that were divided into two sub-categories (namely gender, tenure status and length of tenure), since the differences between the two population means were unknown.

T-tests were performed for

- H_o:*Populuation means are equal*
- H_a:Population means differ.

The results for all of the t-tests could not confirm any differences among the various groups in the sub-categories. T-tests for equal variances among groups were implemented. For the demographic variables that consisted of three or more sub-categories (namely age and education level), Anovas were performed to determine whether significant differences existed between sample means (Williams, Sweeney & Anderson, 2006:403). No significant differences ($p > 0.05$) amongst any of the demographic categories could be confirmed with regard to the respondents' restriction of guests to the social zones of their homes. Similarly, no significant differences existed between the demographic categories and the desire for respondents to restrict their guests to these zones of their homes.

7.4.1.2 Effort and budget allocated to social zones per demographic category

As with the respondents' awareness of different zones in their homes, an investigation into the residents' attention (effort and budget allocated) to social zones of their homes, per demographic characteristic was conducted, and the results are presented in Table 7.17. The categories were once again arranged in terms of the respondents'

- Gender: male; female
- Age: <35; ≥35 –<50; ≥50 years
- Tenure status: own; rent
- Length of tenure: <5 years; ≥5years
- Education level: up to matric; post matric qualifications; post graduate degree or diploma.

The results for all of the t-tests could once again not confirm any differences among the various groups within the sub-categories.

Once again no significant differences ($p > 0.05$) amongst any of the demographic categories could be confirmed with regard to the residents' attention given to the interior of the social zones of their homes (i.e. amount of money spent in the social zones of the respondents' homes and effort made with the interiors of these zones) (Table 7.17).

TABLE 7.16: RESPONDENTS' AWARENESS OF VARIOUS ZONES IN THEIR HOMES PER DEMOGRAPHIC CATEGORY (N=182)

Gender			Age			Tenure status			Length of tenure			Education level		
	Mean	Std. dev.	Years	Mean	Std. dev.		Mean	Std. dev.	Years	Mean	Std. dev.		Mean	Std. dev.
Male n=62	2.88	0.76	<35 n=89	2.91	0.75	Own n=110	2.91	0.77	<5 n=116	2.99	0.73	≤Matric n=41	2.89	0.75
Female n=120	2.95	0.74	≥35-<50 n=52	3.02	0.59	Rent n=71	2.98	0.71	≥5 n=38	2.92	0.77	Certificate Diploma Degree n=97	3.01	0.75
t-test: p=0.5691			≥50 n=41	2.87	0.92	t-test: p=0.5665			t-test: p=0.5404			Post graduate degree/ Diploma n=44	2.79	0.76
			Anova: p=0.5803									Anova: p=0.2684		

TABLE 7.17: ATTENTION TO THE ZONES OF THEIR HOMES INTO EFFORT AND BUDGET ALLOCATED (N=182)

Gender			Age			Tenure status			Length of tenure			Education level		
	Mean	Std. dev.	Years	Mean	Std. dev.		Mean	Std. dev.	Years	Mean	Std. dev.		Mean	Std. dev.
Male n=62	2.62	0.82	<35 n=89	2.55	0.72	Own n=110	2.63	0.82	<5 n=116	2.63	0.76	≤Matric n=41	2.52	0.78
Female n=120	2.63	0.77	≥35-<50 n=52	2.66	0.77	Rent N=71	2.64	0.72	≥5 n=38	2.70	0.80	Certificate Diploma Degree n=97	2.72	0.82
t-test: p=0.9202			≥50 n=41	2.76	0.92	t-test: p=0.9399			t-test: p=0.5728			Post graduate degree/ Diploma n=44	2.52	0.71
			Anova: p=0.3589									Anova: p=0.2379		

7.4.2 Distinction between private and public selves

7.4.2.1 Distinction between private and public selves for the sample

Literature indicates that a distinction can be made between a person's social (public) and private self (Charon, 1979:72,84; Kuhn, 1964). Respondents' reactions to six statements that address how these selves are portrayed in the social zones of their homes are presented in Table 7.18 in descending order for "Agreement" responses. The statements were randomly ordered in the questionnaire and respondents had no idea that the statements actually aimed to infer an association with their 'selves'.

TABLE 7.18: RESPONDENTS' EXPRESSION OF THEIR SELVES IN THE SOCIAL ZONES OF THEIR HOMES (N=182)

Selves	Description	Agree: (slightly-strongly)		Disagree: (slightly-strongly)		Mean	Missing
		n	%	n	%		n
Private	I like to display interior objects of a certain style that reflect my personality in the entertainment areas of my home	153	84.1	29	16.0	3.0	0
Social	The objects displayed in the entertainment areas of my home could attract attention and provoke conversation	133	73.1	49	26.9	2.9	0
Private	I love to display family photos in the entertainment areas of my home	125	69.1	57	31.4	2.9	0
Social	I choose to display objects from my travels or life experiences in the entertainment areas of my home	122	67.0	60	33.0	2.8	0
Social	I display more impressive objectsin the entertainment areas of my home	115	63.1	67	36.8	2.8	0
Private	I display objects of personal value for example childhood medals, sentimental objects etc. in the entertainment areas of my home	53	29.2	129	70.9	2.0	0

Three of the statements addressed respondents' private selves, while the other three addressed their social selves. More than 80% of the respondents' indicated that they liked to reveal their personality (an element of their private self) in the entertainment areas of their homes. The nature of the exhibits included family photographs (mentioned by almost 70% of the respondents as a display item). That suggests that they are proud to reveal their family ties or heritage. More than 70% of the respondents indicated that the objects that are on display in the entertainment areas were chosen to attract attention and to provoke conversation, namely a reflection on their social selves. Apart from displaying family photographs that reflect upon the personal self (69.1%), almost an equal percentage of respondents (67.0%) indicated that they also choose to display objects from their travels or life experiences (which reflected upon their social selves). A

display of impressive objects in the entertainment areas of their homes by the majority of respondents (63.1%) also confirmed attention to their social selves. Objects of a very personal nature, such as childhood medals, are apparently regarded as more private, as 70.9% of the respondents disagreed that they would display these highly personal objects in the social zones of their homes.

For the purpose of triangulation, the respondents were asked later in the questionnaire whether or not the interior objects they bought for the social zones of their homes, had to be aesthetically pleasing to themselves only (personal self), or whether the interior objects had to be impressive to others (social self). Findings suggest that 94.3% of the respondents agreed that the objects had to be beautiful for themselves, while 72.5% of them agreed that the objects had to be impressive to others.

Findings therefore suggest that the interior objects that are displayed in the social zones of townhouses reflect a combination of items associated with the social and private self, but that objects with a more personal, sentimental connotation and medals are perhaps too personal to be regarded as proper. The means are visually indicated in Figure 7.10

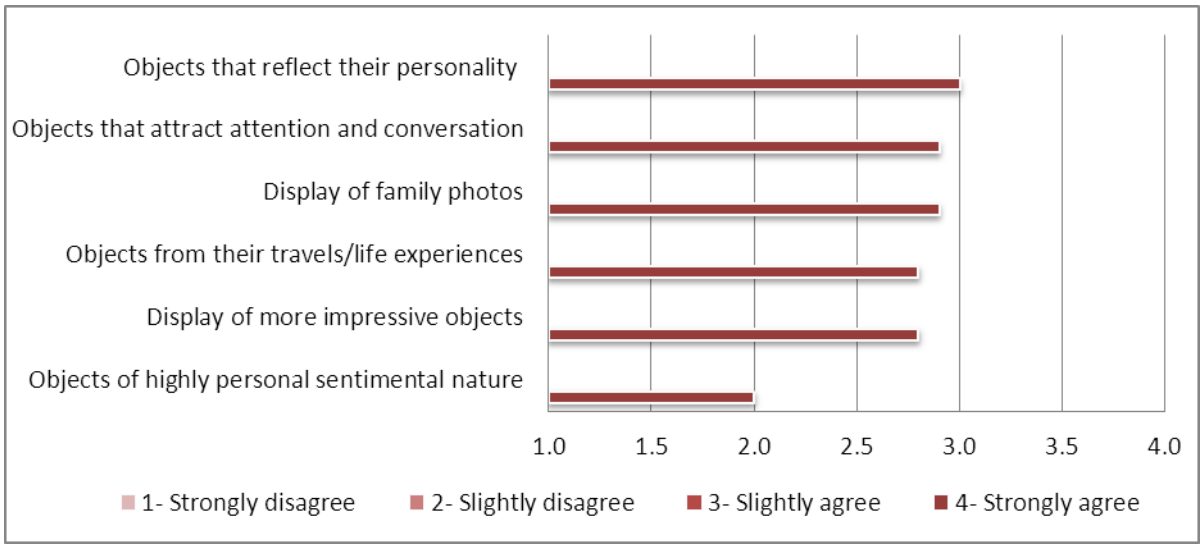

FIGURE 7.10: RESPONDENTS' EXPRESSION OF THEIR SELVES IN THE SOCIAL ZONES OF THEIR HOMES AS MEAN VALUES (N=182)

Findings suggest that respondents agreed that interior objects used and displayed in the social zones of their homes were chosen to reflect both their private and social selves, but they disagreed that highly personal and sentimental objects should be displayed in these zones. They therefore did not mind revealing their personal selves through the selection of interior objects and sanctioned the display of family ties and associations. Highly personal objects were however not

displayed and no significant differences could be found in terms of this behaviour, for various demographic subsets of the sample.

7.4.2.2 Distinction between private and public selves per demographic category

Means were also calculated per demographic category across the range of statements to indicate possible differences in the display of the residents' private or social selves. The means were calculated per subset of sample i.e.

- Gender: male; female
- Age: <35; ≥35 –<50; ≥50 years
- Tenure status: own; rent
- Length of tenure: <5 years; ≥5years
- Education level: up to matric; post matric qualifications; post graduate degree or diploma.

The information is presented in Table 7.19 in terms of a reflection of their private selves, and in Table 7.20 in terms of their social selves.

T-tests were carried out for the sub categories that consisted of two variables (gender, tenure status and length of tenure). The results for all of the t-tests could not confirm any significant differences among the various groups in the sub-categories. Anovas were conducted for those sub-categories that had three groups (age and education level). No significant differences existed amongst any of the groups regarding the type of self (public or private), which is on display in the social zones of the residents homes ($p>0.05$).

TABLE 7.19: RESPONDENTS' EXPRESSION OF THEIR PRIVATE SELVES PER DEMOGRAPHIC CATEGORY (N=182)

Gender			Age			Tenure status			Length of tenure			Education level		
	Mean	Std. dev.	Years	Mean	Std. dev.		Mean	Std. dev.	Years	Mean	Std. dev.		Mean	Std. dev.
Male n=62	2.62	0.67	<35 n=89	2.80	0.60	Own n=110	2.74	0.68	<5 n=116	2.69	0.61	≤Matric n=41	2.80	0.61
Female n=120	2.81	0.64	≥35-<50 n=52	2.72	0.71	Rent n=71	2.76	0.61	≥5 n=38	2.81	0.76	Certificate Diploma Degree n=97	2.78	0.69
t-test: p=0.0648			≥50 n=41	2.64	0.72	t-test: p=0.8323			t-test: p=0.2922			Post graduate degree/ Diploma n=44	2.60	0.63
			Anova: p=0.4469									Anova: p=0.2892		

TABLE 7.20: RESPONDENTS' EXPRESSION OF THEIR SOCIAL SELVES PER DEMOGRAPHIC CATEGORY (N=182)

Gender			Age			Tenure status			Length of tenure			Education level		
	Mean	Std. dev.	Years	Mean	Std. dev.		Mean	Std. dev.	Years	Mean	Std. dev.		Mean	Std. dev.
Male n=62	2.85	0.67	<35 n=89	2.94	0.62	Own n=110	2.85	0.75	<5 n=116	2.84	0.75	≤Matric n=41	2.88	0.83
Female n=120	2.83	0.80	≥35-<50 n=52	2.73	0.80	Rent n=71	2.81	0.77	≥5 n=38	2.84	0.79	Certificate Diploma Degree n=97	2.81	0.76
t-test: p=0.8196			≥50 n=41	2.74	0.92	t-test: p=0.7537			t-test: p=0.9875			Post graduate degree/ Diploma n=44	2.86	0.68
			Anova: p=0.1754									Anova: p=0.8522		

Figure 7.11 includes the means regarding the four categories that were under investigation, namely, the respondents' awareness of the various zones in their homes; the effort put into and the amount of money spent in the various zones of the respondents' homes; the private self that is on display in the social zones of the homes; and lastly the social self on display in the social zone of the homes. The standard deviations for each of the categories' mean values are also presented. The standard deviations were ≥0.66, with the standard deviation for the awareness of the zones in the homes, the effort put into and the money spent in (attention to) the zones of the homes, the private selves on display in the social zones of the homes and the social selves on display in the social zones of the home being 0.79, 0.75, 0.66 and 0.78 respectively.

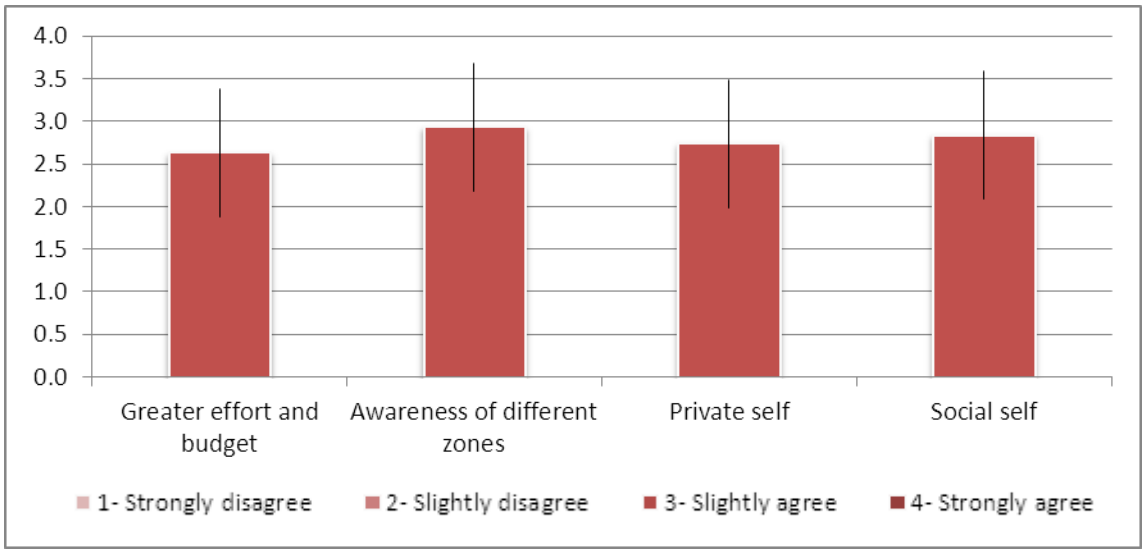

FIGURE 7.11: MEAN VALUES REGARDING THE SOCIAL AND PRIVATE ZONES IN THEIR HOMES, AS WELL AS THEIR PRIVATE AND SOCIAL SELVES (N=182)

7.4.3 Summary

Interior objects chosen for the social zones of the residents' homes represented a combination of social objects and objects of a personal nature that reflected on their private selves, although the latter did not include highly personal objects such as childhood medals. Respondents therefore 'protected' their highly personal selves from onlookers. Interior objects used in the social zones of the townhouses are therefore not limited to objects that exclusively reflect their social selves. In addition, there seemed to be a relative strong awareness of a distinction between the private and social zones of their homes and respondents agreed that more effort and money were spent on the social zones of their homes. This was confirmed through respondents' agreement that guests should be restricted to the social zones of their homes and that guests should preferably

not enter the private zones of their homes. This suggests that the social zones of their homes are regarded as 'open territory' where outsiders are allowed to observe and interpret. The same does however not apply to the private zones, possibly because they prefer to protect these zones and thereby their private selves, or because it is less impressive (the respondents admitted that less effort and money were spent on these areas of their homes).

Further investigation was done, namely t-tests, for gender, tenure status and length of tenure and Anovas for age and education level and can be seen in Table 16, Table 17, Table 19 and Table 20. No significant differences were found for variables regarding the respondents' awareness of the various zones in their homes. Similarly, no significant differences were found regarding the amount of effort and money spent in the zones of the homes ($p>0.05$).

Even though no significant differences were found for the variables regarding the displaying of the respondents private selves in the social zones of their homes, a p- value of 0.0648 indicated that women (mean 2.8) were more inclined to put their private selves on display in the social zones of their homes, than men were (mean 2.6). This p-value does, however, not indicate a significant difference amongst these two groups, since the value is greater than 0.05. Lastly, no significant differences were found for the variables regarding the respondents' social selves on display ($p>0.05$).

7.5 TOWNHOUSE OWNERS' NEED TO EXPRESS THEIR UNIQUENESS

7.5.1 The Need for Uniqueness Scale

When people perceive themselves as highly similar to others to such an extent that their identities are threatened, they tend to partake in counter conforming behaviour to alleviate the threat to their identities. A need to counter-conform is seen as a need for uniqueness, which comprises three possible avenues, namely *creative choice counter-conformity (CCCC), unpopular choice counter-conformity (UCCC)* and *avoidance of similarity (AOS)* (Tian *et al*., 2001). *Creative choice counter-conformity* represents choices that are unique but still accepted by a person's reference group, although these choices are novel in comparison to average product choices. *Unpopular choice counter-conformity* represents product choices that deviate to some extent from social norms of that persons' reference group. Such products may provoke greater social scrutiny than the other options, but if the reference group later accepts such products, the person will be seen as a trendsetter. *Avoidance of similarity* represents a choice of products that is regarded as acceptable by a person's reference group, although the products are rarely chosen, i.e. the

exception rather than the rule. People tend to discontinue using such products when they become popular (Ruvio, Shoham & Brenčič, 2008; Tian & McKenzie, 2001; Tian *et al*., 2001).

Respondents were asked to answer statements that reflected upon all three types of counter-conformity behaviour in order to investigate their need for uniqueness when choosing interior products for the social zones of their homes. The Need for Uniqueness Scale was originally developed by Snyder and Fromkin in 1977 within a behavioural frame of reference (Tepper & Hoyle, 1996) and has been implemented in multiple studies since in terms of clothing, activities and hobbies contexts (Ruvio *et al.,* 2008; Simonson & Nowlis, 2000; Tepper & Hoyle, 1996; Tian & McKenzie, 2001; Tian *et al.,* 2001; Workman & Kidd, 2000). The scale that was used by Tian *et al.* (2001) in a clothing framework was slightly adapted for this study in order to infer people's choices of interior products. This was inspired by literature that suggests that clothing does for the human body what a home's interior does for the home (Belk, 1988), and that one of the functions of clothing as a commodity is to serve as an extension of the self (Workman & Kidd, 2000). It can thus be proposed that the home (as a commodity) could also serve as an extension of the self. Tepper and Hoyle (1996) state that consumers' expression of uniqueness can also manifest in the form of personal or material possessions and therefore the *Need for Uniqueness Scale* can be used to examine behaviour regarding consumers' choice of material objects in an interior environment. The scale consisted of 31 statements, i.e. eleven statements regarding *creative choice counter-conformity*; eleven statements regarding *unpopular choice counter-conformity* and nine statements about *avoidance of similarity*. The statements pertaining to the various types of counter-conformity behaviour were, however, presented in random order in the questionnaire so that it would not be clear which type of counter-conformity the respondents were reacting to. A five point Likert-type scale ranging from *Disagree strongly* to *Agree strongly* was used for the investigation. The results are presented in Table 7.21, Table 7.22 and Table 7.23 in terms of the specific types of counter-conformity.

7.5.2 An investigation of respondents' choice of counter-conformity

7.5.2.1 Creative choice counter-conformity

Findings relating to the respondents' inclination towards creative choice counter-conformity when choosing interior objects for the social zones of their homes, are presented in Table 7.21.

TABLE 7.21: INTERIOR CHOICES THAT REFLECT CREATIVE CHOICE COUNTER-CONFORMITY BEHAVIOUR (n=175)

Statement	n	%	Median	Mean	Std. dev.
The interior products that I like best, are the ones that express my individuality	65	10.1	2	3.7	1.3
Having an eye for interior products that are interesting and unusual assists me in establishing a distinctive image	64	9.9	3	3.5	1.3
When buying interior products an important goal is to find something that communicates my uniqueness	54	8.4	4	3.5	1.3
I try to find a more interesting version of run of the mill interior products, because I enjoy being original	57	8.8	4	3.4	1.2
I'm on the look-out for new interior products that will add to my personal uniqueness	70	10.8	3	3.4	1.3
I look for a one of a kind product so that I create a style in my entertainment areas that is all my own	52	8.0	4	3.3	1.1
I actively seek to develop my personal uniqueness by buying special interior products	62	9.6	3	3.2	1.3
I combine interior products in such a way that I create a personal image for myself that can't be duplicated	55	8.5	4	3.1	1.1
I think of how I can use the things I buy to shape a more unusual image	69	10.7	4	3.1	1.1
I have purchased unusual interior products as a way to create a more distinctive image in my home	51	7.9	3	3.0	1.2
I collect unusual interior products as a way of telling people I am different	47	7.3	4	2.5	1.2
Cronbach Alpha					0.92
Median					3.3
Standard deviation					0.9

Creative choice counter-conformity reflects the selection and consumption of interior objects in an 'acceptable manner' for a person within his/her social environment, although products are still novel in comparison to choices made by a person's reference group (Ruvio *et al.,* 2008). Findings revealed that respondents agreed with the majority of the statements (median 3.3) regarding CCCC. This indicates that across the sample, respondents agreed that interior objects are chosen creatively to differ from those of others, although objects would still conform to the norm (Figure 7.13). A Cronbach Alpha of 0.92 suggests good internal consistency. This indicates that the responses given by respondents were reliable.

7.5.1.2 Unpopular choice counter-conformity

The findings relating to respondents' disposition towards unpopular choice counter-conformity when choosing interior objects for the social zones of their homes are presented in Table 7.22.

TABLE 7.22: INTERIOR CHOICES THAT REFLECT UNPOPULAR CHOICE COUNTER-CONFORMITY BEHAVIOUR (n=180)

Statement	N	%	Median	Mean	Std. dev.
Being out of place with my friends doesn't prevent me from having an interior I want to have	63	8.8	3	3.6	1.0
When my interior is deemed as different I am aware that others think I am peculiar, but I DO NOT care	77	10.8	3	3.3	1.3
When it comes to the interior products I buy and the situations in which I use them, customs and rules are made to be broken	50	7.0	2	2.9	1.2
If someone hinted that my interior is deemed as inappropriate, I will continue decorating in the same fashion	76	10.6	3	2.8	1.0
When it comes to the interior products I buy, and the situations in which I use them, I have broken customs and rules	67	9.4	4	2.8	1.2
I have gone against the understood rules of my social group regarding when and how certain interior products are properly used	73	10.2	3	2.7	1.2
I rarely agree with others on what conventional interior objects to buy	58	8.1	3	2.6	2.0
I have violated the understood rules of my social group, regarding what to buy or own	71	9.9	3	2.6	1.2
I have unconventional interior products in my home, even when it's likely to offend others	56	7.8	2	2.1	1.1
I enjoy challenging the prevailing taste of people I know by buying things I know they wouldn't accept	75	10.5	3	1.9	1.3
I decorate my entertainment areas in a way that others are likely to DISAPPROVE of	48	6.7	1	1.5	1.4
Cronbach Alpha					0.84
Median					2.6
Standard deviation					0.8

Unpopular choice counter-conformity behaviour implies increased risk perception for a person since product choices digress from those of their reference groups. Product choices can therefore alienate a person if choices are not accepted by their social group. Contrarily, if such choices are accepted, a person will be seen as an innovator and will be admired by his/her social peers (Ruvio *et al.,* 2008). In terms of the UCCC, findings suggest that respondents were hesitant to choose products that would reflect unpopular choices, arguably due to the severity of the penalties when such products are rejected (Tian *et al.,* 2001). The median of the statement indicates agreement with such product choices, "When it comes to the interior products I buy, and the situations in which I use them, I have broken customs and rules", (median 4). The majority of the other responses however confirmed the respondents' hesitance to choose unpopular interior

objects (median 3). An overall median of 2.6 (Figure 7.13) suggests that UCCC is the exception. The responses of the respondents seemed reliable (Cronbach Alpha 0.84).

7.5.1.3 Avoidance of similarity

The findings relating to respondents' disposition towards avoidance of similarity when choosing interior objects for the social zones of their homes, are presented in Table 7.23.

TABLE 7.23: INTERIOR CHOICES THAT REFLECT AVOIDANCE OF SIMILARITY BEHAVIOUR (n=170)

Statement	n	%	Median	Mean	Std. dev.
I avoid interior products and brands that have already been accepted and purchased by the average consumers	53	9.4	2	2.7	1.3
The more commonplace an interior product is amongst the general population the less interested I am in buying it	68	12.1	3	2.5	1.3
Products DON'T seem to hold much value to me, when they are purchased regularly by everyone	72	12.8	2	2.5	1.1
As a rule I dislike products that are normally purchased by everyone	61	10.9	2	2.5	1.2
I try to avoid interior products that are bought by the general public	60	10.7	2	2.3	1.2
When interior products or brands that I like become popular, I lose interest	49	8.7	2	2.2	1.0
I remove fashionable interior products from my entertainment areas once they become popular by the general public	66	11.7	2	2.0	1.2
When the interior products I own, become common items, I remove them from my entertainment areas	74	13.2	2	2.0	1.2
When products that I like become popular among the general population, I move it out of my entertainment areas	59	10.5	2	1.9	1.1
Cronbach Alpha					0.90
Median					2.3
Standard deviation					0.9

Avoidance of similarity implies that consumers purchase products that are innovative, i.e. one of a kind, fresh, for example trendy wallpaper with a new print or pattern. If (and when) such a product then becomes popular in the general domain, the people that have a high AOS will stop using and even remove such products and will search for alternative, new or rare products that would be acceptable in their social and reference groups, but that are scarce (Ruvio *et al.,* 2008). Statements pertaining to avoidance of similarity consisted of nine statements. The AOS investigation (median of 2.3) (seen in Figure 7.12) revealed that this type of behaviour was least practiced. Findings therefore suggest that the respondents refrained from this form of counter-conformative choice, when choosing interior objects for their homes. A Cronbach Alpha of 0.9 suggests good internal consistency, implying that the results are reliable.

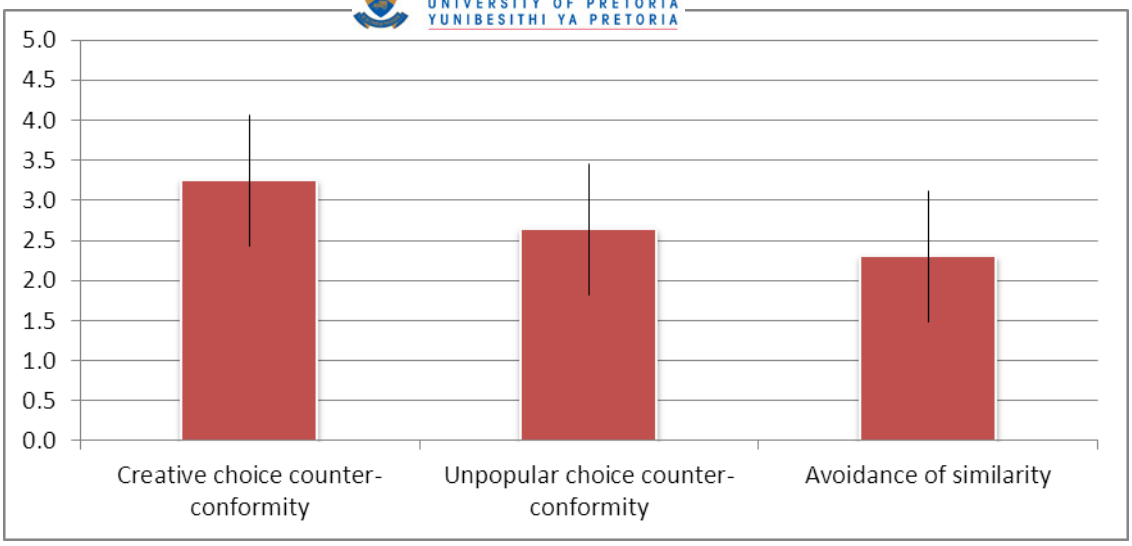

FIGURE 7.12: CATEGORIES OF THE NEED FOR UNIQUENESS SCALE ALONG WITH THE MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS (N=182)

Considering all three types of counter-conformity behaviour, this study's findings seemed reliable (Cronbach Alpha ≥0.84), and the standard deviations seemed consistent across all three measurements (0.8 to 0.9). The standard deviation measures that average departure from the mean value of the variable that is under investigation both in a positive and in a negative direction, and therefore the mean values, instead of the medians, are depicted in Figure 7.12. Considering the standard deviations, respondents therefore did not fluctuate much in terms of their responses to the statements.

7.5.2 Analysis of variance and the Need for Uniqueness Scale

After the initial results of the Need for Uniqueness Scale was interpreted in terms of medians, means, standard deviations, standard errors and Cronbach alpha's, the sample was distinguished in terms of specific demographic characteristics for further investigation for the three types of counter-conformity behaviour in order to determine if specific demographic characteristics could be associated with the respondents' need for uniqueness. The dependant variables for each comparison were therefore the creative choice counter-conformity, unpopular choice counter-conformity and avoidance of similarity. The independent variables were

- Gender: male; female
- Age: <35; ≥35 –<50; ≥50 years
- Tenure status: own; rent
- Length of tenure: <5 years; ≥5years
- Education level: up to matric; post matric qualifications; post graduate degree or diploma.

Once again t-tests were performed and results for all of the t-tests could not confirm any differences among the various groups within the sub-categories for gender, tenure status or length of tenure. For the sub-categories of age and education level, Anovas were performed to determine whether significant differences existed between sample means (Williams *et al.*, 2006:403). For all the GLM models, the residuals were tested and the distributions were found to be normal in all instances (Table 7.24, Table 7.25 and Table 7.26).

TABLE 7.24: RESPONDENTS' CCCC PER DEMOGRAPHIC CATEGORY (N=182)

Gender			Age			Tenure status			Length of tenure			Education level		
	Mean	Std. dev.	Years	Mean	Std. dev.		Mean	Std. dev.	Years	Mean	Std. dev.		Mean	Std. dev.
Male n=62	2.86	0.14	<35 n=89	3.25	0.14	Own n=110	3.18	0.10	<5 n=116	3.12	0.11	≤Matric n=41	3.06	0.12
Female n=120	3.48	0.10	≥35-<50 n=52	3.06	0.15	Rent n=71	3.16	0.15	≥5 n=38	3.22	0.14	Certificate Diploma Degree n=97	3.34	0.16
t-test: p= <0.0001[12]			≥50 n=41	3.20	0.17	t-test: p=0.8656			t-test: p=0.5848			Post graduate degree/ Diploma n=44	3.11	0.16
			Anova: p=0.5903									Anova: p=0.3088		

TABLE 7.25: RESPONDENTS' UCCC PER DEMOGRAPHIC CATEGORY (N=182)

Gender			Age			Tenure status			Length of tenure			Education level		
	Mean	Std. dev.	Years	Mean	Std. dev.		Mean	Std. dev.	Years	Mean	Std. dev.		Mean	Std. dev.
Male n=62	2.45	0.12	<35 n=89	2.56	0.12	Own n=110	2.54	0.09	<5 n=116	2.58	0.09	≤Matric n=41	2.59	0.10
Female n=120	2.70	0.09	≥35-<50 n=52	2.65	0.13	Rent n=71	2.61	0.13	≥5 n=38	2.58	0.12	Certificate Diploma Degree n=97	2.49	0.14
t-test: p=0.0640			≥50 n=41	2.52	0.14	t-test: p=0.6007			t-test: p=0.9952			Post graduate degree/ Diploma n=44	2.65	0.14
			Anova: p=0.7489									Anova: p=0.6764		

[12]Indication of a significant difference between the sub-sets for gender, i.e. female>male.

TABLE 7.26: RESPONDENTS' AOS PER DEMOGRAPHIC CATEGORY (N=182)

Gender			**Age**			**Tenure status**			**Length of tenure**			**Education level**		
	Mean	Std. dev.	Years	Mean	Std. dev.		Mean	Std. dev.	Years	Mean	Std. dev.		Mean	Std. dev.
Male n=62	2.02	0.14	<35 n=89	2.15	0.14	Own n=110	2.23	0.10	<5 n=116	2.23	0.11	≤Matric n=41	2.29	0.12
Female n=120	2.40	0.10	≥35-<50 n=52	2.29	0.14	Rent n=71	2.20	0.15	≥5 n=38	2.20	0.14	Certificate Diploma Degree n=97	2.20	0.16
t-test: p=0.0141[13]			≥50 n=41	2.20	0.16	t-test: p=0.8512			t-test: p=0.8738			Post graduate degree/ Diploma n=44	2.15	0.16
			Anova: p=0.7639									Anova: p=0.7154		

[13] Indicates significant difference between the sub-sets for gender, i.e. female>male.

The creative choice counter-conformity investigation involved eleven statements (Table 7.21) that were associated with the independent variables, namely gender, age, tenure status, length of tenure and level of education. No significant differences emerged in terms of CCCC within the various demographic sub-categories of age, tenure status, length of tenure and level of education ($p>0.05$). In terms of gender however, the CCCC of females (mean 3.48) in terms of the interior objects chosen for the social zones of their homes were significantly stronger than their male counterparts (mean 2.86) ($p =0.001$). Females are therefore significantly more inclined to choose interior products that differ from the run-of-the-mill objects, but rather products that are novel in comparison to those chosen by their social group. In terms of unpopular choice counter-conformity (UCCC) (comprising eleven statements presented in Table 7.22) there were no significant differences within the various subsets of the demographic categories. When compared to CCCC, means for UCCC were lower in general, which suggests that this type of uniqueness is less pertinent if some form of uniqueness is exercised through product choices. Similar to CCCC, the avoidance of similarity (AOS) (comprising nine statements present in Table 7.23) showed a significant difference in the object choices of males compared to those of females. Although the means were once again generally lower than for CCCC and for UCCC, which suggests this form of counter-conformity to be the least popular option, females AOS was significantly higher (mean 2.4) than that of males (mean 2.0) ($p =0.0141$). The residuals of the GLM model also indicated that the values of the response variables were normally distributed for the CCCC, UCCC as well as for AOS.

7.5.3 Summary

The overall means for the Need for Uniqueness Scale were indicated on a five point Likert-type scale that ranged from Disagree strongly (1), Disagree slightly (2), Neither disagree/agree (3), Agree slightly (4) to Agree strongly (5). Findings suggest that respondents were the least likely to display avoidance of similarity behaviour (AOS) (mean 2.3; standard deviation of 0.9). Respondents were thus inclined to choose products that were purchased and used by the general public. The unpopular choice counter-conformity (UCCC) was more accepted than AOS (mean 2.6; standard deviation 0.8), indicating that this behaviour might be exercised to reflect their uniqueness. The form of counter-conformity that was mostly opted for by the respondents was the creative choice counter-conformity (CCCC) (mean 3.3; standard deviation 0.9). This means that when residents of townhouses need to express their uniqueness, they would be more likely to choose products that are accepted by their social groups but that are novel in comparison to the objects that are commonly chosen. By choosing the CCCC option, they avoid the objects

that might potentially carry greater social scrutiny by their social groups as with the objects from UCCC and AOS.

When respondents' need for uniqueness was investigated in terms of demographic subsets of the sample, the only significant difference that could be confirmed was significantly stronger expression of CCC and AOS for females than for males (Table 7.24; Table 7.26). Also the uniqueness strategy mostly exercised was CCCC, i.e. the 'safer option' where interior objects were concerned and that included acceptable product choices that were used in a creative manner, while the least popular option was AOS where the objects chosen carry potential negative consequences in terms of the person's social groups. Findings thus suggest that a townhouse residents' need to express uniqueness is apparently stronger for females than for males and that the 'safer', less provocative choices would be made to reflect uniqueness not to alienate their particular social groups.

7.6 FACTORS THAT GUIDE BUYER BEHAVIOUR

7.6.1 An exploration of relevant factors or elements pertaining to buyer behaviour

Respondents were asked to indicate on a 12 point Likert-type Agreement scale, which factors they considered most important when purchasing interior objects for the social zones of their homes. Responses were subjected to exploratory factor analysis and four factors that consisted of three items each, emerged. Due to the limited number of items that loaded onto each factor, i.e. three items per factor, it was decided after consultation with a statistician not to continue with a calculation if the internal stability of the factors.

7.6.2 Factor analysis

An Exploratory Factor Analysis, using Principal Components, in particular an oblique rotation called Promax, was implemented to scrutinize the 12 statements (V78-V89) that were included in the questionnaire. The aim was to distinguish pertinent coherent buying practices (behaviour) to equalize the relative importance of the factors and to simplify their interpretation. Four factors were retained from the data by using Kaiser's criterion (with eigenvalues greater than 1). The findings are presented in Table 7.27.

TABLE 7.27: FACTOR LOADINGS OF THE FOUR PROPOSED FACTORS THAT GUIDE BUYER BEHAVIOUR (N=182)[14]

Statements	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
I would rather save for original paintings, than to purchase and hang prints in the entertainment areas of my home	0.86784	0.04285	-0.00988	-0.09241
I regard objects in the entertainment areas of my home as investments and therefore prefer to source original objects	0.86527	0.06642	0.02891	0.01044
I prefer hand crafted/designer accessories and furniture to mass produced accessories and furniture	0.6406	-0.02207	0.22311	0.20137
I prefer to shop at a large variety of stores for my interior goods, rather than to purchase most of what I need at a single store	0.1063	0.75183	-0.10304	-0.0437
I purchase beautiful objects, even if it is less expensive	-0.19773	0.71067	0.33113	0.04347
I save up until I can purchase what I desire i.e. I don't settle for second best	0.39554	0.69103	-0.12566	-0.03875
I use second hand furniture that are functional and useful	-0.00309	-0.03166	0.89269	-0.32129
I prefer to purchase antique/scares objects	0.20744	0.0458	0.64117	0.22274
I select and purchase individual items rather than whole sets e.g. an entire lounge suite	0.08143	-0.03856	0.50694	0.4356
I purchase interior objects that I need for my home at specialized outlets rather than major prominent retail stores such as *Mr Price Home; House and Home; @ Home; Boardmans*	0.15947	-0.17969	-0.08192	0.75262
I prefer objects that are impressive even if it is less functional	-0.00828	0.10342	-0.04639	0.67675
I buy products that look expensive, even if they are not	-0.30706	0.3533	-0.06333	0.49886
% Variance explained (VP)	1.9869	1.6198	1.4477	1.4279

The statement regarding the purchase of individual items namely *I select and purchase individual items rather than whole sets e.g. an entire lounge suite,* cross loaded on factor three, as well as factor four. This item can therefore be loaded on either factor 3 (*limited/scarce*) or onto factor 4 (*impressive*). Considering the coherent meaning of the content of the two factors, this particular item was not regarded as *impressive* (purchasing an individual item and constructing a set of eclectic elements that might be admired by others), but rather as *limited/scarce* (owning interior objects that are rarely seen in such combinations in other homes). This in addition to the fact that the item loaded stronger onto factor 3, indicates that this was the better fit.

Scrutiny of the content of the factors revealed a coherence of related items that suggested consumers' attention to the following discriminates when choosing interior objects for the social zones of their homes: Factor 1: Original/Valuable, based on an integration of the following statements-, *I would rather save for original paintings, than to purchase and hang prints in the entertainment areas of my home; I regard objects in the entertainment areas of my home as*

[14] The shaded items represents the items loaded onto each factor

investments and therefore prefer to source original objects and I prefer hand crafted/designer accessories and furniture to mass produced accessories and furniture. Factor 2: Exclusive, based on an integration of the following statements-, *I prefer to shop at a large variety of stores for my interior goods, rather than to purchase most of what I need at a single store; I purchase beautiful objects, even if it is less expensive and I save up until I can purchase what I desire i.e. I don't settle for second best.* Factor 3: Limited/scarce, based on an integration of the following statements-, *I use second hand furniture that are functional and useful, I prefer to purchase antique/scarce objects and I select and purchase individual items rather than whole sets e.g. an entire lounge suite.* Factor 4: Impressive, based on an integration of the following statements-, *I purchase interior objects that I need for my home at specialized outlets rather than major prominent retail stores such as Mr Price Home; House and Home; @ Home; Boardmans; I prefer objects that are impressive even if it is less functional and I buy products that look expensive, even if they are not.*. A visual representation of each of the factors (mean values and standard errors) is presented in Figure7.13- Figure 7.16.

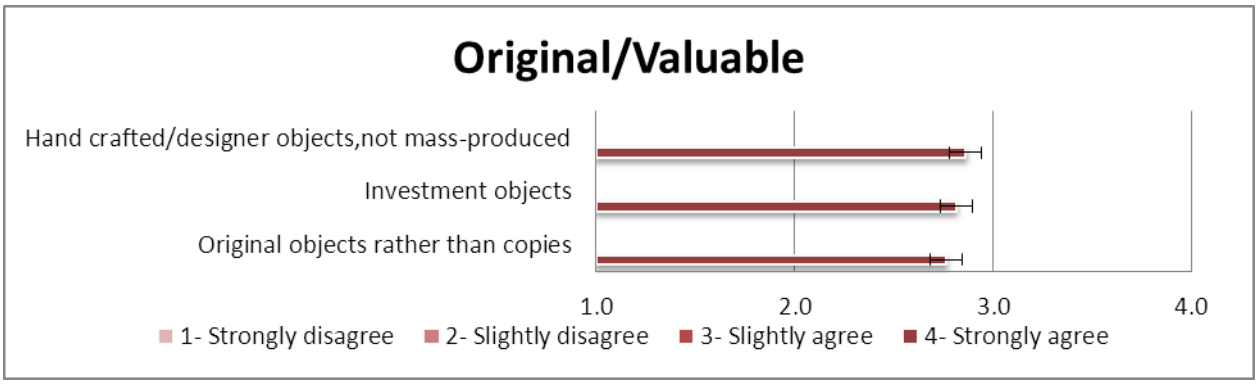

FIGURE 7.13: RESPONDENTS' BUYER BEHAVIOUR – FOR ORIGINALITY (FACTOR 1) (N=182)

FIGURE 7.14: RESPONDENTS' BUYER BEHAVIOUR – FOR EXCLUSIVITY (FACTOR 2) (N=182)

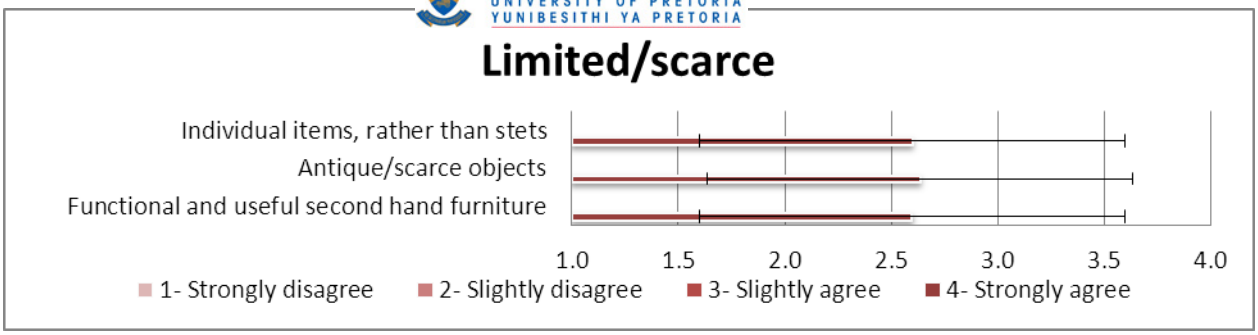

FIGURE 7.15: RESPONDENTS' BUYER BEHAVIOUR – FOR SCARCENESS (FACTOR 3) (N=182)

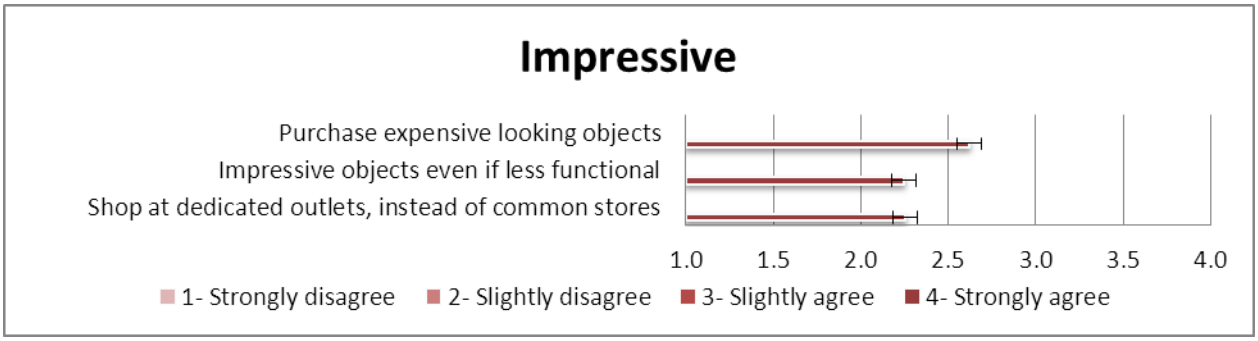

FIGURE 7.16: RESPONDENTS' BUYER BEHAVIOUR – FOR IMPRESSIVENESS (FACTOR 4) (N=182)

Findings suggest that when presented with the options of purchasing interior objects for the social zones of the respondents' homes that are *original/valuable, exclusive, limited/scarce and impressive* they first and foremost preferred to purchase interior objects that were *exclusive*, where after they selected *original/valuable* objects and then objects that were *limited/ scarce*. They were however more hesitant to purchase interior objects that were *impressive* in nature. This correlates with the fact that the majority of the respondents chose to creatively express their uniqueness through CCCC, and would therefore try to purchase interior objects that would reflect such a choice (rather exclusive interior objects, than impressive interior objects).

7.6.3 Importance of specific purchase criteria when purchasing interior objects

7.6.1.3 Introduction

For the purpose of triangulation respondents also had to specify the importance of single selected criteria as an indication of how their buying decisions were influenced. Findings are presented in descending order in Table 7.28.

TABLE 7.28: IMPORTANCE OF SELECTED PURCHASE CRITERIA (N=182)

Purchase criteria		Disagree		Agree		Mean	Std dev.
	n	n	%	n	%		
Original	178	49	27.5	129	72.5	2.93	0.98
Rare	172	92	53.5	80	46.5	2.31	1.05
Branded	173	129	74.6	44	25.4	1.96	0.90
Expensive	171	140	81.9	31	18.1	1.74	0.84

More than 70% of the respondents indicated that when choosing interior objects, the products had to be *original* (n=129, 72.5%) while nearly 50% agreed that the objects needed to be *rare* (n=80, 46.5%). Choosing *branded* and/or *expensive* interior objects was not necessarily highly regarded by many (n=44, 25.4%; n=31, 18.1%).

Original (authentic) objects carry a historic link to a person, event, time or place of significance and are considered highly valuable. Literature also states that personal identity (represented through a person's extended self), is tied to the historical content (origin) of an object, rather than the features such an object may possess or the accompanying brand name (Frazier *et al.,* 2009). This may explain why original objects were more sought after (mean 2.93) than branded objects (mean 1.96). Furthermore, original objects are judged by the general public as exceeding inauthentic objects regarding all aspects of such an object based on a rational economic decision, as well as on a desire for wanting to own such an item. A person's appreciation for original objects therefore translates into a desire to own, keep, hold and value original objects (Frazier *et al.,*2009).

The rarity or scarcity of interior products does not refer to natural scarcity whereby only a few products are produced due to the restricted supply of materials, but rather as objects that have a large demand in the market but only a small supply in the market place. *Rare* objects carry social gains to those who own them, since they are usually expensive which limits the option of purchasing such an object to a select few. This fact and the expressive superiority of rare objects contribute to the increased value of such objects and make rare objects so desirable (Goffman, 1951). Although positive about rare interior objects (mean 2.31), this feature did not seem highly important, possibly because rare objects are also expensive and the higher the price of an object, the less interested respondents were in such an item (only 18.1% of respondents said that they intentionally selected expensive interior objects).

A branded object can serve to create its own brand personality, which in turn can indicate to onlookers the consumer's (resident of townhouse unit) extended self. A *brand*, just as with the

interior of one's home can therefore, through its various types of descriptive personality-like traits, reveal a consumer's lifestyle, values and attitudes to onlookers (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:133-134). The respondents of this particular study did however not purposefully choose to express their extended selves through the use of branded interior objects (mean 1.74).

The price a person pays in monetary terms for a product may be used by consumers as an indication of quality. *Expensive* products are also viewed by onlookers as more prestigious, and will therefore enhance the consumer's perceived social status. The use of the price of a product in combination with that product's brand name, serves as an indication of the status of a product, rather than the products performance (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:183-184). This study could not confirm evidence that expensive interior objects were highly sought after. The study was undertaken during a time when the economies of the world were under pressure and this may have influenced the findings.

This serves to confirm that the respondents chose objects that were exclusive, whereas the grandeur (branded and expensive) of the objects did not influence their product selection criteria much. The findings (mean values and standard errors) are visually presented in Figure 7.17.

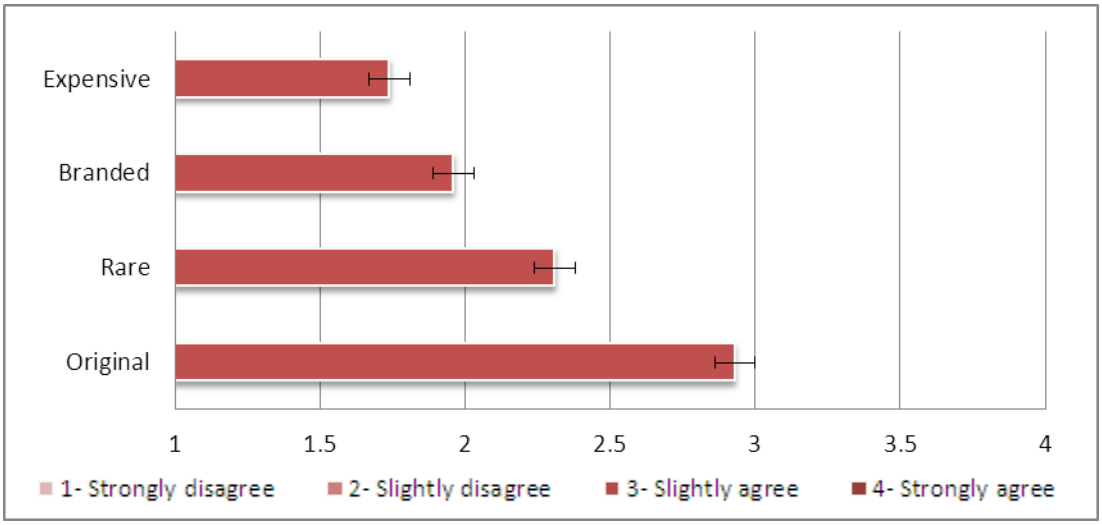

FIGURE 7.17: THE INFLUENCE OF SPECIFIC SELECTION CRITERIA ON INTERIOR PRODUCT CHOICES (N=182)

7.5.1.4 Importance of specific product selection criteria per demographic sub-categories

The pertinence of specific product selection criteria was also investigated per demographic characteristics of the sample and are presented in Table 7.29 for expensive objects; Table 7.30

for rare objects; Table 7.31 for original objects; Table 7.32 for branded objects, in order to determine whether any significant differences existed amongst the various demographic sub categories. These categories were arranged in terms of the respondents'

- Gender: male; female
- Age: <35; ≥35 –<50; ≥50 years
- Tenure status: own; rent
- Length of tenure: <5 years; ≥5years
- Education level: up to matric; post matric qualifications; post graduate degree or diploma.

In terms of gender, tenure status and length of tenure, t-tests were conducted and the results could not confirm any differences among the various groups within the sub-categories. Anovas were performed for the sub categories of age and education level to determine whether significant differences existed between different groups.

TABLE 7.29: RESPONDENTS REGARD FOR THE EXPENSIVENESS OF INTERIOR OBJECTS PER DEMOGRAPHIC SUB SETS OF THE SAMPLE (n=171)

Gender			Age			Tenure status			Length of tenure			Education level		
	Mean	Std. dev.	Years	Mean	Std. dev.		Mean	Std. dev.	Years	Mean	Std. dev.		Mean	Std. dev.
Male n=61	1.84	0.99	<35 n=89	1.69	0.81	Own n=102	1.79	0.82	<5 n=96	1.80	0.93	≤Matric n=35	1.83	0.98
Female n=110	1.69	0.76	≥35-<50 n=48	1.67	0.86	Rent n=68	1.68	0.89	≥5 n=49	1.83	0.78	Certificate Diploma Degree n=94	1.74	0.78
t-test: p=0.2858			≥50 n=34	2.0	0.92	t-test: p=0.3783			t-test: p=0.6748			Post graduate degree/ Diploma n=42	1.67	0.90
			Anova: p=0.1417									Anova: p=0.7090		

TABLE 7.30: RESPONDENTS REGARD FOR THE RARITY OF INTERIOR OBJECTS PER DEMOGRAPHIC SUB SETS OF THE SAMPLE (n=172)

Gender			Age			Tenure status			Length of tenure			Education level		
	Mean	Std. dev.	Years	Mean	Std. dev.		Mean	Std. dev.	Years	Mean	Std. dev.		Mean	Std. dev.
Male n=61	2.26	1.00	<35 n=89	2.26	0.97	Own n=102	2.30	1.04	<5 n=96	2.32	1.08	≤Matric n=35	2.26	1.07
Female n=111	2.34	1.08	≥35-<50 n=48	2.31	1.15	Rent n=69	2.33	1.08	≥5 n=49	2.30	1.06	Certificate Diploma Degree n=94	2.27	1.05
t-test: p=0.6343			≥50 n=35	2.45	1.12	t-test: p=0.8586			t-test: p=0.9293			Post graduate degree/ Diploma n=43	2.47	1.05
			Anova: p=0.6411									Anova: p=0.5552		

TABLE 7.31: RESPONDENTS REGARD FOR THE ORIGINALITY OF INTERIOR OBJECTS PER DEMOGRAPHIC SUB SETS OF THE SAMPLE (n=178)

Gender			**Age**			**Tenure status**			**Length of tenure**			**Education level**		
	Mean	Std. dev.	Years	Mean	Std. dev.		Mean	Std. dev.	Years	Mean	Std. dev.		Mean	Std. dev.
Male n=62	3.11	0.85	<35 n=89	2.91	0.90	Own n=107	2.95	1.00	<5 n=98	2.89	1.01	≤Matric n=38	3.10	0.99
Female n=116	2.84	1.03	≥35-<50 n=51	2.84	1.14	Rent n=70	2.90	0.95	≥5 n=53	3.04	0.96	Certificate Diploma Degree n=96	2.78	1.01
t-test: p=0.0719			≥50 n=38	3.11	0.92	t-test: p=0.7248			t-test: p0.3784			Post graduate degree/ Diploma n=44	3.11	0.87
			Anova: p=0.4386									Anova: p=0.0817		

TABLE 7.32: RESPONDENTS REGARD FOR THE BRAND OF INTERIOR OBJECTS PER DEMOGRAPHIC SUB SETS OF THE SAMPLE (n=173)

Gender			**Age**			**Tenure status**			**Length of tenure**			**Education level**		
	Mean	Std. dev.	Years	Mean	Std. dev.		Mean	Std. dev.	Years	Mean	Std. dev.		Mean	Std. dev.
Male n=61	2.16	0.93	<35 n=89	1.93	0.86	Own n=103	1.93	0.84	<5 n=96	1.96	0.91	≤Matric n=36	2.17	1.00
Female n=112	1.85	0.86	≥35-<50 n=48	1.83	0.93	Rent n=69	2.00	0.99	≥5 n=50	2.02	0.87	Certificate Diploma Degree n=94	1.97	0.85
t-test: p=0.0267[15]			>50 n=36	2.19	0.92	t-test: p=0.7248			t-test: p=0.3784			Post graduate degree/ Diploma n=43	1.77	0.90
			Anova: p=0.1750									Anova: p=0.1430		

[15] Indicate significant difference between the sub-sets for gender, i.e. female>male.

The results indicate that there were no significant differences for the dependant variables concerning *expensiveness, rarity or originality* (Table 7.29, Table 7.30, Table 7.31). There is however a significant difference between the sub-set for gender in terms of their selection of *branded* products (p=0.0267). Males were significantly more inclined to purchase branded products (mean 2.16; standard deviation 0.93), than females (mean 1.85; standard deviation 0.86). Although means suggest that branded products were not all that important (Figure 7.18).

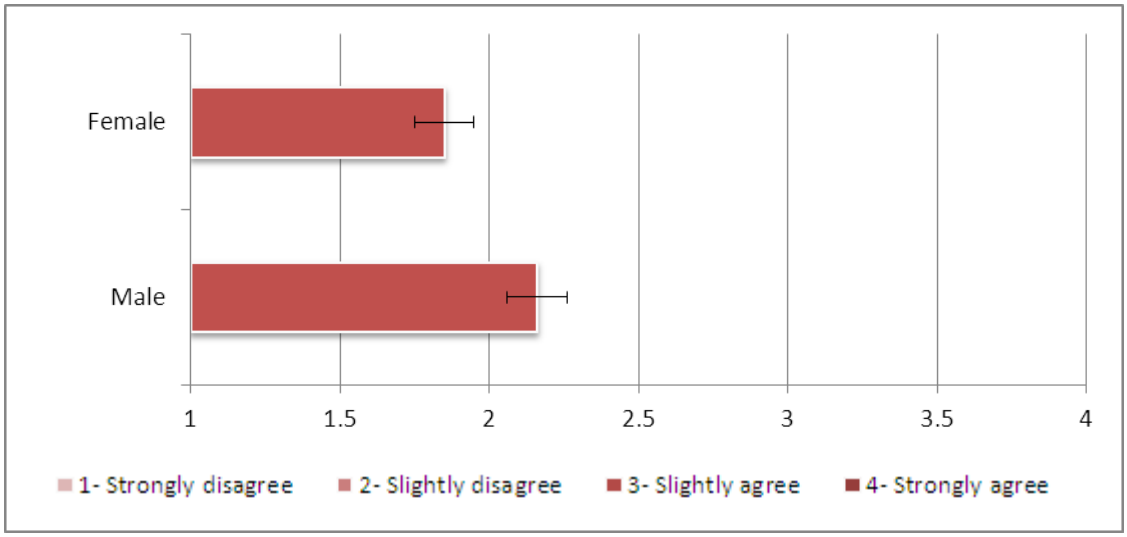

FIGURE 7.18: RESPONDENTS' REGARD FOR BRANDED INTERIOR OBJECTS PER GENDER CATEGORY (N=182)

7.7 INTERIOR INSPIRATION

7.7.1 Sources of interior inspiration

Since the socialization process of a person has such a big influence on that person's extended self (Charon, 1979:40-41; Lindamood & Hanna, 1979:87-89; Luymes, 1997; Sandstrom *et al.,* 2006:58; Wilska, 2002), it was necessary to determine which source of that process inspired the respondents' interior design and décor choices the most, in terms of an expression of their extended selves.

TABLE 7.33: RESPONDENTS' SOURCE OF INTERIOR INSPIRATION (N=182)

Source of inspiration	Disagree		Agree		Missing		Mean	Std. dev
	n	%	n	%	n	%		
Immediate family	73	40.8	106	59.2	3	1.6	2.6	1.1
Friends	83	47.2	93	52.8	6	3.3	2.4	0.9
Peers	85	48.3	91	51.7	6	3.3	2.4	1.0
Interior shows	44	24.6	135	75.4	3	1.6	3.0	1.0
Interior designers	148	83.6	29	16.4	5	2.7	1.6	0.9

Findings revealed that respondents used the opinion of interior designers the least when it came to the interior inspiration for their homes (n=148; 83.6%). Respondents gained their inspiration mostly from their immediate family (n=106; 59.2%) and from interior décor shows (n=134; 75.4%) (Table 7.33). The reasoning behind these motivations may be that a person receives feedback form their reference group others, and will be allowed to alter their interior in such a manner that is acceptable to their reference groups with relative certainty (two way communications) (Kaiser, 1998:159-164; Kleine *et al.,* 1993; Lamb *et al.,* 2004:95). This feedback, combined with trends seen from interior décor shows (which is seen as accepted by the general public), will ensure that a person should not make decisions that will alienate them from those who provide them with feedback, that will in turn again influence their opinions about their extended self. Mean values and standard errors are presented in Figure 7.19.

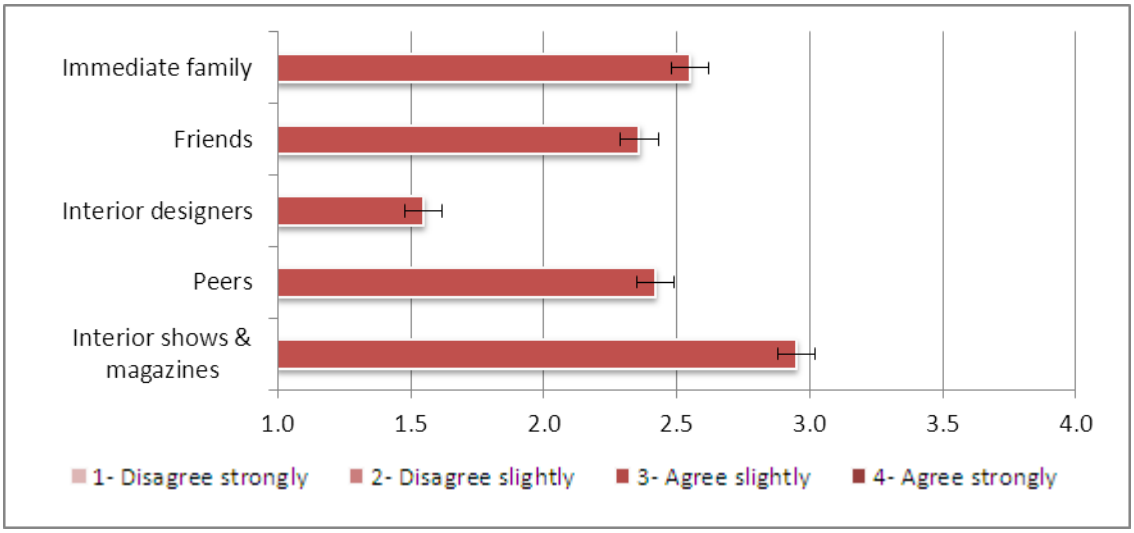

FIGURE 7.19: RESPONDENTS' SOURCE OF INTERIOR INSPIRATION (N=182)

7.7.2 Sources of interior inspiration per demographic category

The sources of interior inspiration were also investigated per demographic category for the sample and is presented in Table 7.34 for inspiration gained from immediate family; Table 7.35 for inspiration gained from friends; Table 7.36 for inspiration gained from interior designers; Table 7.37 for inspiration gained from people I admire; Table 7.38 for inspiration gained from lifestyle magazines, television programs, interior shows etc., in order to determine whether any significant differences existed amongst the various sub-categories. These categories were arranged in terms of the respondents'

- Gender: male; female
- Age: <35; ≥35 –<50; ≥50 years
- Tenure status: own; rent

- Length of tenure: <5 years, ≥5years
- Education level: up to matric; post matric qualifications; post graduate degree or diploma.

Again, t-tests were conducted and no significant differences existed among the various groups within the sub-categories for gender, tenure status or length of tenure. Anovas were performed to determine whether significant differences existed between sample means regarding age and education level.

TABLE 7.34: IMMEDIATE FAMILY AS A SOURCE OF INTERIOR INSPIRATION (n=179)

Gender			**Age**			**Tenure status**			**Length of tenure**			**Education level**		
	Mean	Std. dev.	Years	Mean	Std. dev.		Mean	Std. dev.	Years	Mean	Std. dev.		Mean	Std. dev.
Male n=62	2.71	1.16	<35 n=88	2.78	0.96	Own n=110	2.45	1.08	<5 n=97	2.59	1.07	≤Matric n=40	2.30	1.18
Female n=117	2.48	1.03	≥35-<50 n=50	2.44	1.16	Rent n=68	2.75	1.06	≥5 n=55	2.19	1.17	Certificate Diploma Degree n=95	2.70	1.04
t-test: p=0.1745			≥50 n=41	2.22	1.23	t-test: p=0.0755			t-test: p=0.6049			Post graduate degree/ Diploma n=44	2.50	1.05
			Anova: p=0.0138[16]									Anova: p=0.1407		

TABLE 7.35: FRIENDS AS A SOURCE OF INTERIOR INSPIRATION (n=178)

Gender			**Age**			**Tenure status**			**Length of tenure**			**Education level**		
	Mean	Std. dev.	Years	Mean	Std. dev.		Mean	Std. dev.	Years	Mean	Std. dev.		Mean	Std. dev.
Male n=62	2.45	0.92	<35 n=87	2.43	0.82	Own n=107	2.33	0.93	<5 n=95	2.32	0.97	≤Matric n=38	2.08	0.91
Female n=1114	2.32	0.95	≥35-<50 n=50	2.54	1.01	Rent n=68	2.46	0.94	≥5 n=54	2.31	0.95	Certificate Diploma Degree n=97	2.40	0.93
t-test: p=0.3907			≥50 n=39	2.03	1.01	t-test: p=0.3744			t-test: p=0.9953			Post graduate degree/ Diploma n=44	2.55	0.93
			Anova: p=0.0285[17]									Anova: p=0.0679		

[16] Indicate significant difference between the sub-sets for age

[17] Indicate significant difference between the sub-sets for age

TABLE 7.36: INTERIOR DESIGNERS AS A SOURCE OF INTERIOR INSPIRATION (n=177)

Gender			Age			Tenure status			Length of tenure			Education level		
	Mean	Std. dev.	Years	Mean	Std. dev.		Mean	Std. dev.	Years	Mean	Std. dev.		Mean	Std. dev.
Male n=62	1.66	1.02	<35 n=87	1.47	0.82	Own n=107	1.50	0.89	<5 n=96	1.12	0.84	≤Matric n=38	1.45	0.89
Female n=115	1.50	0.90	≥35-<50 n=51	1.55	1.01	Rent n=69	1.65	1.03	≥5 n=54	1.78	1.09	Certificate Diploma Degree n=95	1.61	0.95
t-test: p=0.2468			≥50 n=39	1.74	1.12	t-test: p=0.2854			t-test: p=0.0253[18]			Post graduate degree/ Diploma n=44	1.52	1.00
			Anova: p=0.3298									Anova: p=0.6502		

TABLE 7.37: ADMIRED PEOPLE AS A SOURCE OF INTERIOR INSPIRATION (n=176)

Gender			Age			Tenure status			Length of tenure			Education level		
	Mean	Std. dev.	Years	Mean	Std. dev.		Mean	Std. dev.	Years	Mean	Std. dev.		Mean	Std. dev.
Male n=62	2.47	1.05	<35 n=87	2.57	0.82	Own n=107	2.46	1.00	<5 n=95	2.43	0.97	≤Matric n=38	2.18	0.98
Female n=114	2.40	0.93	≥35-<50 n=50	2.6	1.07	Rent n=68	2.40	0.93	≥5 n=54	2.52	1.00	Certificate Diploma Degree n=94	2.48	0.95
t-test: p=0.6782			≥50 n=39	2.31	1.15	t-test: p=0.6880			t-test: p=0.6055			Post graduate degree/ Diploma n=44	2.52	1.02
			Anova: p=0.1332									Anova: p=0.2205		

[18] Indicate significant difference between the sub-sets for length of tenure, i.e. ≥5years> <5years

TABLE 7.38: LIFESTYLE MAGAZINES, TV PROGRAMS AND INTERIOR SHOWS AS SOURCES OF INTERIOR INSPIRATION (n=179)

Gender			**Age**			**Tenure status**			**Length of tenure**			**Education level**		
	Mean	Std. dev.	Years	Mean	Std. dev.		Mean	Std. dev.	Years	Mean	Std. dev.		Mean	Std. dev.
Male n=62	2.52	1.11	<35 n=88	3.03	0.90	Own n=107	3.06	0.96	<5 n=97	2.98	1.01	≤Matric n=39	2.72	1.7
Female n=117	3.19	0.84	≥35-<50 n=52	2.87	1.03	Rent n=71	2.83	1.01	≥5 n=54	2.94	1.02	Certificate Diploma Degree n=96	3.10	0.89
t-test: p<0.001[19]			≥50 n=39	2.90	1.14	t-test: p=0.1360			t-test: p=0.8393			Post graduate degree/ Diploma n=44	2.84	1.01
			Anova: p=0.5761									Anova: p=0.0829		

[19] Indicate significant difference between the sub-sets for gender, i.e. female>male

7.7.2.1 Results regarding immediate family as a source of inspiration

One significant difference exists between the sub-categories for age concerning the respondents' immediate family as a source of interior inspiration. Results indicate that younger respondents (<35 years) were more influenced by their immediate family (mean 2.78; standard deviation 0.96) than older respondents (≥50 years) (mean 2.22; standard deviation 1.23), with p=0.0055. Figure 7.20 illustrates mean values and standard errors.

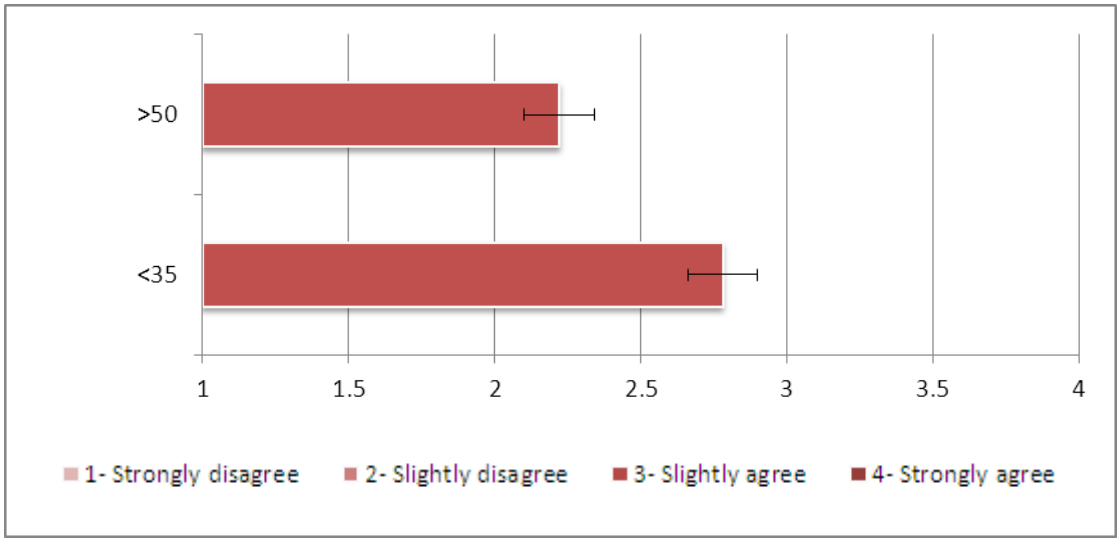

FIGURE 7.20: FAMILY AS RESPONDENTS' SOURCE OF INTERIOR INSPIRATION AND AGE CATEGORIES (N=182)

7.7.2.2 Results regarding friends as a source of inspiration

Once again findings suggest that significant differences exist between respondents within various age categories (p=0.0285). The first difference was between younger and older respondents (p=0.0256). Younger respondents (>35 years) agreed that their friends were a source of inspiration to them (mean 2.43; standard deviation 0.82), while the older respondents (≥50 years) were more hesitant (mean 2.03; standard deviation 1.01). The second significant difference that was found was between the respondents that were older than 35 but younger than 50, and those that were older than 50 years of age (p=0.0097). The younger of the two categories (≥35-<50 years), was mostly swayed by their friends (mean 2.54; standard deviation 1.01), while, as previously stated, older respondents (≥50 years), were not (Figure 7.21).

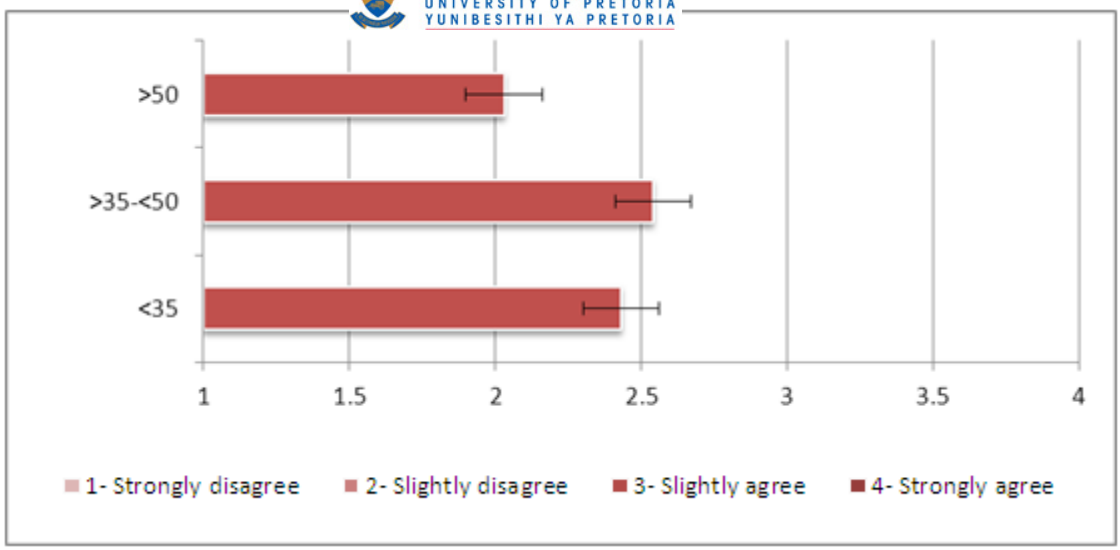

FIGURE 7.21: FRIENDS AS RESPONDENTS' SOURCE OF INTERIOR INSPIRATION AND AGE CATEGORIES (N=182)

7.7.2.3 Results regarding interior designers as a source of inspiration

The only significant difference that emerged regarding interior designers as a source of inspiration was that of length of tenure (p=0.0253). Although the mean values for both of the categories are relatively low, those respondents who resided in their homes for less than five years were less likely to be influenced by interior designers (mean 1.12; standard deviation 0.84), than residents who have lived in their homes for five years or more (mean 1.78; standard deviation 1.09) (Figure 7.22). None of the other independent variables showed an indication that a significant difference exists.

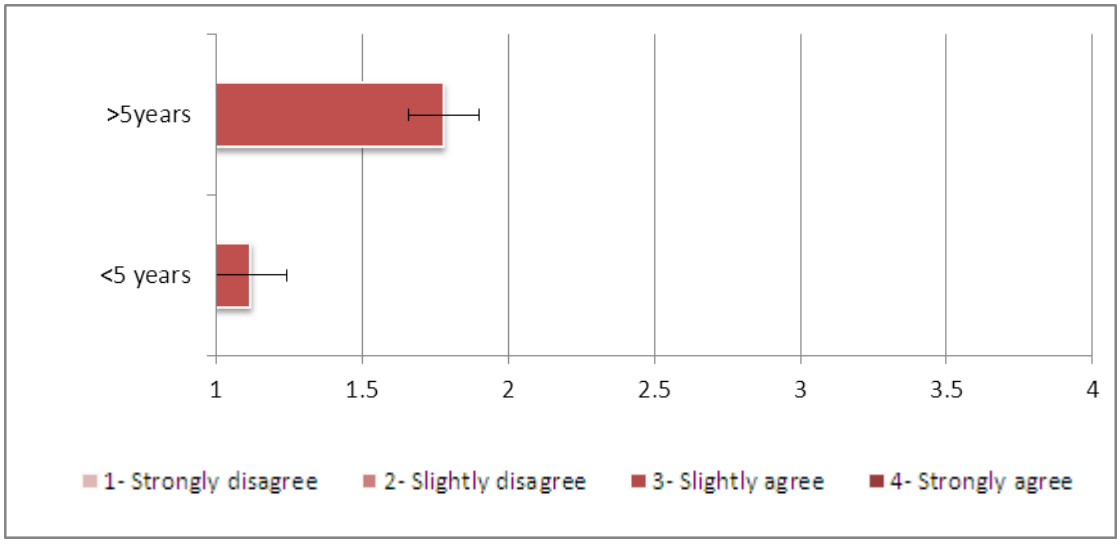

FIGURE 7.22: INTERIOR DESIGNERS AS RESPONDENTS' SOURCE OF INTERIOR INSPIRATION AND LENGTH OF TENURE (N=182)

7.7.2.4 Results regarding peers as a source of inspiration

The only dependant variable that showed no signs of significant differences regarding the independent variables (gender; age; tenure; length of tenure; education), was that of people the respondents admired as a source of interior inspiration. The respondents agreed that they use their peers as a source of inspiration (mean 2.4), but no differences existed amongst the sub-categories concerning their level of agreement.

7.7.2.5 Results regarding lifestyle magazines, television programs and interior shows as a source of inspiration

Results indicate that a significant difference exists between the respondents' gender categorization and the influence of lifestyle magazines, television programs and interior shows ($p<0.001$). Female respondents were much more inclined to be influenced by these forms of media (mean 3.19; standard deviation 0.84), than their male counterparts (mean 2.52; standard deviation 1.11) (Figure 7.23). The other independent variables (gender; age; tenure; length of tenure; education) did not indicate any significant differences.

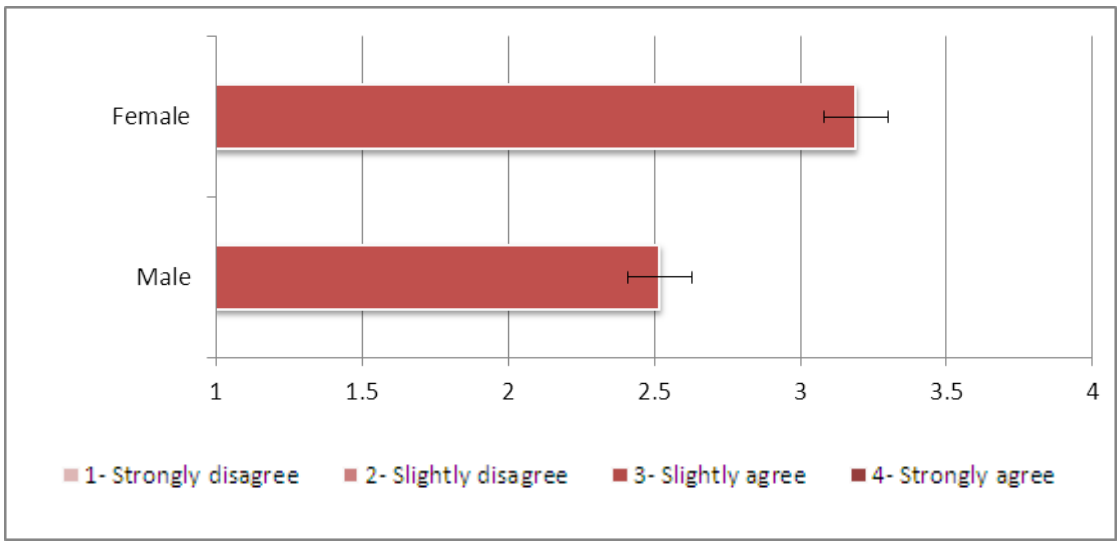

FIGURE 7.23: LIFESTYLE MAGAZINES, TV PROGRAMS AND INTERIOR SHOWS AS RESPONDENTS' SOURCE OF INTERIOR INSPIRATION AND GENDER CATEGORIES (N=182)

7.8 TOWNHOUSE LIVING IN GENERAL

Lastly, respondents' were asked three questions regarding their general perception and satisfaction with townhouse living.

TABLE 7.39: RESPONDENTS' OPINIONS ON TOWNHOUSE LIVING IN GENERAL (N=182)

Opinion description	Disagree		Agree		Missing		Mean	Std. dev
	n	%	n	%	n	%		
Greater attention to interiors.	65	36.1	115	63.9	2	1.1	2.7	1.0
More unique products	70	38.7	111	61.3	1	0.5	2.7	1.0
Opt to live in Th again	86	47.8	94	52.2	2	1.1	2.6	1.1

Firstly, respondents were asked if they thought people living in townhouses give greater attention to their interiors, due to the fact that all of the homes' exteriors are similar or the same, and most of the respondents agreed with this statement (n=115; 63.9%). The second matter was whether or not they thought people in townhouses choose products that will differentiate them from others in the same complex. Once again the majority of respondents were in agreement with this statement (n=111; 61.3%). The last matter that was under investigation, was whether or not the respondents would choose to reside in a townhouse that looks the same as the others in the complex, if presented with the option again. The results indicated that about half of the respondents (n=86; 47.8%) would not choose to do so, with the other half (n=94; 52.2%) stating that they would repeat their choice. The results indicate that even though respondents felt a higher need to pay more attention to create a unique townhouse interior, more than half of the respondents were satisfied with townhouse living (Table 7.39). Mean values and standard errors are presented in Figure 7.24.

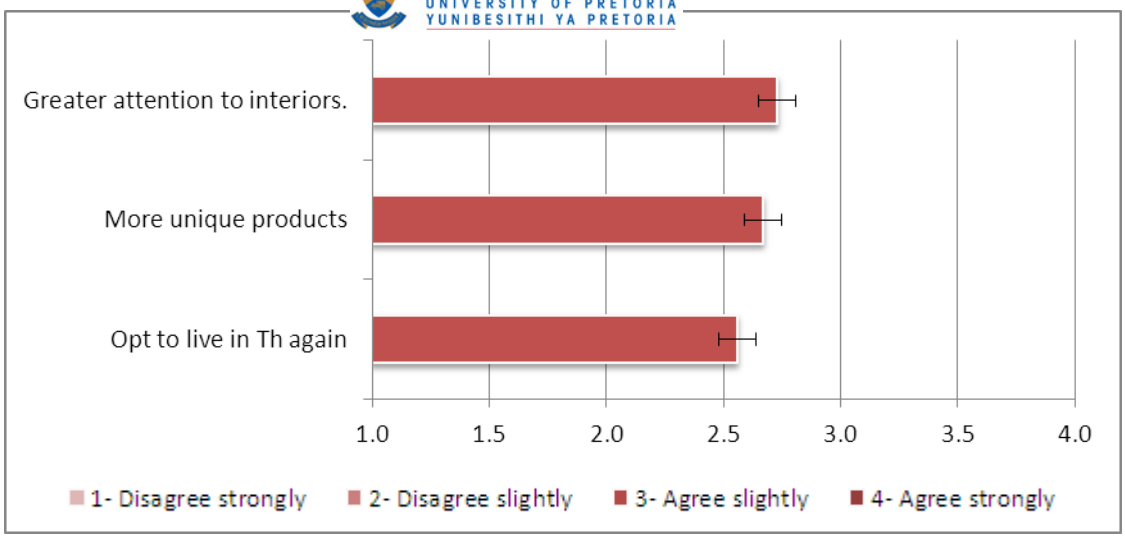

FIGURE 7.24: MEANS AND STANDARD ERRORS OF TOWNHOUSE LIVING IN GENERAL (N=182)

Considering these findings, and considering that the respondents had a rather moderate to low need for uniqueness (regardless of which form of counter-conformity behaviour was chosen), it can be assumed that people with a relative high need for uniqueness would not choose to reside in a townhouse unit, but would rather choose to reside in a free-standing, full title home, where they can alter the appearance (interior as well as exterior), in any which way they desire.

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CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY

This chapter presents the discussion and implications of the findings, as well as further research possibilities

8.1 INTRODUCTION

This study aimed at expanding literature regarding consumers' choice and the suitability of various types of tenure options – specifically that of residing in a townhouse in South Africa. Due to envisaged restrictions of this type of tenure, the study investigated how the residents of those homes use the interior as a means of self-expression. Inevitably, townhouses that are built on a similar style means that very little or no distinction can be made between the different units in a townhouse complex and that may jeopardize owners' eventual satisfaction with this type of tenure. The study was conducted in Tshwane in Gauteng during 2010 in a geographic area where townhouses seemed to have become very popular in recent years due to the construction of multiple new developments. The study was cross sectional in nature and specific to geographical areas where relatively new townhouse complexes were situated. A predominantly quantitative approach was used to collect data through a self-administered, structured questionnaire, which included one qualitative section that provided respondents the opportunity to give additional information without restrictions. The main goal of the study was to investigate the residents' need for uniqueness through the expression of their extended selves within their homes. Although the questionnaires were completed by any willing spouse or partner, literature postulates that the person's view would reflect the views of the household (Rengel, 2005:271). Statistical procedures followed the data collection in order to assist in determining the objectives as set out for the study.

Due to the nature of the investigation, namely people's use of symbols to communicate to onlookers their extended selves, the symbolic interactionism perspective was used to organize the constructs, objectives and discussions. This perspective offers insight into how people communicate and interact with others and how meaning is constructed and reconstructed within a social context (Charon, 1979:22; Kaiser, 1998:23; Nussbaumer, 2009:28-29; Sandstrom *et al.,*

2006:1). This perspective states that people use symbols as a communication tool and describes the methods used to maintain social meaning within an environment. Therefore, people consume and use interior objects to express an extended self to onlookers in an on-going process of feedback and re-establishment of the extended self. This indicates that identities (extended selves) are constantly adapting to accommodate a person's changing circumstances and will always occur within a social environment (Kaiser, 1998:23, 322-323).

Literature indicates that housing can satisfy a person's needs on all the levels indicated in Maslow's hierarchy, i.e. physiological, safety, social, esteem and self-actualization (Gunter, 2000:7-9; Lamb *et al.*, 2004:84-85; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007:97-100; Tikkanen, 2009). Due to an increase in security concerns and a fear of crime in South Africa (Coy & Pöhler, 2001; Jürgens & Gnad, 2002), more and more households have chosen to reside in security estates of which townhouse complexes is an example, and due to the multiple nuclei cores that have sprung up in the Tshwane region, it allowed for several townhouse complexes to be built in a specific area (Agan & Luchsinger, 1965:54; Floyed & Allen, 1994:59-60; Lee, 2003; Shivanides, 2006). Townhouse living is seen as an acceptable type of tenure because it offers several additional benefits, which includes a level of security and opportunity to afford a residence in an upmarket area (Bowers & Manzi, 2006; Hook & Vrdoljak, 2002; Jürgens & Gnad, 2002; Morgan, 2009; Sanchez *et al*., 2005). A home is also seen as the embodiment of the occupants' extended selves and therefore needs to be presented as such, which involves the interior of the homes (Gunter, 2000:157; Kempen & Ozaki, 2006; Nielson & Taylor, 2007:4; Wouters in Van Gorp, 2005). The home is therefore connected to domestic comforts and the process of personification of a house into a home that is recognized and characterized by its occupants as personal to them, and that serves as an extension of the residents' extended self (Adams, 1984; Gunter, 2000:15; Luymes, 1997; Manzo, 2003). Since the Home Owners Association prohibits residents from altering the exterior appearance of their townhouse units, little or no distinction can usually be made between the units, of which there could be up to fifty and even more in a single complex (Jürgens & Gnad, 2002). Therefore the only option generally available to the residents is to personify the interior of their homes to distinguish their homes from the rest and to reflect their extended selves. This chapter will hence reflect on this investigation by discussing the findings in terms of the objectives that were formulated for the study and will then discuss the implications and validity of the research and make recommendations for future research.

8.2 CONCLUSIONS

8.2.1 Demographic characteristics of the sample

The conclusions presented are done in accordance with the research objectives. Due to the sampling method chosen (snowball sampling), the results of the findings are sample specific and cannot be generalized to a greater population. Respondents were all residents of townhouse complexes, and could be categorized as LSM 8-10 groups, i.e. higher income groups. Approximately half of the respondents were 35 years of age or younger (53.3%) while the remaining respondents were older than 36 (46.7%) which provided a good distribution in terms of younger home owners and more established home owners. The majority of the respondents were female (65.9%), due to the fact that, in dual households, the person that was mostly responsible for the interior was asked to complete the questionnaire and that resulted in a predominantly female orientated sample. The households comprised mostly two or more members, while only 20.9% of respondents consisted of single member households. Out of the remaining multiple member households, 61.0% were either married or living with a partner. This was significant in that these respondents had to consider their significant other's tastes, as well as their own, with regard to the interiors of their homes. The majority of respondents owned their homes (60.4%), while 63.7% of respondents resided in their homes for five years or less.

8.2.2 Residents' attention to the interiors of their townhouse units (Objective 1)

The first objective was aimed at investigating and describing residents of townhouse units' attention to the interiors of their homes, namely, whether townhouse owners discriminate between the social and private zones of their homes, in terms of the allocation of their budget for interior related expenses, i.e. to design and decorate the areas; whether townhouse owners discriminate between the social and private zones of their homes, in terms of effort to design and decorate the areas; whether the interior objects that are displayed in the social zones of their homes are representative of their public self, and/or their private self.

The home can be divided into social and private zones. The social zones are seen as the public areas where guests are traditionally received and entertained and should therefore resemble the residents extended selves (Allen *et al.,* 2004:205; Kempen & Ozaki, 2006; Kilmer & Kilmer, 1992:205; Nielson & Taylor, 2007:129). Findings indicated that residents of the townhouses do indeed distinguish between the social and private zones of their homes through showing that they prefer to restrict guests to the social zone of their homes (58.2%) and that they do not wish that

their guests enter the private zones (68.1%), which probably explains the greater effort made to design and decorate these social zones of the home (70.9%). Respondents also choose to spend the majority of their décor budget, although not to such a great extent as their effort, on these zones (59.7%). These findings concur with the existing literature that suggests that guests should be received and entertained in the social zones of a home (Allen *et al*., 2004:205; Kempen & Ozaki, 2006; Kilmer & Kilmer, 1992:205; Nielson & Taylor, 2007:129). Since people use objects as a form of communication with others (Kempen & Ozaki, 2006), it was expected that a larger part of their budget would be spent to decorate the social zones of their homes and that it would involve more effort than furnishing the private zones that were supposed to be 'out of the public eye'.

The interior of a home is interpreted by others within the context of residents' past, background and personalities, and will reflect how a person distinguishes events, occasions, degree of affinity, familiarity and demand and control over situations (Schmitt *et al.,* 2006). The appropriate self on display in a specific area in the home will therefore require meticulous consideration. People may want to display their best qualities and disguise other qualities that are less desirable. This suggests that people would be inclined to display their ideal extended selves in the interior of their homes (Schmitt *et al.,* 2006). It is, however, more difficult to portray when several people share the same home, since all members involved in a household will have different extended selves that they wish to portray. Literature, however, suggests that a group of people or a family will generally display their extended self as a single collective unit (Rengel, 2005:271). Since consumption is self-defining and self-expressive in nature (Van Gorp, 2005) a person can express an extended self through the consumption of products (Tian & McKenzie, 2001; Tian *et al.,* 2001). When status objects that reflect collective individuation are consumed, such objects will reflect a social extended self, while objects that carry individualistic symbolic meaning will be indicative of a private extended self (Tian & McKenzie, 2001). Literature also suggests that a person would choose to display a public self in the social zones of a home, since the public self is constructed with the idea that others would perceive, interpret and judge a person based on what objects are open for public viewing. This form of the self, as opposed to the private self, is constructed in such a manner that a person can control the image others will have of them (Kaiser, 1998:182-183). The results of this study indicate that respondents (residents of townhouse units) do wish to portray a social extended self rather than a personal self in the social zones of their homes, *The objects displayed in the entertainment areas of my home could attract attention and provoke conversation, 71.1%; I choose to display objects from my travels or life experiences in the entertainment areas of my home, 67.0%; I display more impressive objects in the entertainment areas of my home, 63.1%*, but also choose to incorporate

a limited version of their personal self, *I like to display interior objects of a certain style that reflect my personality in the entertainment areas of my home, 84.1%; I love to display family photos in the entertainment areas of my home, 69.1%* (excluding highly personal objects- 70.9%). Therefore, the self that is put on display to onlookers is a combination of both selves, with the majority representative of a social extended self. While respondents focussed on their social selves when furnishing and decorating the social zones of their homes, these areas were also personified through inclusion of selected personal objects, but excluding highly personal objects, such as childhood medals.

A further investigation focussed on residents' awareness of the social and private zones of their homes, specifically to determine whether any significant differences existed for specific demographic characteristics, i.e. gender: male; female; age: <35; >35 to <50; >50 years; tenure status: own; rent; length of tenure: <5 years; ≥5 years; education level: up to matric; post matric qualifications; post graduate degree or diploma. Findings could not confirm any significant differences for residents with different demographic characteristics ($p>0.05$). Additionally no significant differences could be confirmed for their attention to the social zones of their homes. Investigations were repeated for determining whether any significant differences existed amongst the demographic categories and the distinction between the private and public selves and again no significant differences emerged ($p>0.05$). Although respondents differentiate between the social and private zones of their homes and choose to display a combination of their social and personal extended selves to others, it does not seem to deviate (no significant differences exist) from one demographic sub-category to another (gender, age, tenure status, length of tenure and education level).

8.2.3 The source of interaction (Influential others) that mostly influenced residents' interior decisions (Objective 2):

The second objective was to determine which source of interaction mostly influenced residents' interior decisions, namely, significant others; reference group others and generalized others.

The socialization process of a person influences a person's portrayal of his/her extended self (Charon, 1979:40-41; Lindamood & Hanna, 1979:87-89; Luymes, 1997; Sandstrom *et al.,* 2006:58; Wilska, 2002). Throughout life, interaction occurs with several group others, namely, significant others, reference group others and generalized others. *Significant others* emerge during the play stage of a child's development and incorporate a person's role models, for instance immediate family, friends, religious leaders, etc. (Charon, 1979:68). A *reference group*

on the other hand exerts influence over a person regardless of the fact that you belong to that group or not, for example your colleagues. The influence of this group may be regarded as a means for developing a sense of social identity or a feeling of interconnectedness (Kaiser, 1998:159-164; Lamb *et al.,* 2004:95). People place greater importance on feedback and conduct of others when those others belong to a group with which they can identify. Furthermore, people will consider acceptance by a reference group as being central in the formation of their social identities and therefore of extreme importance. It is, however, more intricate and complex since people can belong to several group others simultaneously, for example colleagues, an ethnic minority group, gender, social class etc. (Smith, Taylor & Huo, 2003:162-163, 167). Lastly, a person's *generalized group other* develops in a child's game stage and consist of people whose social norms and values are internalized, including a person's cultural group, and can be labelled as 'them' or 'society' (Charon, 1979:69; Kaiser, 1998:159-164, 359).

The findings revealed that the respondents gained their interior inspiration mostly from the *generalised group other* or society, which involved sources of inspiration such as lifestyle magazines, television programs, interior shows etc. (75.4%).This may be due to the fact that visual media and global communication have evolved to such an extent that consumers can access information on new trends, interiors etc. more easily and are therefore more susceptible to the influences society exerts on a person, as well as a person's peer groups (people I admire, 51.7%). The respondents' *significant others* were the second most influential concerning their interior inspirations (59.2%), probably because people learn from a very early age the values and norms of society from their significant others and will therefore be influenced by this group even if only on a subconscious level. The least influential in terms of inspiration for residents' interiors were the *reference group others* (Friends, 52.8%; Interior designers, 16.4%). Smith *et al.,* (2003:167) state that this type of influence is highly valuable, although this group's influence was not as strong as the other groups when it came to the inspiration for the interiors of their homes. Results also indicated that interior designers and interior decorators, who are the specialists, were consulted the least when designing and decorating the interior of their homes. Only 5.4% of the sample confirmed using their professional services to furnish the interiors of their homes. It is not clear why people do not make use of such services offered more often, but it could be due to the perception that such professional services are too expensive or even unaffordable. This could be investigated further.

Additional statistical procedures (t-tests; Anova) were performed to determine whether any significant differences existed amongst the residents' source of interior inspiration (immediate family, friends, interior designers, admired people and lifestyle magazines, television programs

and interior shows) in terms of various demographic sub-categories, which once again involved respondents' gender: male; female; age: <35; >35 to <50; >50 years; tenure status: own; rent; length of tenure: <5 years; >5 years; and education level: up to matric; post matric qualifications; post graduate degree or diploma.

The only dependant variable that showed no significant difference regarding the demographic categories was that of peers ($p>0.05$). A significant difference was confirmed between the age groups and their use of immediate family as a source of interior inspiration. Results indicated that younger respondents (<35 years) were more significantly influenced by their immediate family than older respondents (≥50 years). There was also a significant difference between friends as a source of interior inspiration for younger and older respondents. Younger respondents (<35 years) were once again significantly more influenced by their friends than older respondents (≥50 years). Respondents who were 35 years of age and older, but younger than 50 years (≥35 -<50 years), were also significantly more influenced by their friends than older respondents (≥50 years). Results also indicated that a significant difference existed in terms of use of interior designers as a source of inspiration and respondents' length of tenure. Respondents who had resided in their townhouses for longer (≥5 years) were more inclined to be influenced by interior designers than those who lived there for less than five years. Lastly, a significant difference also existed between lifestyle magazines, television programs and interior shows as a source of inspiration and that of gender. Female respondents were more influenced by such sources than their male counterparts.

8.2.4 Residents' need for uniqueness (Objective 3):

The third objective was aimed at investigating and describing the residents of townhouses' need for uniqueness or counter-conformity, i.e. their need to distinguish themselves from others within the same townhouse complex through their choice of interior products specifically for the social zones of their homes where others are received and entertained and if so, to identify which form of counter-conformity is most prevalent, namely creative choice counter-conformity; unpopular choice counter-conformity or avoidance of similarity.

Tian *et al.* (2001) conducted a study and developed and validated a Need for Uniqueness Scale that could be used to determine counter-conformity behaviour in terms of three levels of counter-conformity. The internal consistency of the scale was tested by means of a re-test reliability measurement over a two-year period to ensure minimal threat from social desirability response bias, discriminant validity and nomological validity. The scale accentuates visual rather than

verbal communication of uniqueness. The scale is therefore considered a product orientated scale that corresponds with conceptual marketing models of consumers' responses to the exterior design of products, their fashion cycles and variety seeking behaviour, which are all relevant to interior merchandise.

Although questionnaires were completed by individuals, it is assumed that the findings reflect on a households' collective need for uniqueness based on Rengel's (2005:271) findings, who stated that in such circumstances where more than one person have to be represented in a home, the shared identity of the family will be portrayed, instead of that of an individual member. Only 21.0% of the respondents represented single member households, which implies that respondents of dual member households (48.1%) and those of households with three or more members (30.9%) had to consider the extended selves of multiple household members in their interior decisions.

One's need to be unique can be secured via three types of counter-conforming behaviour. All three types of counter-conforming behaviour vary and will evoke different reactions in a person's social group and society as a whole. The *creative choice counter-conformity* (CCCC) represents social distinction from others in a manner that a person's social group will approve of. Stated differently, it represents social difference through the use of unusual products that are admired by others. Even though it involves some risk, if accepted, it will elicit positive social evaluations from others (Snyder & Fromkin, 1977 in Tian *et al.,* 2001; Tian *et al.,* 2001). This type of counter-conformity seemed more prevalent amongst the respondents (median: 3.3/5 on a Likert-type scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree). *Unpopular choice counter-conformity* (UCCC) refers to the use of products that differ from those that match a person's social group norms and involves greater social risk than the creative choice counter-conformity. People who react in this way may prefer to consume objects that will distinguish them from others, even if the connotation to those products is negative. The UCCC may, however, enhance a person's self and social image due to the fact that they risk social disapproval in order to establish themselves as unique (Gross, 1977 in Tian *et al.,* 2001). Objects that are seen as unpopular initially may become popular at a later stage due to the selection thereof by individuals, which will enhance a person's self-image as an innovator (Heckert, 1989 in Tian *et al.,* 2001). Even though unpopular choice counter-conformity behaviour can be highly rewarding, the respondents in this study did not admit to this type of behaviour (median: 2.6/5). *Avoidance of similarity* (AOS), the third type of counter-conformity behaviour refers to the discontinued use of objects that become popular, in order to re-establish a person's uniqueness. This inevitably requires a continual change of a person's interior to ensure social distinction (Tian *et al.,* 2001). In this study, this type of counter-

conformity behaviour seemed the least evident (median: 2.2/5). Irrespective of the type of counter-conformity behaviour, residents of townhouse units therefore did not express a strong need for uniqueness if the findings of this study are used as an indication. Avoidance of similarity, which requires a continual change or replacement of interior objects, seemed to be the least practiced. Unpopular choice counter-conformity, which involves the highest risk in terms of social rejection, was also not pertinent. Although not highly relatable, the form of counter-conformative behaviour that seemed more prevalent was creative choice counter-conformity.

Research indicates that the effect of social interaction has one of two influences, namely conformity and counter-conformity. People who choose to conform will do so to abide with social norms, to avoid criticism and to gain the approval of others, in order to gain rewards for such behaviour, e.g. social acceptance. On the other hand, people who choose to counter-conform can do so to fulfil a positive function such as promote or enhance a person's self and social image, and people may experience satisfaction from being perceived as unique (Fromkin & Snyder, 1980 in Simonson & Nowlis, 2000). Researchers have reported that conformative behaviour is more common in society than a need to be unique, due to the rewards that such behaviour elicits. However, when people are presented with the option to explain why they purchased certain products, they appropriately indicate that they prefer novel products that will aid in the expression of a unique identity (Simonson & Nowlis, 2000).

The findings of this study suggest that the respondents did not exhibit a strong need for uniqueness, and when this need is exercised, it is done so through the use of 'acceptable' product choices. It may therefore be concluded that residents of townhouses do not necessarily have a strong need for uniqueness. Respondents who did exhibit a stronger need for uniqueness may do so (as literature suggests) due to personality traits (Simonson & Nowlis, 2000). Furthermore, literature indicates that higher educated people, who were well represented in this study, are less concerned about expressing uniqueness (Tian & McKenzie, 2001). The study involved consumers within the LSM 8-10 categories, which coincides with the higher educated segment of South African citizens (77.5% of the respondents furthered their education after high school). Findings therefore support extant research.

Further investigation was done to determine whether counter-conformity behaviour differed across the selected demographic categories, namely gender: male; female; age: <35; >35 to <50; >50 years; tenure status: own; rent; length of tenure: <5 years; >5 years; and education level: up to matric; post matric qualifications; post graduate degree or diploma. The only significant differences that could be confirmed were in terms of gender, specifically for creative choice

counter-conformity (CCCC) and avoidance of similarity (AOS). Results indicated that females were more inclined to demonstrate counter-conforming behaviour than their male counterparts for CCCC. In terms of avoidance of similarity females were once again significantly more prone to this type of counter-conformity behaviour than males. This means that when products are advertised, especially to couples, the focus should differ for that of men and women. Women would require more unique products, as well as a larger variety thereof, whereas men have a greater desire to purchase generic products.

8.2.5 Respondents' buyer behaviour, specifically in terms of interior objects (Objective 4):

The fourth objective was to investigate and describe townhouse owners' buyer behaviour pertaining to interior related objects that are used in the social zones of their homes and to determine which characteristics dominate their buying decisions.

A home serves as a 'canvas' for the residents to portray their extended selves and their social standing to onlookers. One's home therefore requires attention, i.e. to choose and apply interior objects that reflect the occupants' personality (Fernandez, 2008; Kempen & Ozaki, 2006; Moore, 2000). In order to express their personalities, people would thus consume and manipulate various props (including interior objects) to support their extended selves (Ireland, 2009:13-14; Rengel, 2007:258-259). Through this process of personification, people distinguish themselves in terms of cultural domains, family life, social class etc. (Girling-Bud, 2004:27; Sparke, 2004:72-73). The style in which people decorate their homes therefore truly becomes a medium through which the occupants' extended selves (actual or ideal) are projected (Kempen & Ozaki, 2006; Gunter, 2000:58, 116, 157-161; Van Gorp, 2005). Objects can therefore be consumed either for their functional value or for their aesthetic value. Functional objects are concerned with the utilitarian role of an object to perform as intended (Veryzer, 1995), while conspicuous consumption is useful to reflect personal information about people to others through aesthetics, symbolic values and the ability of objects to draw attention (Creusen & Schoormans, 2005; Girling-Bud, 2004:27-37; Van Gorp, 2005). People react to objects that are distinguishable from their surroundings, i.e. objects that are unusual or different, e.g. counter-conforming objects (Creusen & Schoormans, 2005). People are therefore likely to display objects that will improve their standings within the social hierarchy in order to gain respect from others and to further their association with an idealised social group (Goffman, 1969:30-44).

To purchase and consume objects therefore involves several types of risk that are accompanied by certain costs if the interior objects do not perform as intended. Social cost refers to the risk of social disapproval due to an inappropriate choice; financial cost, i.e. risk of financial loss because money was not spent well; time cost, i.e. time spent on sourcing and purchasing the interior object; effort cost, i.e. the amount of effort spent on allocating and purchasing the interior object; and physical cost, i.e. the risk of physical harm that an object may inflict (Hawkins *et al.,* 1998:537).

When presented with several statements which described different factors that may guide their buyer behaviour, findings suggested that respondents would firstly choose objects that are e*xclusive,* where after they selected *original or valuable* interior objects, followed by objects that were *limited or scarce* and lastly objects that were *impressive.* For the purpose of triangulation, respondents were again asked whether they agreed with single statements on a four point Likert-type scale. These findings supported the former results indicating that the respondents firstly preferred *original* objects (valuable authentic objects with a historical connotation: mean 2.93); secondly the respondents chose *rare or scarce* objects (small supply of objects in comparison to a large demand: mean 2.31). The respondents were more hesitant to choose objects that were *branded* (object with descriptive personality-type traits: mean 1.96) and *expensive* (high monetary price: mean 1.74) (Frazier *et al.,* 2009; Goffman, 1951; Shiffman & Kanuk, 2007:133-134, 183-184). This indicated that the respondents were likely to select objects that would reflect creative choice counter-conformity behaviour through purchasing original objects instead of reproductions, and furthermore through selecting scarce objects that other people might find difficult to come by, instead of selecting to buy well-known (branded) objects that were expensive.

Additional statistical procedures were conducted to determine whether any significant differences could be confirmed between the product selection criteria (expensiveness, rarity, originality and branded interior objects) for the selected demographic sub-categories, namely gender: male; female; age: <35; >35 to <50; >50 years; tenure status: own; rent; length of tenure: <5 years; >5 years; and education level: up to matric; post matric qualifications; post graduate degree or diploma.

No significant differences could be confirmed for any of the dependant variables for expensiveness, rarity and originality and any of the demographic categories. A significant difference, however, existed in terms of the choice of branded objects and gender. Results indicated that males were significantly more prone to select branded objects than their female counterparts. This may be more relevant in terms of interior objects such as household

technologies, such as television sets and entertainment systems, where brands are more conspicuous and can be used as an indication of quality and workmanship.

8.2.6 Respondents' intentional choice of interior objects (Objective 5):

The last objective aimed at identifying and explicating interior products in the social zones of the residents of townhouses, i.e. objects that were most valued as an attempt to portray their extended selves during their interaction with others.

Research suggests that people's attachment to certain products or objects and subsequently the relationship they formed with the objects is used as an expression of their extended selves (Ahuvia, 2005; Belk, 1988; Fernandez, 2008). Since product consumption is indicative of a person's extended self (Kleine *et al.,* 1993; Van Gorp, 2005), the choice of interior products in a person's home will be valuable in communicating to onlookers who the residents are, and what image they wish to portray to others. People will therefore attempt to personify their homes as a means of expressing their extended selves, through the use of specific interior objects (Gunter, 2000:4,10). Through this personification process, people will then develop a bond with a place (interior of their homes), and will become emotionally and symbolically connected to the space (Kempen & Ozaki, 2006; Knez, 2005; Mannarini *et al.,* 2006).

In this study respondents were asked to list their most valued interior objects in the social zones of their homes. These objects were then carefully analyzed and placed into encompassing categories as indicated through literature (Allen *et al.,* 2004:265-270; Kilmer & Kilmer, 1992:481, 492, 520-532). Results indicated that the objects that were most valued in the interiors of the residents' homes were first and foremost furniture (51.2%), followed by household technology (20.7%), decorative objects (15.7%) and personal objects (12.4%). None of the respondents ranked textile products as their most valued interior objects, but this does not imply that such objects aren't valued.

The fact that furniture was rated as the most important interior object may be because furniture is usually chosen first in order for the room to function as intended. It therefore serves as the basis of the style of the room and as the backdrop for the rest of the furnishings. Females were mostly involved in the design and décor of the interiors and this suggests that, along with their creative counter-conforming behaviour, the furniture selection in the home would be done by them in such a manner that represents some uniqueness behaviour. After furniture, household technology was

the second most popular interior object category, most probably since the respondents used household technology to further facilitate the function of the room. Decorative objects only ranked third most important, but these objects are used to create or enhance the ambience and mood of the space through the design, colour and style of such objects. After the decorative objects were mentioned, personal objects were also noted. This confirms the choice of a combination of the social and personal selves on display, since these objects are only valued by the residents themselves. Textile products were not mentioned as being most valued and this may be because new technologies such as blinds may have rendered specialized and valued window treatments obsolete and old fashioned.

As with the multiple selves a person has, there also exist multiple reasons for valuing the objects in a person's home. In our current society, people constantly have to explain the decisions they make, shifting the focus from the choice of products available to the reason for that decision. The 'weight' of the reason depends on the task, context, choice problem and individual differences of people (Simonson & Nowlis, 2000). In this study, respondents were asked to motivate why they valued the objects they did in the social zones of their homes. Findings indicated that social and private motivations were almost equally relevant (47.5% and 52.5% respectively), although it was initially expected that social motivations would be predominant, as suggested by literature (Allen *et al.,* 2004:205; Kempen & Ozaki, 2006; Kilmer & Kilmer, 1992:205; Nielson & Taylor, 2007:129). The combination of the two types of motivations may be based on a need to personalize a non-distinguishable living environment in a manner that the respondents were comfortable with, since people form an emotional attachment with objects, including interior objects. Such objects then become valuable for personal reasons irrespective of its actual commercial value (Frazier *et al.,* 2009).

8.3 SUPPOSITIONS

Housing is an essential part of every person's life as it can fulfil all five needs as identified by Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Due to several factors that are specific to the situation within the South African housing environment, a popular option for type of tenure is to reside in a townhouse complex. Such complexes provide several advantages to the residents, but are also accompanied by several negative aspects, one of which is the exteriors of the units in a complex that are highly similar. Due to regulations set out by the Home Owners Association, the exterior appearance of the units may not be altered in any way to distinguish a resident's unit from those of the surrounding units. This may be problematic if people have some need for uniqueness, and desire to express their uniqueness. The only viable option for the residents of such townhouse

complexes therefore lies within the interior of their homes. A house becomes a home when the residents have personified such a space in order to reveal the extended selves they wish to portray to others. This process of personification is facilitated through the use of interior objects.

This study confirmed that the respondents discriminated between the social and private zones in their homes, and wished to restrict guests to the social zones. Through this process, residents of townhouse units allowed themselves the opportunity to adorn and manipulate such spaces and to give more attention to the social zones to reveal their extended self to others in a manner that they could control. Furthermore, residents wished to portray a combination of their social selves as well as their private selves to onlookers, but did not wish to reveal their highly personal selves. Since the home will reveal the occupants' past, background and personalities, it became clear that the respondents were open to the idea of revealing a limited part of their personal selves to others, perhaps to further distinguish themselves from others in an otherwise non-distinguishable environment. The inspiration for adorning their interiors was first and foremost found from generalized others, followed by significant others and lastly reference group others. This implies that global communication and trends are hugely influential and have far reaching consequences, but that people who instilled a person's values and norms still have a strong influence, long after the basic socialization process has begun.

Respondents in this study did not exhibit a strong need for uniqueness, which indicates that people with a high need for uniqueness would most likely not choose to reside within a townhouse complex where the units appear identical or similar.

The type of counter-conforming behaviour that was most prevalent was the creative choice counter-conformity. This implies that respondents chose interior objects that were socially accepted by their reference and peer groups, but that were novel in comparison to usual product consumption, i.e. less risky. Respondents were less prone to select the unpopular choice counter-conformity and the avoidance of similarity behaviour which implies greater social scrutiny if objects are consumed in the wrong manner. In accordance with these findings, when presented with product choices, respondents were more inclined to select interior objects that were original in nature (authentic), where after they selected rare or scarce objects. Male respondents were significantly more brand conscious than females.

In terms of the type of interior products that were valued by the respondents, furniture was listed first. This might imply that the respondents were aware of furniture's role to identify the style of the interior, the function of a space and that furniture should be chosen to facilitate the activities in

the home. The second most valued interior object was household technology. These items are functional and are used to enhance the quality of life of the respondents. Decorative objects were ranked as the third most valued objects, which seemed logical in terms of creating ambience. Personal objects were fourth most valued, which explains the attention to personal objects in the social zones, as previously discussed. Textile products were not mentioned as highly valued but this does not imply that such objects are insignificant. Recent fashion trends, e.g. blinds rather than curtains, may have influenced these findings.

8.4 THE RESEARCH IN RETROSPECT

8.4.1 Introduction and planning

The initial field of interest was thoroughly researched by the researcher. It involved a scrutiny of the relevant literature to formulate the problem statement and research objectives. Since this topic has not received much attention in the past, relevant literature was dated and difficult to find. South African housing research is limited and no other study has been done before to determine the significance of interiors to support home-owners' extended selves within their homes before. Supporting literature utilized studies in the clothing field (the Need for Uniqueness Scale was adapted from a version applicable to clothing) and other references that were either dated or not relevant in a South African context. Despite these drawbacks, the internal consistency of the scales used (Cronbach Alpha values) was good ($\geq$0.84). After the literature was analyzed, a questionnaire was developed and several experts were consulted in order to ensure that the concepts measured were logical and easily understandable, that no questions were leading and lastly that the questionnaire was grammatically correct. The questionnaire was then subjected to a pilot test to further ensure that all possible errors were eliminated. It was also important to ensure that the study (and particularly the questionnaire) adhered to the University of Pretoria's ethics policies. The questionnaire was therefore sent to the ethics committee of the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences for approval, and only after approval was granted, did the data collection commence.

8.4.2 Implementation of the questionnaire

This research was limited in scope, considering that only 182 respondents were included in the study (although 450 questionnaires were distributed). The research was intended to be explorative and descriptive in nature and the intention was never to generalize the findings. The results are therefore sample specific. Several limitations prohibited the expansion of the study to include more respondents, namely, financial limitations (the study was self-funded); geographical

limitations (the geographical area was restricted to include only areas that would meet the criteria as set out by the researcher); time limitation (this study forms part of a Masters degree, and only a limited time frame is given to complete the study); and lastly it was extremely difficult to gain access to townhouse units. Even after permission was granted from the Body Corporates of the complexes, people were hesitant to complete the questionnaire and some even refused. Repeated entry into the complex was also difficult, and since the respondents could withdraw at any time should they wish to do so anonymously, it was nearly impossible to identify which questionnaires should still be returned. The researcher is however confident that the questionnaires that were completed were done so with care, and that the findings are truthful and will provide valuable insight into a topic that has not received much attention previously.

A cover letter accompanied the questionnaire in which the purpose of the study was briefly explained, giving instructions on how to complete the questionnaire, indicating how long it will take to complete and, lastly, to ensure confidentiality of the respondents, as well as to let them know that they could withdraw from the study at any given point without reason, should they wish to do so. It was also made clear that the information gathered from this study would be used solely for this particular study within an academic context of the University of Pretoria. Furthermore the letter aimed at encouraging the participants to answer the questions truthfully and honestly. The questionnaires were then distributed in a drop-off-collect-later manner by the researcher and two trained assistants.

8.4.3 Data analysis and conclusions

After the self-administered questionnaires were collected the researcher coded them herself, in order to ensure that the data was correct and reliable. To further warrant inter rater reliability, a research assistant aided the coding process of one of the sections. Differences that emerged after this process were discussed and re-categorized. The data was checked for errors before the statistical analysis commenced. Cronbach Alphas were also calculated in order to ensure that the scales had internal consistency. The research objectives were met to the satisfaction of the researcher within the limitations as explained, and the findings were presented with the aid of tables and graphs. The findings were interpreted with the aid of a statistician, to ensure that the data was interpreted correctly. Conclusions were drawn from the results. No unforeseen problems occurred during the research period.

8.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Three limitations can be identified that may have hampered the study, namely, geographical area, access to townhouse complexes and the sample and sampling method. Due to the growth pattern that cities in Tshwane have experienced recently, townhouse complexes in these cities seemed an ideal geographical area for the research. It might have been preferable to include other townhouse complexes as well, i.e. those with exterior facades that differ, since this might have offered the chance of more people partaking in the study and an opportunity to compare the findings. Furthermore, access to these complexes was severely hampered due to the security measures taken to 'protect' the residents of such complexes. This made it difficult to recruit respondents from a wide variety of townhouse complexes that was intended in order to avoid bias. This also restricts the generalizability of the results. The last limitation of the study was that of the sample and sampling methods. In the end the researcher had to resort to convenient snowball sampling due to the difficulty of reaching willing participants. This implies that the willing respondents involved the people they identified in townhouse complexes to complete the questionnaires, which in turn influenced the demographics of the questionnaire (all of the respondents did however meet the criteria specified by the researcher). This process was extremely time consuming and expensive.

8.6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES

The following opportunities for further research were identified during the completion of the research process, namely that a larger more representative sample could be used that covers more regions in order to gain data that is generalizable. In other words, a study can be conducted within a South African context instead of only focussing on the region of Tshwane. Although the results of this study are sample specific, it can be used in the implementation and planning of more extensive research. The second recommendation is that of using an alternative survey method. The method used within this study was predominantly quantitative in nature, with one section focussing on qualitative data, but a study that is entirely focussed on a qualitative approach would offer a better in-depth insight into how consumers use the interior of their townhouse units in order to portray an extended self, in an environment that is not conducive to uniqueness. This method may also serve to identify and explore the relative low level of uniqueness that was found with the respondents, and can also serve to explore the differences between males and females with regard to their counter-conforming behaviours. The study only involved respondents who resided in townhouse complexes where all the units are similar.

Inclusion of other complexes would allow for a comparative study, especially because this study concluded that people who have a strong need for uniqueness may probably not reside in these complexes because it may be too inhibiting from the start.

8.7 IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The findings of this study provide empirical evidence that would be useful for developers, interior designers and decorators and for the retail environment. The findings will be adding to the existing body of literature, which is limited in terms of consumers' housing choices and how housing type influences interior choices. In this study, the Need for Uniqueness Scale that was originally developed in a clothing context (Tian *et al.,* 2001) has been implemented successfully (Cronbach Alpha $\geq$0.84) in an interior context, which is useful for future research. Furthermore, developers can also benefit in terms of marketing new developments, which seem increasingly popular. When involving prospective buyers from an earlier stage, the interiors of individual units could be personified through mass customisation, to enhance post purchase satisfaction. Also, differences in terms of the exterior appearance may be encouraging for prospective buyers. The findings will also be useful for interior designers and decorators who could develop a better understanding of home owners' ignorance or negative perceptions that prevent them from using their services. Lastly, the retail environment can also benefit since the findings can be useful, especially in terms of projection of gender in advertisements and also for involving both genders in their marketing and sales approaches.

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Appendix

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences

Department of Consumer Science

012 420 2531

August 2010

RESEARCH PROJECT: EXPRESSING YOURSELF WITHIN YOUR HOME

Dear respondent

The intention with this research is to gain some insight into homeowners' decisions regarding the interior design/ décor of their homes (within townhouse complexes). It will take approximately 15 minutes of your time to complete this questionnaire that forms part of a dissertation for my Master's degree in Consumer Science. All information will be strictly confidential and the identity of the participant will not be disclosed in any stage of the research project. Respondents may however provide their details voluntarily (separately), so that you could be entered into a lucky draw to win a R 500 Woolworths gift voucher at the completion of data collection. Spouses must please complete the questionnaire separately without discussing it with one another. If you will be more comfortable with removing the cover page of the questionnaire, and handing it in separately, please feel free to do so. The winner will be notified telephonically by the end of August.

Please read the questions carefully and give your honest opinion throughout.

For any further enquires, please contact me via phone

Lorna Swanepoel

082 782 6383

Thank you for your participation!

Student: M Consumer Science Interior Merchandise Management

Study Leader: Prof Alet C Erasmus

\- -

You may tear this part off

INFORMATION FOR THE LUCKY DRAW ☺
Cell number:

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Questionnaire: EXPRESSING YOURSELF WITHIN YOUR HOME

Respondent number	V1	

Please answer the questions on all 4 pages, by circling the most appropriate number from the options listed, or by filling in the blank space. Your honest opinion will be appreciated. ALL INFORMATION WILL REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL.

Please answer the questions on all 4 pages, by circling the most appropriate number from the options listed, or by filling in the blank space. Your honest opinion will be appreciated. ALL INFORMATION WILL REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL.

SECTION A: PLEASE TELL ME MORE ABOUT YOURSELF										For office use only	
1. What is your gender?	Male	1	Female	2						V2	
2. What is your age?		Years								V3	
3. How many people are living in your home (including yourself)										V4	
4. Do you own or rent the residence?	Own	1	Rent	2						V5	
5. Roughly, what is your average disposable monthly HOUSEHOLD income?		Rands								V6	
6. Please indicate to which racial category you belong											
White	1	Black	2	Coloured	3	Indian	4	Other: Specify		V7	
7. Please indicate from the options below what highest level of education you have successfully completed											
Below matric	1									V8	
Matric	2										
Post matric certificate	3										
Diploma	4										
University degree	5										
Post graduate diploma	6										
Post graduate degree	7										
8. How long have you been living in this townhouse complex?		Years		Months						V9	
										V10	
9. During the time that you have lived in the complex, APPROXIMATELY how much have you spent in total, on the interior of your home?										V11	
10. Please indicate your marital status in accordance with the options provided below											
Single	1									V12	
Married/ living with a partner	2										
Divorced	3										
Separated	4										
Widower/ widow	5										
12. Referring to number 10. How long have you been this status?		Months								V13	

SECTION B: DECISIONS CONCERNING THE INTERIOR OF YOUR HOME ***Who is/are responsible for the decisions concerning the interior/decor of your home: Indicate by stating whether each of the participants listed are Never, Seldom or Mostly involved:***	**Never**	**Seldom**	**Mostly**	**For office use only**	
1. Myself	1	2	3	V14	
2. My partner	1	2	3	V15	
3. It is a joint effort of the whole family, including children if relevant	1	2	3	V16	
4. An interior designer	1	2	3	V17	
5. An interior decorator	1	2	3	V18	
6. My friends	1	2	3	V19	
7. Other- Please specify:				V20	
With reference to number 7, if chosen, please specify ***by stating whether the participant is Never, Seldom or Mostly involved***	1	2	3	V21	

SECTION C: YOUR VALUED POSSESSIONS ***Name 5 interior items in the entertainment areas of your home (living and dining rooms) that you value the most AND GIVE A REASON WHY YOU VALUE EVERY ONE OF THESE ITEMS/ OBJECTS:***			**For office use only**	
Item No.	***Item description***	***Motivation-Please mention the single most important motivation only***		
1.			V22	
			V23	
2.			V24	
			V25	
3.			V26	
			V27	
4.			V28	
			V29	
5.			V30	
			V31	

NOW, please rank the items listed above under "Item description" in order of importance from most important, using "1" to least important using "5". Please do not repeat rank value e.g. Item 3=1 (Most important); Item 5=2 (les important than number 3)etc.

1.		V32	
2.		V33	
3.		V34	
4.		V35	
5.		V36	

SECTION D: THE INTERIOR OF YOUR HOME ***Please react to the following statements regarding the interior of your home. Note that the <u>entertainment area implies your living and dining room areas</u>. Responses range from "DISAGREE STRONGLY to AGREE STRONGLY"***	**Disagree strongly**	**Disagree slightly**	**Agree slightly**	**Agree strongly**	**For office use only**	
1. I like to restrict guests to the entertainment areas of my home	1	2	3	4	V37	
2. I prefer that guests do not enter my private bedroom and bathroom areas	1	2	3	4	V38	
3. I put more effort into the décor of the entertainment areas in my home	1	2	3	4	V39	
4. I spend most of my decorating budget on the entertainment areas of my home	1	2	3	4	V40	
5. I like to display interior objects of a certain style that reflect my personality in the entertainment areas of my home	1	2	3	4	V41	
6. I choose to display objects from my travels/ life experiences in the entertainment areas of my home	1	2	3	4	V42	
7. The objects displayed in the entertainment areas of my home could attract attention and provoke conversation	1	2	3	4	V43	
8. I display more impressive objects within the entertainment areas of my home	1	2	3	4	V44	
9. I display objects of personal value for example childhood medals, sentimental objects etc. within the entertainment areas of my home	1	2	3	4	V45	
10. I love to display family photos in the entertainment areas of my home	1	2	3	4	V46	

SECTION E: THE USE ON INTERIOR OBJECTS IN UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA ***Please react to the following statements regarding the interior objects of your home. Responses range from "DISAGREE STRONGLY to AGREE STRONGLY"*** *(Interior products and objects refer to furniture and furnishings, such as interior accessories, wall and window treatments)*	**Disagree strongly**	**Disagree slightly**	**agree nor ...**	**Agree slightly**	**Agree strongly**	**For office use only**	
1. I collect unusual interior products as a way of telling people I am different	1	2	3	4	5	V47	
2. I decorate my entertainment areas in a way that others are likely to DISAPPROVE of	1	2	3	4	5	V48	
3. When interior products or brands that I like become popular, I lose interest	1	2	3	4	5	V49	
4. When it comes to the interior products I buy and the situations in which I use them, customs and rules are made to be broken	1	2	3	4	5	V50	
5. I have purchased unusual interior products as a way to create a more distinctive image in my home	1	2	3	4	5	V51	
6. I look for a one of a kind products so that I create a style within my entertainment areas that is all my own	1	2	3	4	5	V52	
7. I avoid interior products and brands that have already been accepted and purchased by the average consumers	1	2	3	4	5	V53	
8. When buying interior products an important goal is to find something that communicates my uniqueness	1	2	3	4	5	V54	
9. I combine interior products in such a way that I create personal image for myself that can't be duplicated	1	2	3	4	5	V55	
10. I have unconventional interior products in my home, even when it's likely to offend others	1	2	3	4	5	V56	
11. I try to find a more interesting version of run of the mill interior products, because I enjoy being original	1	2	3	4	5	V57	
12. I rarely agree with others on what conventional interior objects to buy	1	2	3	4	5	V58	
13. When products that I like become popular among the general population, I move it out of my entertainment areas	1	2	3	4	5	V59	
14. I try to avoid interior products that are bought by the general public	1	2	3	4	5	V60	
15. As a rule I dislike products that are normally purchased by everyone	1	2	3	4	5	V61	
16. I actively seek to develop my personal uniqueness by buying special interior products	1	2	3	4	5	V62	
17. Being out of place with my friends DOESN'T stop me from having an interior I want to have	1	2	3	4	5	V63	
18. Having an eye for interior products that are interesting and unusual assists me in establishing a distinctive image	1	2	3	4	5	V64	
19. The interior products that I like best, are the ones that express my individuality	1	2	3	4	5	V65	
20. I remove fashionable interior products from my entertainment areas once they become popular by the general public	1	2	3	4	5	V66	
21. When it comes to the interior products I buy, and the situations in which I use them, I have broken customs and rules	1	2	3	4	5	V67	
22. The more commonplace an interior product is amongst the general population the less interested I am in buying it	1	2	3	4	5	V68	
23. I think of how I can use the things I buy to shape a more unusual image	1	2	3	4	5	V69	
24. I'm on the look-out for new interior products that will add to my personal uniqueness	1	2	3	4	5	V70	
25. I have violated the understood rules of my social group, regarding what to buy or own	1	2	3	4	5	V71	
26. Products DON'T seem to hold much value to me, when they are purchased regularly by everyone	1	2	3	4	5	V72	
27. I have gone against the understood rules of my social group regarding when and how certain interior products are properly used	1	2	3	4	5	V73	
28. When the interior products I own, become common items, I remove them from my entertainment areas	1	2	3	4	5	V74	
29. I enjoy challenging the prevailing taste of people I know by buying things I know they wouldn't accept	1	2	3	4	5	V75	
30. If someone hinted that my interior is deemed as inappropriate, I will continue decorating in the same fashion	1	2	3	4	5	V76	
31. When my interior is deemed as different I am aware that others think I am peculiar, but I DO NOT care	1	2	3	4	5	V77	

SECTION F: BUYING BEHAVIOUR REGARDING PRODUCTS *Please react to the following statements regarding the purchasing of interior objects <u>for the entertainment areas</u> of your home. Responses range from "DISAGREE STRONGLY to AGREE STRONGLY"*	**Disagree strongly**	**Disagree slightly**	**Agree slightly**	**Agree strongly**	**For office use only**	
1. I would rather save for original paintings, than to purchase and hang prints in the entertainment areas of my home	1	2	3	4	V78	
2. I regard objects in the entertainment areas of my home as investments and therefore prefer to source original objects	1	2	3	4	V79	
3. I prefer hand crafted/designer accessories and furniture to mass produced accessories and furniture	1	2	3	4	V80	
4. I select and purchase individual items rather than whole sets e.g. an entire lounge suite	1	2	3	4	V81	
5. I use second hand furniture that are functional and useful	1	2	3	4	V82	
6. I save up until I can purchase what I desire i.e. I don't settle for second best	1	2	3	4	V83	
7. I purchase beautiful objects, even if it is less expensive	1	2	3	4	V84	
8. I prefer to purchase antique/scarces objects	1	2	3	4	V85	
9. I prefer objects that are impressive even if it is less functional	1	2	3	4	V86	
10. I prefer to shop at a large variety of stores for my interior goods, rather than to purchase most of what I need at a single store	1	2	3	4	V87	
11. I purchase interior objects that I need for my home at specialized outlets rather than major prominent retail stores such as *Mr Price Home; House and Home; @ Home; Boardmans*	1	2	3	4	V88	
12. I buy products that look expensive, even if they are not	1	2	3	4	V89	
13. I have a specific list of criteria that products have to adhere to, for instance they have to be:						
Expensive	1	2	3	4	V90	
Rare	1	2	3	4	V91	
Original	1	2	3	4	V92	
Branded	1	2	3	4	V93	
Aesthetically pleasing for myself	1	2	3	4	V94	
Admired by/Impressive for others	1	2	3	4	V95	

SECTION G: INTERIOR INSPIRATION ***Please indicate where you get your inspiration from to decorate the entertainment areas of your home:***	**Disagree strongly**	**Disagree slightly**	**Agree slightly**	**Agree strongly**	**For office use only**	
I gain inspiration for my interior decorating style from **immediate family**	1	2	3	4	V96	
I gain inspiration for my interior decorating style from **friends**	1	2	3	4	V97	
I gain inspiration for my interior decorating style from **people I admire**	1	2	3	4	V98	
I gain inspiration for my interior decorating style from **lifestyle magazines, television programs, interior shows** such as ROOMS ON VIEW etc**.**	1	2	3	4	V99	
I consult **interior designers** to assist me with the décor of my entertainment areas	1	2	3	4	V100	

SECTION H: TOWNHOUSE LIVING ***Please answer the following questions on townhouse living in general ranging from "Strong disagreement to strong agreement"***	**Disagree strongly**	**Disagree slightly**	**Agree slightly**	**Agree strongly**	**For office use only**	
1. People in townhouses give more attention to the interior of their homes, because all the houses in the complex looks alike	1	2	3	4	V101	
2. People choose products in their homes that will differentiate them from others, especially their neighbours	1	2	3	4	V102	
3. Presented with the choice, I will again choose to reside within a townhouse complex of which all the units look the same	1	2	3	4	V103	

Thank you for your time and cooperation!

xxXxx