

Chapter Five – Analysis and Interpretation of Results

5.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to present the results of the thematic data analysis as well as to uncover the processes underlying the perceptions of anti-smoking advertising held by the South African adult smoking population. This chapter consists of two sections; the first of which deals with the identity of the smoker in terms of his or her knowledge and attitudes towards this health-risk behaviour. The second section of this chapter deals with the perceptions that smokers have of anti-smoking advertising campaigns with the use of fear-appeal.

The focus groups were held to answer the following central research question: “What are the perceptions currently held by adult South African smokers regarding anti-smoking campaigns through using fear-appeal advertising?”

The results presented in this chapter are the researchers account of the most prominent themes as identified by the respondents. These themes have already been identified in the preliminary stages of the process of thematic analysis, and will be discussed and substantiated by verbatim responses as provided by the respondents. These results represent the information gathered from a series of five focus groups conducted in Johannesburg from the 10 to 12 May 2005 amongst a group of adult smokers ranging in age from 25 to 49.

Below are several basic assumptions that guided the design and construct of this research:

- Fear-appeal advertising will have a greater impact on health-risk behaviour such as smoking in comparison to conventional methods;
- Smokers who are health conscious, are more likely to be affected by the advertising campaign;
- Smokers will choose to ignore the health warnings, even though they are aware of the health risks associated with smoking;
- The type of ‘milder’ fear-appeal advertising used in South Africa has no impact on the smoking population.

5.2 Uncovering the Identity of the Smoker

The following section of this chapter discusses the identity of a smoker, placing emphasis on aspects such as knowledge, attitudes and behaviour of the individual.

5.2.1 Reflexive Observations on Group Processes

Significant group processes were identified and will now be discussed and utilised as a form of an introduction to the results discussion.

This discussion will include observations made by the researcher prior to the commencement of the focus group discussions, during the focus group discussion and after the discussions.

5.2.1.1 Prior to Commencement of Focus Group Discussions

Due to learning experience gained by the researcher during the period of this study, it was observed that group factors might have been the result of general personality factors of smokers. The researcher adopts this theory based on observation of group processes that occurred prior to the commencement of the focus groups as well as during the focus groups.

According to previous experience and knowledge of the nature of focus groups and the level of interaction between respondents, it is an unusual occurrence that there is a high level of interaction between the respondents in the waiting room before they enter the focus group rooms. In the case of Project Smoke the interaction of the respondents was observed prior to the commencement of the focus groups. As the respondents arrived, they were given the option of waiting in the courtyard or the waiting room until the moderator was ready to begin the groups. Ten minutes prior to every focus group, all respondents usually ended up waiting in the courtyard having one last cigarette before the start of the focus group. The level of interaction between all these 'perfect strangers' was unusually high. There are two explanations that could possibly lead to a better understanding of this occurrence. Firstly, smokers share a common habitual behaviour, which could play a role and secondly, the personality traits of smokers are described as "sociable", "carefree", "easy going", to list just a few.

The second assumption could easily be substantiated with literature. This observation has led to the generation of the existence of the sub-theme or assumption that smokers are perceived to be more sociable than non-smokers.

5.2.1.2 Smokers Perceived to be More Sociable than Non-Smokers

Since the first major review of personality characteristics associated with smoking by Matarazzo (1984) and Saslow (1982), clusters of variables often called extroversion have been shown to be positively associated with cigarette smoking. According to Eysenck (1993), the typical extrovert, “craves excitement, is willing to take risks, is sociable, likes parties, is carefree, easy going, and may be aggressive”.

“I am adamant that smokers are happier, I’m telling you that we are much better people, we are more relaxed, we have more fun, I’m telling you!” (35-49 yrs)

“Smokers sit, and they socialise more. They drink and they actually visit.” (35-49 yrs)

“I like socializing, going out and another thing I like most is my Craven A, I cannot divorce it, that is my man. The man of the moment.” (35-49 yrs)

“These ads are basically saying that smokers are bad people - In fact, we are a lot less stressed than non-smokers, we’ve just got a habit and you know what? Smokers are actually more sociable people.” (35-49 yrs)

5.2.1.3 During Focus Group Discussions

Due to the fact that respondents were recruited on the basis that they share the one similar characteristic, being that of a smoker, the concept of ‘group-think’ was prominent during the focus group discussions that were held.

Group-think refers to the situation where the individual attempts to conform his or her opinions to what he or she believes to be the consensus of the group (www.wikipedia.org/wiki/groupthink). The process of group-think was said to have played a role in the group dynamics in a more positive than negative manner.

5.2.1.4 After Focus Group Discussions

Following the group discussions, respondents discussed the evening’s proceedings with enthusiasm and shared views. They all showed great interest in the research study, and felt grateful that they had been given the opportunity to share their opinions.

5.2.1.5 Spontaneous Awareness of Advertising in General

Three questions were asked about advertising in general² and anti/pro smoking advertising specifically, with regards to levels of awareness and basic spontaneous recall of advertisements.

² When the researcher refers to advertising in general she is not referring to advertising that has anything to do with smoking. The product and topic of the advertisement is irrelevant.

Respondents were asked: “Which advertisements can you think of or remember that are currently on television or anywhere else, such as billboards, the Internet, magazines and so forth?”

Based on the results, it appears that the smokers in the focus groups share similar levels of awareness of current advertisements that are flighted in South Africa, to the general public/consumers. These views are similar, in the nature of the product as well as the nature of the advertisement; for example, humorous advertisements that were realistic had a higher level of recall than any others. The commonality that defines this similarity is the level of emotional content present in the advertisement. The majority of the advertisements that were recalled were defined by most as humorous, and realistic.

5.2.1.6 Elements that Constitute Memorable Advertisements

According to responses shared by the respondents in the focus groups, certain elements were identified that constituted memorable advertisements. For example, realistic advertisements were more favourable than non-realistic advertisements, humorous and ‘intelligent’ advertisements were also considered to represent memorable advertisements.

Respondents felt that it was very important for advertisements to have these elements, in order for them to be memorable due to the fact that the public is continuously bombarded with advertising messages.

“It is the ones with the human touch that kind of stick with me, that I remember for a long time.” (35-49 yrs)

“It’s life-like, ads that you can relate to and ads that are humorous, but you remember them because of something funny.” (35-49 yrs)

“The ad has to be funny, witty and have lots of humour.” (25-34 yrs)

“I will remember an ad if it is funny or clever.” (25-34 yrs)

“I think if you can remember an ad at the end of the day, that advert has succeeded.” (35-49 yrs)

Smokers’ Attitudes Toward Past and Present Tobacco Advertising

Smokers were asked: “What advertisements can you remember of pro-smoking advertising as well as anti-smoking advertising? Pro-smoking advertising referring to cigarette brands that are advertised or marketed in order to increase their market share, and anti-smoking advertising referring to advertisements or campaigns whose objectives are to make smokers and non-smokers aware of the health risks associated with smoking?”

Where respondents had high levels of recall with certain advertisements, they were asked why these advertisements were memorable. Alternative methods of pro-smoking advertising were also discussed. Overall, the highest recall was amongst the pro-smoking advertising campaigns, especially amongst the older respondents, and lastly, recall and awareness of anti-smoking advertising was very low.

5.2.2 Advertising 'Cigarette Brands'

Secondly respondents were asked to try and recall any pro-smoking advertising they may have seen recently or a while ago.

5.2.3 High Recall

Across all ages there was a high level of recall for certain, well-known cigarette brands such as; Peter Stuyvesant, Camel, Marlboro, and Benson and Hedges. The respondents also stated that the above brands were usually advertised in cinemas and not on television, they also said that there is no more of this advertising taking place presently.

"Well that just shows you the sort of impact that these pro-smoking advertisements had..." (35-49 yrs)

"Benson and Hedges was a brand that I always associated with cricket." (35-49 yrs)

"There are no pro-smoking ads on TV or anywhere else, it was a long time ago that I saw anything like that." (35-49 yrs)

"You never saw these ads on TV, so they actually remind me of the cinema, because that is where I always saw them." (35-49 yrs)

5.2.4 Alternative Methods of Pro-Smoking Advertising Currently Used in South Africa

The younger age groups (25-34 yrs) mentioned a new, more recent method of marketing used by tobacco companies currently in the form of promotions. These promotions are marketed to a database of smokers in the form of exclusive parties for brands such as Camel, Lucky Strike and Peter Stuyvesant. Persons who have registered on this database are then notified telephonically of the details of these exclusive parties.

According to Whiteside (1971); since the ban of cigarette advertising on television in certain countries, the tobacco industry began using alternative marketing techniques, such as direct marketing (promotions, displays at the point of sale in stores, etc.)

Another example is, tobacco companies in the United Kingdom have been making use of new tactics to lure smokers.

According to the IATH Bulletin (No. 176, October 2005), recent press reports claim that Philip Morris is using ‘experimental’ marketing techniques using furniture and design, transforming the interiors of more exclusive bars and music events, to subtly promote its Marlboro brand. Internal marketing plans show that Phillip Morris offered financial incentives to managers to fill their bars with furniture bearing the Marlboro logo, or place branded ashtrays and vending machines in smoking areas. It is also experimented with subliminal ways of promoting Marlboro, through themed bars put up at social events, without the Marlboro logo or name. Instead, these ‘installations’ created lounge areas by placing comfortable red sofas in front of video screens showing scenes redolent of Wild West Marlboro country to convey the essence of the cigarette brand while circumnavigating sponsorship bans.

5.2.5 Anti-Smoking Advertising

Lastly, respondents were asked “What anti-smoking advertising are you aware of and which advertisements are you able to recall?”

Methods of anti-smoking advertising were noted by the respondents as being the health warnings placed on the back of cigarette boxes, the notice boards in the smoking sections of restaurants, and lastly some anti-smoking advertisements were mentioned that they had seen on television. The overall efficacy of these advertisements as rated by the respondents was said to be low.

“I don’t watch much TV, but I do see the anti-smoking advertising on the back of cigarette boxes... “smoking cause breast cancer”... I don’t have breasts therefore I don’t need to take notice of that.” (25-34 yrs)

“...and the smoking sections in Wimpy etc., have these ‘no smoking’ boards and they have this help line telephone number advertised on them. But if I want to stop, I’ll do it for myself.” (25-34 yrs)

“There is another advert as well, where they are having a conversation and this one lady picks her nose and puts it into the ashtray...filthy habit...it was the most odd thing I have ever seen in my life.” (25-34 yrs)

“They are terrible ads, the asthmatic breathing one...” (25-34 yrs)

In summary, the levels of awareness of anti-smoking advertising are very low and the respondents had negative perceptions of this type of advertising. These responses towards this genre of advertising could be explained using one of the theories discussed in chapter three, namely the theory of cognitive dissonance. These theoretical substantiations will be discussed in detail in chapter six.

5.3 Stance of Smokers Toward South African Smoking Legislation

Respondents were asked: "What are your feelings were towards the recent introduction of the smoking legislation in South Africa?"

There was a strong distinction in views between the older and the younger respondents. Younger respondents have far more accepting attitudes regarding these laws and now simply accept the fact that they are only allowed to smoke in designated areas, whereas older respondents see these laws as an infringement of their rights. Results generated by the discussions allowed the researcher to distinguish between the benefits and the detriments of the implementation of the smoking legislation.

5.3.1 Positive Thoughts

The benefits include the fact that smokers have witnessed increased levels of productivity at work amongst themselves and their colleagues, due to the fact that in order for them to have a cigarette, they would have to go to the ground floor of their office block, in which they would waste half an hour just for a smoke break, and thus they opted to rather cut down on the amount of cigarettes they smoked.

The younger respondents (25-34 yrs) were a lot more accepting of the fact that these laws were introduced and they value the fact that non-smokers also have a right to their beliefs.

"I think it s a brilliant idea, the next time you light a fag, you look around, now you start caring about the people around you, you don't just light up." (25-34 yrs)

"I think it's very good, for productivity in the work place it is fantastic." (25-34 yrs)

"These laws have helped me cut down on the amount of cigarettes I smoke." (25-34 yrs)

The above responses to the issue of the introduction of the smoking laws can shed light on numerous issues that smokers are faced with. The younger groups were a lot more accepting to the fact that there are people in public places who do not appreciate persons smoking in the vicinity, due to obvious health reasons, and therefore showed a greater level of acceptance towards these laws and regarded them as less restricting.

"I think it is a good thing that you don't smoke at the work place, just for the consideration of others, let me give you an example, I work in retail and I used to stand with a cigarette and help customers in the shop, I now realise how disrespectful that was." (25-34 yrs)

5.3.1.1 Level of Education regarding Smoking Legislation

The fact that respondents seemed to have already considered the advantages and disadvantages of the new legislation led the researcher to assume that smokers are well informed regarding the South African smoking legislation. These high levels of knowledge and awareness concerning these laws has led to the emergence of certain emotional responses, these being shock and realisation. Shock was identified as an emotional response amongst the respondents when discussing the implementation of the smoking legislation. Younger respondents expressed their shock at the smoking exhibited in public places before the implementation of these laws. The emotional response of shock in turn led to realisation. This realisation is assumed to have the power to lead to positive behaviour change regarding smoking behaviour, in other words, smokers especially from the younger generation have become more conscious of their smoking behaviour when in the company of non-smokers.

5.3.1.2 Response Outcome: Shock

The emotional responses of shock and realisation emerged amongst both the older and younger respondents. When they were asked about their feelings towards the smoking legislation. The following responses were generated:

“It makes for a lot better, a lot cleaner malls, because there aren’t stompies lying around in the mall.” (25-34 yrs)

“I am shocked to think that we actually used to be allowed to smoke in such confined areas like aeroplanes and shopping malls, that is really disgusting!” (35-49 yrs)

5.3.1.3 Response Outcome: Realisation

“I think it is a good thing that you don’t smoke at the work place, just for the consideration of others, let me give you an example, I work in retail and I used to stand with a cigarette and help customers in the shop, I now realise how disrespectful that was.” (25-34 yrs)

“I think it is a brilliant idea, the next time you light a fag, you look around, now you start caring about the people around you, you don’t just light up.” (25-34 yrs)

“Smoking is a selfish habit, because of the legislation, we have become more aware, we are forced even though we don’t want to, and we are forced not to smoke around other people who don’t smoke.” (35-49 yrs)

“I actually smoke less cigarettes now, which is a good thing” (25-34 yrs)

5.3.1.4 Positive Effect of Response Outcomes: Behaviour Change

The introduction of the smoking laws has led to changes in smoking behaviour:

“Smoking is a selfish habit, because of the legislation, we have become more aware, we are forced even though we don't want to, and we are forced not to smoke around other people who don't smoke” (35-49 yrs)

“I think it's very good, for productivity in the work place it is fantastic.” (25-34 yrs)

“If smokers want to smoke they have to go downstairs and out of the building, so now they don't smoke as much as they used to, and now suddenly the work rate has gone up. The amount of money that these guys are bringing in has doubled.” (35-49 yrs)

“If I went to visit someone's house who is a non-smoker fifteen years ago, I wouldn't have even bothered asking if it would be okay to light up a smoke, I would have just done it. Nowadays, I ask: “Do you mind if....?” And if they say that they mind, then it's cool, I won't smoke.” (35-49 yrs)

“...if I am with people that don't smoke, I don't feel like smoking.” (35-49 yrs)

“I don't smoke as many cigarettes now...” (35-49 yrs)

5.3.2 Negative Thoughts

With regards to the disadvantages or detriments of the new legislation, smokers especially those from the older group felt that unfair restrictions were being imposed on them, that weren't previously in place, simply because of a habit that they had no control over.

5.3.2.1 Perceived Restrictions Imposed on Smokers

“Irritated, “it is an infringement on my rights”, “discrimination”, “I don't like it, they should actually rather do it on drinking than smoking. Drinking kills people and it can do a lot more harm than smoking.” (35-49 yrs)

“In those days you could smoke wherever you wanted to, you know, and we got used to that. Now all of a sudden we're just being told- ‘you can't smoke there or there...” (35-49 yrs).

“We should have the same rights as non-smokers, and be allowed to do what we have to do anywhere just like them.” (35-49 yrs)

“I feel that the laws are very restricting.” (35-49 yrs)

“Yes, you adapt, but at the same time you feel like a school kid with all these laws and only certain places where you are allowed to smoke.” (35-49 yrs)

“I avoid places where I won't be able to smoke.” (35-49 yrs)

“In summer it is okay if you sit outside and smoke, but in winter I want to make the non-smokers go and sit outside!” (35-49 yrs)

“In the old days you could smoke wherever you wanted to, you know, and we got used to that. Now all of a sudden we're just being told – you can't smoke there or there...” (35-49 yrs)

5.3.2.2 The Media's Message regarding Smoking and the Nature of the Addiction

Despite smoking being the most widespread addiction amongst the world's population, addicts fail to recognise and acknowledge the fact that they have a serious problem. The reasoning behind this could be due to the superficial nature of the warnings and information that smokers are exposed to, thus resulting in a lack of serious treatment for this addiction.

Smokers are receiving the incorrect form of treatment for their addiction. There is no clear distinction of the nature of this addiction. Smokers are not truly able to recognise themselves as addicts, because they do not really know the reason for this addiction and they do not understand why they have no control over their habit.

The media's messaging regarding smoking is very one-sided, in terms of the fact that most of the focus is placed on the health consequences associated with smoking, instead of making clearer distinctions about the cause of the problem. For example, as what type of addict can a smoker be classified? Or is smoking a psychological or a physical addiction? When referring to the terms psychological and physical addictions, the following definitions are applicable:

- Physical addiction: this is when a person's body actually becomes dependent on a particular substance.
- Psychological addiction: this occurs when cravings for a drug are psychological or emotional. People who are psychologically addicted feel overcome by a desire to have the drug.

Smokers have labelled their behaviour as a psychological addiction:

"We are emotionally dependent on our fags." (35-49 yrs)

"You're emotionally dependent, it is our pacifier, they are our best friend, it makes us feel okay when we are stressed out." (35-49 yrs)

"I give myself time limitations, but when I am feeling stressed, I can be happy or sad, it doesn't matter, I need a cigarette!" (35-49 yrs)

"When your mind is occupied you don't need to smoke." (35-49 yrs)

"Talking about myself now, there are certain times, certain places that I might light up a cigarette. For instance if I get into my car, I will light a cigarette..." (35-49 yrs)

"After my hijacking, first thing I did was go to the garage and say, 'give me some cigarettes now', I didn't even money on me, because it also got stolen, but all I could think of was cigarettes!" (35-49 yrs)

5.3.2.3 Addiction

Smokers are aware of the fact that they are addicted to smoking, yet how clear is the distinction of this addiction between emotional and psychological addiction, and are smokers able to call themselves addicts?

Taking note of the messages that anti-smoking campaigns convey, they all stress how bad smoking is, but they do not place any kind of emphasis on the fact that it is an addiction, therefore they are not supplying smokers with the correct tools to help them deal with their addiction. Smokers need to be made aware of the fact that nicotine is just as addictive as hardcore narcotic substances such as cocaine

5.3.2.4 Physical Addiction to Smoking

"Yeah, I think my life is quite healthy, that is why I continue smoking. Because I will go insane if I stop." (35-49 yrs)

"Smoking is an addiction, and there is nothing worse than going cold turkey, because it makes you unpleasant to be around, unpleasant to work with, and it has a major impact on your life as a whole." (35-49 yrs)

"It is the most addictive drug." (35-49 yrs)

"I think we can stop smoking if we want to stop, it's just that we don't want to..." (35-49 yrs)

5.3.2.5 Frustration

The fact that smokers are addicted to their habit, leads to feelings of helplessness, frustration and guilt. Since the implementation of the smoking legislation, smokers have begun to feel even more helpless because of their addiction. Respondents felt that society (friends and family) did not understand their addiction.

"Look, I know that we are killing ourselves, I know that. I am still smoking and I know that at the end of the day my lungs are full of smoke, but I eat healthy and take anti-oxidants." (35-49 yrs)

"The worst thing ever is when my little daughter asks why I smoke...that makes me feel really bad, it is the worst." (35-49 yrs)

5.3.2.6 The Psychological Addiction to Smoking

"I run a restaurant and that is a very stressful environment, that is the reason that I smoke." (35-49 yrs)

"My health is reasonably good, every person is entitled to a weakness, and smoking is one of them and I have no intention of quitting." (25-34 yrs)

"Yeah, I think my life is quite healthy, that is why I continue smoking. Because I will go insane if I stop." (35-49 yrs)

"I mean all of us would love to stop smoking, I mean it is costing us money, but it is a weakness, it is addictive, and I am telling you, if I didn't have

cigarettes I would probably be addicted to wine, seriously, it is because we have addictive personalities.” (35-49 yrs)

“Smoking keeps you calm.” (35-49 yrs)

“I give myself time limitations in between smoking, but when I am feeling stressed, I can be happy or sad, it doesn’t matter, I need a cigarette.” (35-49 yrs)

“We are emotionally dependent on our fags.” (35-49 yrs)

“You’re emotionally dependent, it is our pacifier, they are our best friends, it makes us feel okay when we are stressed out.” (35-49 yrs)

“I think we can stop smoking if we want to stop, it’s just that we don’t want to...” (35-49 yrs)

“After my hijacking, first thing I did was go to the garage and say: “Gooi cigarettes, boet!”” (35-49 yrs)

“I mean all of us would love to stop smoking, I mean it is costing us money, but it is a weakness, it is addictive, and I am telling you, if I didn’t have cigarettes I would probably be addicted to wine, seriously, it is because we have addictive personalities.” (35-49 yrs)

From the results that were generated during the discussions, the researcher was able to make a conclusion that the nature of the cigarette smoking addictions is very much both a psychological and physical addiction, yet the distinction between the two is very unclear from the point of the media.

5.3.2.7 Rationalisation of Smoking by Smokers

Respondents said that they knew they were going to die “one day” and said that they were in fact faced with death every day of their lives, things like “driving a car”, “flying in an aeroplane”, even “walking in the polluted streets of Johannesburg”. Smokers of the ages of 35-49 years were also adamant that there were factors in the environment that had the potential to cause more serious damage to a non-smokers health than passive smoking; in these statements below respondents were referring to environmental pollution.

“But also I mean they say that passive smoking affects the non-smoker and it makes them sick. Well in that case, they should first take all the trucks on the road...they are polluting the air more than us with a cigarette.” (35-49 yrs)

“Well they say that a normal smoker living in Johannesburg or in one of these built-up cities in South Africa...every time they go outside and breathe, they are smoking pretty much 10 cigarettes a day.” (35-49 yrs)

From the responses, it can be deduced that there is a discrepancy between the values and fears displayed by the respondents. In terms of values, it is only natural for a human being to ‘want to survive’, but in this case, the smokers’ fears of dying sooner

because of their habit has caused their value system to alter when considering that they may die sooner than non-smokers.

5.3.2.8 Health Consciousness

Secondary to the core objectives of this study, the researcher wanted to investigate whether or not the smokers' level of health consciousness³ played any type of role in their perceptions of the advertising campaign. This investigation was not thorough enough to generate valid results, but the information gathered was substantial enough to make assumptions regarding the topic of this investigation.

The majority of smokers, when asked to describe their levels of health in one sentence reported back as being 'fairly health conscious.'

The levels of health consciousness were structured as follows:

- Very health conscious;
- Fairly health conscious
- Not very health conscious;
- Not at all health conscious.

5.3.2.9 Perceptions of Individual Levels of Health Consciousness

When asked to elaborate on the reasons as to why respondents described themselves as fairly health conscious, there was a consensus on the fact that most of the respondents acknowledged the health-risks associated with smoking, but the mere fact that they were aware of this gave them the right to describe themselves as fairly health conscious.

"I try very hard to look after my health, but there are some habits you can't quit." (35-49 yrs).

"Yeah, it's only in the last two years that I really started to look after my health as well, and I have really cut down on smoking." (35-49 yrs)

There was a great division in opinions amongst the older age group (35-49) and the younger age group (25-34) regarding individual health awareness. A portion of the younger respondents (25-34) considered themselves to be 'not very health conscious'

"Enjoy life regardless, you only live once!" (25-34 yrs)

"I am conscious of my health issues, my lifestyle is partially you know, unhealthy, I just do whatever." (25-34 yrs)

As one can see, attitudes differ regarding health consciousness; the younger group of smokers have a very carefree attitude regarding their health ("It will never happen to me!"), whereas smokers in the older group, who are parents of children, are generally

³ Health consciousness, for the purpose of this study can be defined according to the levels of physical activity the smoker engages in whether or not the individual takes note of his/her dietary intake and if they are aware of their physical well-being on a regular basis

more aware of their health, and consider smoking to be an addiction. As stated previously, there is a divide in opinions amongst the older group, and an assumption can be made that this opinion is based on the amount of cigarettes smoked as well as the length of time that the individual has been a smoker. Thus it seems that the individuals who consider themselves regular, heavy smokers are the individuals that do not take their health into consideration as much as the remainder of the group, and their responses are a lot more 'care-free' than those displayed by the younger respondents.

"Unhealthy by choice." (35-49 yrs)

"When it comes to my health, I am not really bothered; I have no time to bother." (35-49 yrs)

"Yeah, I think my life is quite healthy, that is why I continue smoking. Because I will go insane if I stop." (35-49 yrs)

5.3.2.10 Respondents' Double Standards

Double standards' on the part of the smoker refers to the psychological concept of cognitive dissonance. Cognitive dissonance is probably one of the most prominent themes of this study, and is clearly present within the discussion regarding levels of health consciousness.

A brief example of a situation in which cognitive dissonance takes place has been provided:

Some smokers may be motivated to quit smoking, after having taken the negative consequences of the habit into consideration, yet they are unable to do so. This behaviour can be described as defensive avoidance behaviour, which is a motivated resistance to the health messages recommendation, such as the minimization of the threat (Janis & Fesbach, 1953). It refers to the tendency to ignore or deny the consequences conveyed in the message. Reactance is what is said to occur when freedom is perceived to be reduced by the messages recommendation, such as: "I know they're just trying to get me to do what they want instead of what I want" (Brehm, 1966).

"But isn't it amazing... the excuses we find to justify our habits." (35-49 yrs)

Respondents are aware of the health risks associated with smoking, yet they continue to smoke, and still consider themselves to be healthy:

"Yeah, I think my life is quite healthy, that is why I continue smoking. Because I will go insane if I stop." (35-49 yrs)

"Except for smoking, I tend to look after my health well these days." (35-49 yrs)

"I try very hard to look after my health, but there are just some habits that you can't quit." (35-49 yrs)

"My health is reasonably good, every person is entitled to a weakness, and smoking is one of them and I have no intention of quitting. That is why I take vitamins-to keep myself healthy!" (35-49 yrs)

"I am particular about my health, I have a way that I want to live, I do smoke and there is some drinking and I have a daughter and am 35 years old. You only live once, that is basically how I see it. I certainly do not deprive myself of the world's pleasures." (35-49 yrs)

5.4 South African Smokers' Perceptions toward Fear-Appeal Advertisements

It has been established in psychological research that, when fear-appeal is employed correctly in advertising, it can be useful in behaviour change (Witte & Allen, 2000); this is because it challenges individuals to perform certain optional behaviours, by scaring them into action (Morman, 2000).

As already seen, fear-appeal is a persuasive communication, which attempts to arouse fear in order to promote precautionary motivation, and self-protecting actions such as quit smoking. Fear arousal is an unpleasant emotional state, triggered by an individual's the perception of threatening stimuli (Ruiter 2001, p. 214).

Re-evaluating the content of the advertisements used in this study (see Chapter 4), it is clear that humour and fear were used in order to 'get the message across'. The type of 'fear' used in the advertisements was on more of a fictional level than anything else, and due to this, when the respondents were asked whether or not they found an advertisement, that was considered to have a relatively high level of fear-appeal in it, effective? They said that that would never happen to them, and therefore they distanced themselves from the message portrayed in the advertisement. From these findings, it is evident that the use of humour or even fear may not be the only mechanisms behind effective advertising. The use of humour in the advertisements also decreased the level of seriousness of the message regarding the effects of smoking.

According to verbatim responses as given by the respondents (only certain responses were chosen to represent each of the advertisements, these were selected as they best represented the views as expressed by each of the groups as a whole) regarding the series of six advertisements that they were shown, they had the following perceptions of the advertisements (for an individual analysis of each of the advertisements please re-visit Chapter 4):

The perceptions of this type of advertising held by the average South African cigarette smoker was universal across all the ages groups, their opinions of the series of advertisements that they were shown were negative, even though the message in each of the advertisements was positive, they felt that this type of advertising was overdone. They feel that they are continuously bombarded with health warnings, radio advertisements, as well as advice given by family members regarding their habit, so much so that they have actually become desensitised to these messages and images.

“I know how much tar I am putting in my lungs, I know all about that, I know all the health issues, it’s bad if you are breastfeeding.” (25-34 yrs)

The manner in which the message of each of the advertisements was delivered, gave respondents the impression that the person speaking in the advertisement was treating them as if they were uninformed and unintelligent.

“You can show me these advertisements, I don’t care, driving in a car can kill you quicker than smoking, I’m not going to stop driving my car, so to me it makes no difference.” (25-34 yrs)

“To me these ads are bringing out the negative side, obviously, because they don’t want you to smoke, but I don’t like it when things get a little hectic and they nag me. I hate that, I am an intelligent person and know what I am doing.” (35-49 yrs)

5.5 Advertising Appeal: Analysis of Series of Advertisements Used in Project Smoke

A brief summary of the advertisements used in this research study has been provided below as an introduction to a brief summary of respondents’ reaction toward each of the advertisement.

5.5.1 Don’t Jump

This advertisement’s story line is about a young 26-year old, Jonathan. He is standing on the edge of a very high building. His friend is begging him not to jump, by keeping on saying: “Jonathan, don’t do it, please don’t do it...” as if Jonathan is about to jump off the edge of the building.

The advert concludes when instead of seeing Jonathan jumping off the edge of the building, he lights up a cigarette, and the disappointment on his friend’s face is very clear.

Respondents did not have very positive reactions to this advertisement, and felt that the simplicity of the message discriminated against their intelligence.

“I don’t know, I think it is just an over exaggeration, and it actually questions our intelligence. They are comparing someone jumping off a building to

dying because of smoking, but I feel that all that exaggeration will just make you dismiss the message.” (25-34 yrs)

“I think it’s over the top, it is completely overdone, with smoking you kill yourself slowly.” (35-49 yrs)

5.5.2 Suzy Q

This advertisement is set at a house party; and there are people from all cultures (representative of the South African population) at this party. There is music playing in the background – a song called ‘Suzy Q’ – and the people at the party are dancing, lazing around and chatting in a smoke filled room.

The camera closes in on a tall blonde girl, and there are two young guys busy watching her every move. They are totally in awe of her beauty, but they are puzzled by her next action: she begins picking her nose. At first these two guys cannot believe what she is doing?! They look at one another and are very confused, but assume that if she is doing that, then it must be COOL, so they begin doing the same thing, until eventually the entire party of people are picking their noses and wiping their fingers off in the ash trays.

Feedback regarding this advertisement was both positive and negative, and touched on the issue of current social perceptions that exist amongst the non-smoking community. Smokers voiced the fact that this advertisement was a form of discrimination against smokers.

On the positive side, they felt that the actors in the advertisement were well representative of the South African population. They also enjoyed the music that was used in the advertisement.

“This advertisement is about passing judgement. No ways is smoking as bad as picking your nose!” (25-34 yrs)

“If you watch it and you are in your mid-twenties or whatever and you see an ad like this one, it’s like that’s a disgusting habit, it’s like patronising, telling you it’s a disgusting habit.” (25-34 yrs)

“It is also about being self conscious, when you are young, you are still defining your boundaries, you are learning about who you are as a person.” (25-34 yrs)

“I think it would work better for younger kids who haven’t started smoking, or have just started off smoking, unlike talking to someone who knows what they are doing and they are aware of the pros and cons that exist.” (25-34 yrs)

5.5.3 Children Against Smoking

This advertisement is set in a forest, with 6-year old twin sisters playing the leading roles. The music for this advertisement seems very aggressive, attempting to reflect

the sisters' rebellion against their parents' smoking. They speak about washing your hands after having had a cigarette, smoking outside instead of inside, and the fact that they want their parents to still be around when they are older, hence their aggressive attitudes towards smoking.

The message towards smokers is basically that they should behave responsibly towards their children. At the same time, this advert gives children a chance to voice their opinions about their parents' smoking habits.

The emotional element of this advertisement was effective on respondents who were parents, non-parents felt that the advertisement also questioned their level of intelligence.

“Responsible parents first of all don't smoke in the house, neither does my husband, we go out onto the balcony, so yes there are some things that I relate to in that ad, like washing my hands, I mean I do that automatically.” (25-34 yrs)

“When your own daughter sits next to you and says that you stink from all the smoking, that is the worst feeling by far.” (35-49 yrs)

“That children against smoking advert, where they say that they want their parents to be around longer...yeah my kids also tell me, “don't smoke”, you know. They want me to be around a little longer, you know. That sort of thing hit me quite honestly.” (35-49 yrs)

“Anything to do with a kid has definitely got to be cute. It is about kids who are trying to speak up, speak out against something they have absolutely no power over, they are trying to get their point across here.” (25-34 yrs)

5.5.4 Chemical Facts

This advertisement is totally devoid of any emotional content. It is very scientific and factual; a man is talking about all the various chemicals present in cigarettes. There is no music in this advert, no people, no emotion.

There was no positive feedback regarding this advertisement, the reason being that the respondents could not relate to the advertisement. The message was very inhuman and scientific, therefore impeding the respondents' ability to relate to the advertisement.

“This guy's voice, I have a problem with it, and he sounds like someone who does infomercials.” (25-34 yrs)

“If this came on television while I was watching, I would get up and go and make coffee.” (35-49 yrs)

“But why did they encourage us to smoke and now they are telling us to stop?” (35-49 yrs)

5.5.5 Lung Runs Away

The advertisement starts with a young guy sitting in a restaurant early one morning. There are no other people in the restaurant, and he orders breakfast from the waitress. As the waitress approaches the young man, he begins coughing profusely, until eventually his lung emerges from his mouth and falls onto the table in front of him. The waitress cannot believe her eyes and neither can the young man! His lung literally jumps off the table and runs out the door of the restaurant.

Responses towards this advertisement included humour and disbelief. Respondents were able to relate to the advertisement in the beginning, but as the advertisement drew to the end it became more unrealistic, and respondents distanced themselves from the message through the humorous nature of the advertisement.

“Well if those are a smoker’s lungs jumping out there, then...they look quite healthy, and that is not possible.” (25-34 yrs)

“I think we can all relate to this ad, all of us are smokers, because once in a while you find yourself coughing like mad.” (25-34 yrs)

“They look way too healthy, they are pink!” (35-49 yrs)

5.5.6 Inside Out

This advertisement is set in a forest, the camera pans in on a very attractive young woman, with a cigarette in her hand. She slowly takes the cigarette towards her mouth and inhales, the camera then pans past her and a tree blocks out her face for a few seconds. When her face comes into view again, it is distorted, resembling the inside of smokers' lungs.

This advertisement highlighted a very important element of anti-smoking advertising, which should be taken into consideration when implementing anti-smoking campaigns. The fact that this advertisement focused on the effects that smoking has on a person, both on the outside and the inside, came as a shock to the respondents. This is due to the fact that every human being cares about how people perceive him or her, and if anti-smoking advertisements focused more on the cosmetic effects that smoking has, more people would re-consider lighting up that cigarette.

“A person who is self-conscious will definitely think twice before lighting up their next cigarette.” (25-34 yrs)

“If cigarettes did affect us externally and you could see it in the mirror, it would definitely stop a lot more people in what it does to our lungs on the inside, but it is on the inside and we don’t see it. I mean we wake up in the morning, have a quick cough, okay guys light up another one, be set for the day. I mean if we walked into the bathroom and looked in the

mirror and our faces looked like that, I would be a bit more self-conscious, walking around with a cigarette in my hand.” (25-34 yrs)

“Honestly, if our insides look like that, I would definitely quit!” (25-34 yrs)

“We are not like alcoholics who are in denial, we are not in denial, we know that smoking is going to kill us, but because of the time span that it is going to take to get there, we rather just carry on...” (35-49 yrs)

5.6 Respondents' Perceptions of the Advertising Campaign

At the end of the focus group discussions, respondents were given three stickers, which they were asked to use as a visual representation for the moderator to establish which of the advertisements were more popular amongst each of the five focus groups.

Older respondents (35-49 yrs), as well as younger respondents (25-34 yrs) voted for ‘Children Against Smoking’ as the most popular advertisement. There were two outliers for each of the age groups, namely ‘Suzy Q’ and ‘Lung Runs Away’, voted as the second most popular advertisements.

These results can be verified by the feedback received in the discussions, where responses included the fact that emotional advertisements were preferred above factual ones. It is also important to bear in mind that the majority of the respondents in the focus groups were parents and even grandparents, which made the advertisement ‘Children Against Smoking’ so much more appealing. ‘Suzy Q’ and ‘Lung Runs Away’ were most probably selected due to the fact of the humorous content of the advertisements increased the levels of popularity towards the adverts.

5.6.1 Overarching Themes of Advertisements

The researcher gathered substantial evidence to state the fact that emotions play a central role in the decision-making process. For example, respondents preferred advertisements that were more emotionally inclined than those that were factual; this enabled them to have a higher recall of these advertisements too.

5.6.2 The Role of Emotions in Anti-Smoking Advertising Campaigns

The essence of an emotion (as elicited by an external factor, directed towards a recipient) promotes the inclination to act and encourages the prompting of plans; an emotion gives precedence for one or a few kinds of action, to which it gives a sense of urgency, so it can interrupt, or contend with, other mental processes or actions. Different types of readiness create different outline relationships with others (Du Plessis, 2005).

Referring to an example by Du Plessis (2005), in agreement to the nature of this specific research study, the fear response, is said to originate in the survival instinct, a simple preference for pleasure (which is naturally associated with surviving and thriving) and against bad feelings (associated with danger and pain), even if sensory pleasure and pain are not obviously involved.

In other words, the emotional response of the respondents to the anti-smoking advertisements is fearful in nature, which in turn is interpreted as a natural survival instinct at first. This can be representative of the type of readiness that this emotion creates, thereafter it becomes something different, more representative of the exact opposite, where respondents refer to death as something very unimportant.

“But also, I mean, they say that passive smoking affects the non-smoker and it makes them sick. Well in that case, they should first take all the trucks on the road...they are polluting the air more than us with a cigarette.” (35-49 yrs)

“Well they say that a normal smoker living in Johannesburg or in one of these built-up cities in South Africa...every time they go outside and breathe, they are smoking pretty much 10 cigarettes a day.” (35-49 yrs)

“You can show me these advertisements, I don't care, driving in a car can kill you quicker than smoking, I'm not going to stop driving my car, so to me it makes no difference.” (25-34 yrs)

“To me these ads are bringing out the negative side, obviously, because they don't want you to smoke, but I don't like it when things get a little hectic and they nag me. I hate that, I am an intelligent person and know what I am doing.” (35-49 yrs)

5.6.3 Unrealistic Messaging

Unrealistic messaging was identified as a factor that caused an impediment on the smokers' ability to relate to the message that the advertisement was trying to portray.

For an advertisement of this nature to be effective, advertisers need to bear in mind that messaging that is realistic, will promote and increase levels of identification between the advertisement and the respondent.

“For me, it's science fiction when I see a beautiful woman become a skeleton, in my mind it's science fiction, that's the way I feel about it. It has no impact on me, it freaks me out and I don't like it, but you know what, it's science fiction, it is something that belongs with Star Wars, and I just can't handle it!” (35-49 yrs)

The fact that a lot of the respondents did not identify with the very graphic representation of the 'Inside Out' advertisement because it looked like 'something out of a science fiction movie', this helped them distance themselves from the message that the advertisement was trying to convey. The more unrealistic the advertisement,

the easier it was for the respondents to distance themselves, whether it be through humour or fear. Since these responses were very prominent with the respondents, it has been identified as a separate theme and will be discussed later on.

5.6.4 The Use of Fear and Humour in Anti-Smoking Advertising Campaigns

The decision to use humour in anti-smoking advertising was based on the public's opinions of general advertising and what made them remember one advertisement over another. The NCAS has utilised fear as well as humour in their advertisements, in an attempt to increase the efficacy of these campaigns.

When considering the advertisements that contained a higher degree of fear, justification of the smoking habit was a strong element that came through from the respondents.

After viewing each advertisement individually, there was a lot of commentary regarding the message of each of the adverts, and this commentary consisted of justifications as to why or why not the advertisement was effective. A very pertinent justification for example was raised regarding the fact that there are many more things in life that would kill a lot quicker than smoking.

"...There's a lot of other things out there that will kill us like the radiation from cell phones and microwaves which is the cause of cancer, our cars, and other much stronger drugs, so..." (25-34 yrs)

"...I mean that is what it can do to you in the long term, people don't think about that, we are smoking now and enjoying it, we will not worry what it might do to us in the long term, unless you are really, really conscious about it...it's like spending on your credit card, it's not going to bother you now, it bothers you later, therefore I will spend anyway!" (25-34 yrs)

"There are so many other things that can kill you. It is my choice if I want to smoke or not. I have been diagnosed about three years ago – I've got 2/3 of my lung capacity left, a third is gone due to smoking. I haven't stopped. I still smoke 30 a day! So maybe one day the penny will sink, I don't know?" (35-49 yrs)

5.6.5 The Use of Humour – 'The Double-Edged Sword'

Results generated suggested that humour may in fact have positive implications of how smokers perceive the advertisement, but they will remain ineffective, in that humour aids in creating a distance between the smoker and the actual health warning conveyed.

There are no reservations that humour is a very powerful, creative medium, and that humorous advertisements achieve good entertainment scores. However, it is important

to remember that humour can be potentially very dangerous, reverting the original intention.

It is important to take into consideration the fact that humour is culture dependent: what seems funny to a South African of English origin might not be funny to an Afrikaner or a Zulu in the same country, let alone someone from a different continent. Another potential danger is that attempted humour that fails to connect with the audience can be a great cause of confusion, and when audiences are confused, they give up on attention (Du Plessis, 2005). This in turn leads to humour having the power to impede the viewers' ability to relate to the advertisement.

5.6.6 'Distance' Techniques

It was suggested the humour be used as an element in anti-smoking advertising, and this suggestion was based on research conducted using advertisements in general, due to the fact that it was found that advertisements that were humorous had higher levels of recall.

From the findings of this study, it is clear that the use of humour or even fear may not be the only way to design effective anti-smoking advertising. The use of humour in the advertisements decreased the level of seriousness of the message regarding the effects of smoking.

5.6.7 Patronising Advertising

A lot of confusion surrounded the issue of the actual harshness of recent anti-smoking campaigns, as well as the mentality of tobacco companies. Some of the messages in the advertisements were conveyed in such a way that the respondents felt that they were 'being talked down to', they said it felt as if the organisations promoting these messages considered smokers to be of a lesser intelligence. All these factors were identified as reasons that smokers themselves pleaded ignorance to the information that was being delivered to them, therefore leading to avoidance. The following verbatim responses were extracted from the transcriptions and prove relevant to the above issue.

"But why do they manufacture cigarettes if they know that they are so dangerous? That's the question I ask myself, so at the same time you justify to yourself that they can't be that deadly. I mean why would they manufacture something that they know will kill you? Why don't they ban them once and for all?" (35-49 yrs)

"But why are they putting poisonous stuff into cigarettes when they know that we are going to smoke them?" (35-49 yrs)

For example, when evaluating the perceptions of the Filthy Habit advertisement, a point was also raised regarding the fact that it felt like the message being conveyed by the anti-smoking campaign was patronising. They felt that the advertisement discriminated against them as smokers, they did not agree with the message: ‘What’s so cool about a filthy habit?’ Most of the respondents found any kind of excuse, to dismiss the advertisement and consider it invalid.

5.6.8 The Media’s Depiction of the Short-Term Effects of Smoking

The long-term vs. short-term effects of smoking was a debate held in every single focus group. This of course was raised through the nature of the advertisements.

Respondents said that they knew they were going to die “one day” and said that they were in fact faced with death every day of their lives, things like “driving a car”, “flying in an airplane”, even “walking in the polluted streets of Johannesburg”. An overall opinion on the advertisements that were used in this study was that “they were boring”, “these ads increase awareness but won’t make people quit”, “they need to use a different tactic.” When the respondents were probed regarding the statement about advertisers using different tactics, they said that more shocking images should be used to scare smokers, scarier images, but at the same time realistic ones. Another tactic that could also be used is to advertise some of the immediate effects of smoking on skin, teeth and even hair. In other words, focus should rather be placed on the short term than the long-term effects of smoking. The effects on a smokers physical appearance as well as the effect that smoking can have on a person in terms of how much money they spend weekly/monthly/yearly on their habit, was mentioned as another way to increase the efficacy of the advertising.

They also acknowledged the fact that they were aware of the health consequences of smoking cigarettes, but right now, they were enjoying it and it wouldn’t/couldn’t kill them now.

“...I mean, that is what it can do to you in the long term, people don’t think about it like that, we are smoking now and enjoying it, we will not worry what it might do to us in the long term, unless you are really, really conscious about it...it’s like spending money on your credit card, it’s not going to bother you no, it bothers you later, but you spend anyway.” (25-34 yrs)

“We know that smoking affects our lungs etc., but these things don’t really get to you because you can’t see what is inside your body, or what it really looks like. Unless some guy turned around and said, here is a lung, and turned it inside out and told me that my lungs looked like that!” (35-49 yrs)

Basically, what is being said is that, smokers do not know enough about the immediate effects that smoking has on their physical appearance. And physical appearance in a western society is very important, but smokers are bombarded with the consequences of what could potentially happen to them in the long-term, and therefore they tend to ignore these warnings, therefore making these types of campaigns seem ineffective.

Smokers are aware of the health risks associated with smoking, but they still continue to smoke because they do not actually see these effects, whereas if these effects were visible to them, and actually affected their appearance they would definitely quit smoking. In other words, anti-smoking campaigns place too much information on the health risks associated with smoking; take the 'Chemical facts' advertisement for example. This advertisement provides information of all the chemicals that cigarettes are made up of. This advertisement had no impact on the respondents, but the advertisement providing information on what smoking can do to your physical appearance clearly caused a lot more concern amongst the respondents.

The flow diagram on the next page illustrates the summary of themes that emerged within the anti-smoking campaign:

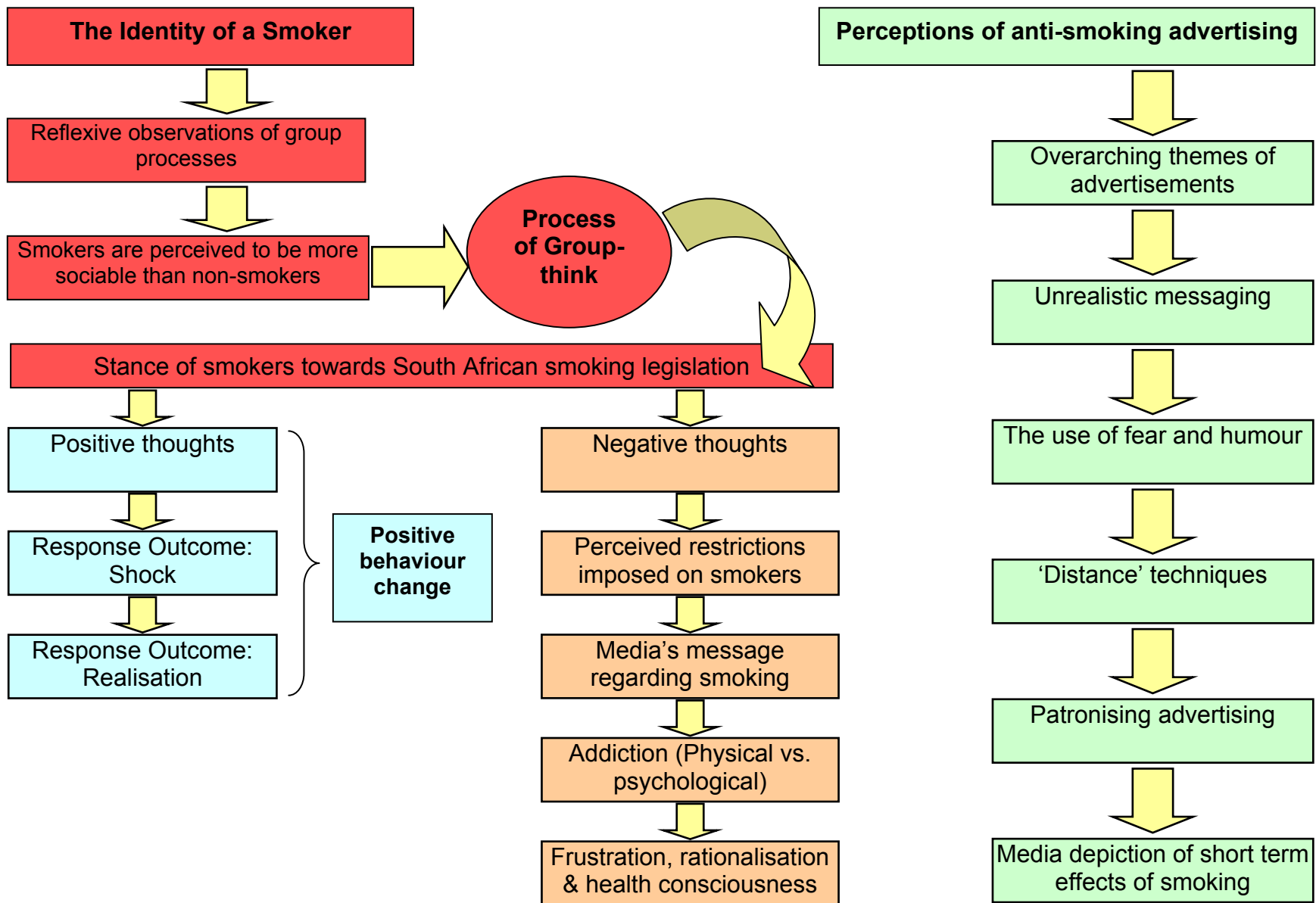


Figure 5.1: Summary of Themes

5.7 Summary

Respondents were recruited according to the selection criteria stated in the recruiting questionnaire (see appendix A). Each group took place at a time and venue suitable to the participant. Discussions that took place during the focus group sessions were recorded on a tape recorder. The tape recordings were then transcribed verbatim and the data analysis commenced immediately after all the information from each of the focus groups had been gathered. This took place over a period of three days.

The identified themes from Project Smoke as a whole were discussed in relation to the advertisements used in each of the focus groups. The advertisements are available for use as per request.

In summary, this chapter consists of two sections; one of which deals with the identity of the smoker in terms of his or her knowledge, attitudes and behaviour. The second section of this chapter deals with the perceptions that smokers have of anti-smoking advertising campaigns with the use of fear-appeal.

In terms of the identification of the profile of a smoker regarding their knowledge, attitudes and behaviour, findings indicated a division between the views held by the younger groups and the views held by the older groups. In terms of knowledge of the legislation, all groups were well informed regarding this; the differentiation arose with regards to their attitudes towards the legislation. Younger respondents held more positive views about the legislation, whereas the older respondents had more negative thoughts on the legislation. These negative attitudes towards the smoking legislation, led to feelings of perceived discrimination amongst the older respondents.

It was identified that emotions play a large role in the 'smoking topic' as a whole. For example, smoking was identified as an emotional addiction, and it was also ascertained that smokers were unclear due to the affect that media has on their perceptions of smoking, whether the addiction is of a physical or psychological nature. The fact remained that, anti-smoking advertising campaigns usually only placed emphasis on smoking being a psychological addiction. The fact that smoking can also be a physical addiction has not been as highly stressed, and even in comparison to the ways in which other addicts, such as cocaine addicts are treated, it is very different to the manner in which cigarette smokers get treated. It would be beneficial to all categories of addictions (physical and psychological addictions) to receive the same 'tools' in order to help them deal with these addictions.

The overall analysis of the perceptions that smokers have of anti-smoking advertising was universal in nature, even though age was identified as a variable that could potentially affect the results, overall the results were similar.

Overarching themes of the advertisements were identified within the discussion on the perceptions of anti-smoking advertising. The benefits of the use of humour and fear in anti-smoking advertising were discussed as well as the detriments thereof. It was concluded that fear is a better option for this genre of advertising, in comparison to the use of humour. This deduction was made, as results reflected that humour had the potential of 'distancing' the smoker from the seriousness of the message.

Smokers are very aware of the long-term health risks associated with smoking simply because of the exposure they have had with anti-smoking campaigns, but not with the short-term effects that smoking has on their physical appearance. This finding could prove to be very helpful when considering the design of new anti-smoking campaigns.

The themes discussed in this chapter will now be explained with the use of psychological theories and academic literature in Chapter 6.