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Consumers' perception of artisan bottled preserved food products

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Consumers' perception of artisan bottled preserved food products

by

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November 2015

Dedicated to

**My parents, Swanie Swanepoel
&
Stella Swanepoel**

Declaration

I, Lorraine F. Swanepoel, hereby declare that this dissertation for the Master in Consumer Science: Food Management at the University of Pretoria, hereby submitted by me, is my own work and has not been previously submitted for a degree at this or any other university or tertiary institution and that all reference material contained herein has been acknowledged.

Lorraine Swanepoel

7 November 2015

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When I enrolled for my Master's degree many warned this was going to be a tough journey ahead and I had to make sure I kept myself motivated to push through with this project. I had to prepare myself for tough times ahead. I must admit the first year was very tough and overwhelming most of the time but later on I kept reminding myself why I embarked on this journey and starting enjoying my research project. This journey had its highs and lows, but I would not have been able to reach the destination without the following people whom I would like to thank:

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This study aims to provide empirical evidence that may be used by entrepreneurs who wish to introduce artisan bottled preserved food products in a competitive market place in an effort to create a more sustainable business venture. In essence, entrepreneurs would have access to valuable information regarding the demographic characteristics of consumers who would purchase artisan bottled preserved food products. Since the study also investigated the combinations of product characteristics consumers seek in these kinds of products, as well as the social and environmental influences that affect the consumers' product choice and purchase behaviour, entrepreneurs would be better informed about their business venture.

The study followed a quantitative survey approach. Respondents were recruited through a convenience sampling method. Questionnaires were distributed online by Consulta, a research company to suitable individuals on their data base. Data was retrieved from 939 respondents across South Africa. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics and exploratory factor analysis, specifically Principal Component Analysis (PCA), through which six coherent factors were extracted that may influence consumers' choice of products in this product category. Based on calculated means for each of these factors, it was evident that respondents are highly concerned ($M=4.11$; $M=5$) about intrinsic product characteristics such as aroma, taste and texture, which represent the sensory characteristics of preserved bottled food products. Of the extrinsic product characteristics, price was relatively important ($M=3.50$)

In order to determine significant differences within the different demographic groups, ANOVA's were done. Results showed that men are more concerned about extrinsic attributes specifically brand relevance while their female counterparts prioritised intrinsic attributes such as colour and quality as well as sensory attributes. It was evident that African respondents and other population groups (white respondents) are significantly more concerned about extrinsic product characteristics such as brand, price and exclusivity than whites ($p<0.05$). Lower income consumers were also significantly more concerned about extrinsic product characteristics such as price than intrinsic characteristics such as sensory aspects ($p<0.05$). Findings could be useful to entrepreneurs in terms of determining their target markets' preferences. Particularly useful to entrepreneurs, is the finding that consumers seem willing to try novel brands and that although price is important, higher prices

would not discourage them to try artisan bottled preserved food products. The fact that products can be sampled at markets where these products are often sold, is beneficial as consumers regard the sensory attributes as the most important determinant of choice.

Key words: artisan; preserved; bottled foods; intrinsic; extrinsic; entrepreneur; product characteristics

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Chapter 1

Overview of the study

This chapter provides the background to the study and introduces the main theme in terms of the research problem. It also briefly explains the methodology, the theoretical perspective and presents the overall structure of the study.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Preserved bottled food products used to be something quite ordinary and hugely prevalent in households across the globe some decades ago (Joubert, 2011; Dickerman, 2010). The majority of housewives took great pleasure in the preservation of seasonal fresh produce that was in abundance only at certain times of the year in an effort to increase its availability throughout the year (Haugaard, Hansen, Jensen, Klaus & Grunert, 2014; Joubert, 2011). For some families preservation was essential for surviving the dark and cold winter months. It therefore became a routine task in day-to-day living, a form of habitual behaviour (Kalia & Parshad, 2015; Wijesinha-Bettoni, Kennedy, Dirorimwe & Muehlhoff, 2013; Atkinson & Mayhew, 2010). Many of these housewives also proudly entered competitions at agricultural shows and food fairs to show off their handmade preserved produce.

Over time, urbanisation and the redefinition of gender roles in society, including females' entry into full-time careers, have led to food preservation becoming a highly specialised activity. Preserving fruit and vegetables is no longer common practice in most households (Braun, 2013; Joubert, 2011; Atkinson & Mayhew, 2010) for several reasons such as the lack of skill (Haugaard *et al.*, 2014; Braun, 2013; Meah & Watson, 2011; Fonte & Papadopoulos, 2010; Bruckmeier, Engwall & Larson 2006; Short 2006), time and limited access to affordable seasonal fresh produce and suitable facilities to conduct preservation (Braun, 2014; Dickerman, 2010). In the twentieth century homes became smaller, resulting in less storage space, thus posing another challenge for practising home preservation, as large amounts of home stocks could simply not be stored anymore. Consumers then opted to buy from the vast variety of preserves that became available in supermarkets (Braun, 2014; Atkinson & Mayhew, 2010:7; Shove & Pantzar, 2005). Nevertheless, apart from the opportunity to use their skill in an entrepreneurial income-generating venture, even with their busy

lifestyles, some homemakers still prefer making their own preserves rather than purchasing mass-produced versions that contain artificial flavourings and colourings. For many, the satisfaction that comes from creating their own unique product has just become priceless (Braun, 2014; Atkinson & Mayhew, 2010).

Today leading market research companies around the world see preserved bottled food products as part of an artisanal food trend (Centre for Culinary Development and Packaged Facts, 2010; Fonte & Papadopoulos, 2010). Manufacturers admit that, for consumers, artisanal foods signify quality. This has prompted small-scale producers to make traditional food products by hand, thereby treating this type of manufacturing as a craft during which extreme care is taken to create a final product with qualities that a niche consumer market would appreciate (Centre for Culinary Development and Packaged Facts, 2010). This artisanal trend has even rippled outwards to large scale manufacturers where they have started to produce more rustic-looking products with distinctive ingredients, unique cooking methods and stories connecting consumers with these food products, to capture some of their nostalgia (Centre for Culinary Development and Packaged Facts, 2010).

During the past century the globalisation of the food industry has resulted in an increasingly complex marketplace, influencing all role players throughout the supply chain. The sudden exposure and growth of new food products offered by retailers, in particular South African retailers since 1994, has had a significant impact on consumers, giving them thousands of products from which to choose. The result is both unprecedented convenience and confusion (Grunert, 2014; Veeck, 2010; De Barcellos, Aguiar, Ferreira, & Vieira, 2009). From the perspective of both the manufacturer and the retailer, this change resulted in increased pressure and competition. Compared to thirty years ago, building and sustaining a food product in a competitive food market today is extremely challenging (De Pelsmaeker, Gellynck, Delbaere, Declercq, Dewettinck, 2015; Grunert, 2014; De Barcellos *et al.*, 2009). In seeking differentiation, and achieving the ultimate competitive advantage, most retailers rely on sales from private enterprises and, more recently, also from the sale of niche food brands. These brands do differ from manufactured and nationally marketed brands in that they are not only sold at well-known retailers but also target a very specific target market. Hence they ultimately require a specific marketing strategy (Nenycz-Thiel & Romaniuk, 2011).

Niche marketing, also known as micro-marketing or concentrated marketing, is a process whereby marketers, often including the entrepreneur who develops these products, focus their marketing

efforts on one small yet significant group or segment of the market (Thilmany, 2012; Ivanov, 2009; Lamb, Hair, McDaniel, Boshoff & Terblanche, 2008:166). This enables them to target their product offerings according to the specific lifestyles and interests of the consumers within a particular market segment they choose to select (Thilmany, 2012; Dellarocas, Gao & Narayan, 2010; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:258). This also means that these niche products are generally more exclusive and cater for more specialised consumer segments in contrast to standard products sold in supermarkets serving mainstream markets (Dellarocas *et al.*, 2010). Niche, artisan-branded products are characterised by an innovative product design which implies that the product has unique physical characteristics rather than a distinct brand image (Jarvis & Goodman, 2005).

Products lacking a brand image can pose an acceptance risk to brand-loyal consumers for whom the product is totally new. Because niche products are primarily for, and launched among, a small market segment, their pricing strategy is generally different. More often than not this exclusivity results in them being more expensive than private or some national brands. However, this is not necessarily a disadvantage as price is often used by consumers to predict the quality of products, especially when they have limited knowledge and experience of the particular product (Brucks, Zeithamel & Naylor, 2000). Niche products may therefore create a favourable impression in terms of quality perceptions (Boyle & Lathrop, 2013) as consumers who are concerned about the quality of products are often willing to pay a premium price (Littler & Melanthiou, 2006; Jarvis & Goodman, 2005).

In the current food scene, consumers are bombarded with a wide range of preserved bottled food products (Joubert, 2011), both mass-produced or homemade, as they are available at retail store level, as delicatessen specialities, at home industries, farm stalls as well as local food markets (Centre for Culinary Development, 2010). Consumers are often left with the overwhelming task of choosing between the wealth of range of preserved bottled food products. They therefore often have to rely on familiar products or simply being brand-loyal when they have limited time to browse through all the products before making a purchase decision (Jarvis & Goodman, 2005).

However, the idea of home preserved foods in one's pantry still brings fond nostalgic memories for many consumers (Joubert, 2011; Centre for Culinary Development and Packaged Facts, 2010). A growing trend has emerged where consumers purchase speciality gourmet food products for the purpose of gifting (Packaged Facts, 2010). The tendency is fuelled by upper-income household spending trends (Packaged Facts, 2012). According to a consumer survey in the United States of

America (US), one in every five consumers purchase a speciality gourmet food product (Packaged Facts, 2010). Due to the recent worldwide economic downturn, many consumers choose to wine and dine at home rather than at restaurants. This has resulted in food producers delivering restaurant quality, speciality gourmet food products for “culinary-aware consumers” to “bring the restaurant experience home” (Packaged Facts, 2010). Creative individuals have utilised this opportunity in the market and optimised the situation to generate an income. For the more meticulous and dynamic entrepreneur, the idea of a nostalgic, more sophisticated food product posed a business challenge with the potential to grow beyond the entry phase to lead to competing with established brand names. Ina Paarman and Tracy Foulker from NOMU have managed to do just this (Koeman, 2009). Their artisan food product success stories serve as inspiration for entrepreneurs who wish to enter the marketplace. Their range of food products have gained consumers’ trust over time and have become established, recognised food brands in South Africa, despite their humble beginnings.

Ina Paarman was fascinated by her grandmother's cooking and started her own cooking school during the 1980s in a converted garage at her home in Constantia in the Western Cape. During the 1990s Paarman Foods, the manufacturing leg of the business was instigated when Ina's son joined the business. He modernised the packaging of the product line, relocated operations to factory premises in a more lucrative area, and aggressively expanded the product range. Not long after these changes were made, Paarman Foods managed to secure itself a spot in major food retail chains. They started exporting in 1995. In 1998 Paarman Foods entered the local South African food service industry by supplying customised products to restaurants and franchised food groups (Paarman, 2015).

More recently, towards the end of 2000, Tracy Foulkes, a former caterer and self-taught chef with a contagious passion for flavour, with only R25 000, similarly started experimenting with food as owner of the NOMU Company in her Cape Town home kitchen (Koeman, 2009). Today, her products are listed in selected stores in 27 countries and they have been profiled in top magazines the world over. Nine years of hard work paid off when Harrods approached NOMU in 2009 to stock the NOMU product line. NOMU values quality, consistency and innovation with an authentic twist (NOMU, 2013; Noyce, Marshall & De Freitas, 2010). In a fairly brief period, Tracy has become a well-respected South African food personality and businesswoman, and the NOMU brand has received much acclaim and attention in the South African food scene (NOMU, 2015).

Unfortunately consumers do not necessarily spend much time deliberating on grocery purchases and are often brand loyal to reduce their risk perception, and to save time in the food store (Wyma, Van der Merwe, Bosman, Erasmus, Strydom & Steyn, 2012). Brand-loyal consumers are apparently more hesitant to purchase novel niche products that enter the market place, mainly due to their risk perception (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:203). The major challenge therefore, is to convince consumers to purchase novel, artisan, and niche products like bottled, preserved foods that are introduced to the market by young, motivated entrepreneurs who wish to offer products that are highly appreciated but no longer produced in home kitchens as was done some decades ago. By doing so, young entrepreneurs – especially well-trained entrepreneurs who possess product as well as managerial skills - can grow their businesses and contribute to the economic growth of the country as well as offer consumer satisfaction and pleasure.

1.2 THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Artisan products generally have no established brand image and brand identity to reassure the trusting quality of the product to the consumer (Jarvis & Goodman, 2005). A brand image assists in the identification of products and forms the base for product awareness from which brand loyalty can grow (Ahearne, Bhattacharya, Gruen, 2005). Understandably then, consumers might find it difficult to change their habitual behaviour and switch from a trusting national or from private label to a niche artisan food product that they know very little about (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:203). Apart from personal preferences (Rollin, Kennedy, Wills, 2011; Fell, Wilkins, Kivinen, Austin & Fernandez, 2009; Cardello, Schutz & Leshner, 2007), various reasons may induce risk perception and jeopardise consumers' willingness to at least trial artisan niche food products (Littler & Melanthiou, 2006). Primarily it is important to identify consumers' risk perceptions and then to determine, preferably empirically, how to overcome them in the promotion of such products.

One problem that arises is the difficulty to choose one product from the vast array of food products that are available (Joubert, 2011). Special products usually have limited exposure as food shelves in supermarkets are filled predominantly with established national brands and private labels (Nenycz-Thiel & Romaniuk, 2011). The perceived risk involved in purchasing a novel artisan food product is very real as is premium pricing that accompanies niche food product items (Littler & Melanthiou, 2006; Rozin, 2006). Moreover, having limited time to evaluate a novel artisan product is often an issue (Jarvis & Goodman, 2005) as well as the fact that there are few concentrated points of product

availability. Sometimes a special trip, and even additional time, for getting information about them is necessary which is another inconvenience in an already time-pressured society.

Some, if not all, of these challenges are experienced when entrepreneurs find themselves faced with products in the introductory stage in the product life cycle (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:203), a phase that requires the product's acceptance. Entrepreneurs of artisan bottled preserved food products therefore find it extremely challenging to enter the market and to compete with established branded products in the South African food retail scene. Assuming that it is possible for a young entrepreneur to grow an innovative artisan product to a reputable brand, as was done by Paarman and Foulkes (discussed in 1.1 p.4) among others, empirical evidence is required to indicate which product characteristics are crucial in terms of consumers' favourable evaluation of artisan bottled preserved food products. It is the product's characteristics that will convince consumers to consider novel artisan bottled preserved food products. Consumers who typically purchase niche branded products and who are happy with their purchases, become more brand-loyal towards those products compared to consumers who are loyal to private labels or national brands (Jarvis & Goodman, 2005). It is, however, not clear how consumers prioritise the product characteristics of bottled food products, and therefore no evidence exists whereby entrepreneurs could strategize to favourably position artisan bottled preserved food products in the market.

1.3 RESEARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES

This study aims to provide empirical evidence that may be used by entrepreneurs who wish to introduce artisan bottled preserved food products in a competitive market place in an effort to create a more sustainable business venture. In essence, entrepreneurs would have access to valuable information regarding the demographic characteristics of consumers who would purchase artisan bottled preserved food products. Since the study also investigates the combinations of product characteristics consumers seek in these kinds of products, as well as the social and environmental influences that affect the consumers' product choice and purchase behaviour, entrepreneurs would be better informed about their business venture.

The following objectives were formulated for this research study:

Objective 1:

To investigate and describe the importance of selected extrinsic, intrinsic and integrated product attributes that arise during consumers' evaluation of artisan bottled preserved food products; hence it is necessary to investigate and describe the following in terms of consumers' evaluation of bottled preserved food products in general:

- 1.1 Consumers' prioritisation of product characteristics in terms of the importance of selected **extrinsic characteristics**, namely store image, price, brand, brand image, packaging, labelling and product origin
- 1.2 Consumers' prioritisation of product characteristics in terms of the importance of selected **intrinsic characteristics**, namely aroma, texture, taste and visual appearance and product safety
- 1.3 Consumers' prioritisation of product characteristics in terms of the importance of selected **integrated product characteristics** namely the price - quality relationship; the brand-quality relationship; brand-equity and product uniqueness
- 1.4 Consumers' prioritisation of product characteristics in terms of the relative importance of **extrinsic, intrinsic and integrated product characteristics**.

Objective 2:

To investigate and describe consumers' application of compensatory and non-compensatory decision rules when purchasing preserved bottled food products as an indication of their exploratory buying behaviour and/or willingness to compensate when evaluating product characteristics.

Objective 3:

To investigate and discuss consumers' prioritisation of product characteristics when evaluating bottled preserved food products in terms of their gender; level of education; population group; geographical area of residence and financial status in order to make recommendations in terms of the positioning of artisan bottled preserved food products.

1.4 STUDY AREA

An investigation of decision makers within households, in terms of their choice and evaluation of preserved food products, was conducted throughout South Africa, in all nine provinces. The entire database of Consulta Research Company was used to gather data in the shortest possible time. Doing a nationwide study provided a bird's eye view of South African consumers' product choices. All the respondents participated willingly. The eventual sample included respondents from all the provinces although the full sample (N = 939) was not necessarily representative.

1.5 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

A quantitative survey-based design was followed. The research was exploratory and descriptive. An established research company distributed structured questionnaires in an electronic format to gather quantifiable data as a source of primary data. Secondary data came from extant research obtained from reliable and accredited journals for a literature review. A reference list of these sources was compiled and constructs for this study were conceptualised with their support (Salkind, 2012:47; Walliman, 2011:177). The literature review sets the background and overall theme of the study and describes relevant concepts on the basis of previously published scholarly work (Salkind, 2012:46, 47; Walliman, 2011:35).

The unit of analysis for this study consisted of adult male and female consumers, 25 years or older, who were the main decision makers with regard to the purchase of food in their respective households. All population groups in medium- to higher-income segments, earning a total monthly household income of R20 000 and more, residing somewhere in South Africa were targeted. The only prerequisite for respondents was that they had to be involved in, or responsible for food purchases in their homes. Higher income groups (those earning \geq R25 000) were chosen because these consumers are better able to choose from a wider variety of products available in the market without their decisions being primarily restricted by affordability. Literature indicates that consumers who purchase niche food products generally come from high- and medium-income group backgrounds as some consumers purchase these type of products to signal their socio-economic status within society (Li, Li & Kambele, 2012; Curet & Pestle, 2010). Respondents aged 25 years and older were selected on the assumption that the consumers included would have already gained a reasonable amount of purchasing experience due to their age (Kohijoki & Marjanen, 2013).

Convenience sampling, a type of non-probability sampling technique was used to gather data from 939 respondents across South Africa. Convenience sampling is “a statistical method of drawing representative data by selecting people because of the ease of their volunteering or selecting units because of their availability or easy access” (Business Dictionary, 2015). The advantages of this type of sampling are the accessibility and the speed with which data can be collected (Business Dictionary, 2015). In simple terms, anyone on the database could have participated on a first come first serve basis (Bujang, Ghani, Zolkepali, Selvarajah & Haniff, 2012), if they were older than 25 years. The entire procedure of gathering data was controlled by Consulta Research who took the responsibility for the recruitment of suitable respondents who met the criteria set for the study. Only those respondents who completed the questionnaire in the specified time frame were included.

The questionnaire was available in English only and was developed according to the objectives set for the study. The questionnaire was assessed by experts in the Consumer Sciences Department at the University of Pretoria as well as at Consulta Research Company to clarify wording and use of concepts, to check the layout and the practical sequence and phrasing of the questions in terms of the objectives of the study. Existing measurement scales as well as self-developed scales were included in the questionnaire as indicated in the following section.

The questionnaire comprised five sections:

- **Section A** included statements pertaining to consumers’ prioritisation of intrinsic, extrinsic and integrated product characteristics when evaluating bottled preserved food products. Statements were presented to respondents whereby they could mark on a scale of one to five between “not important at all” representing number one; “slightly important” representing number two, “neither important or unimportant” representing number three; “important” representing number four and “highly important” representing number five. A number of existing scales were used and adapted to suit the needs of this study. They included: a price perception scale (Lichtenstein, Ridgway & Netemeyer, 1993); a brand experience scale (Brakus, Schmitt & Zarantello, 2009); price-quality schema scale (Lichtenstein, Ridgway & Netemeyer, 1993); quality of branded products scale (Strizhakova, Coulter & Price, 2008); and the uniqueness scale (Tian, Bearden & Hunter, 2001). For the remaining concepts not covered by these mentioned scales, additional self-developed items were added. For each of the 11 product attributes represented in this section, three statements were formulated to measure each attribute. A minimum of three statements per

food product attribute is required for factor analysis and to measure Cronbach's alpha values to determine the internal consistency of the scales used.

- **Section B** included questions investigating the application of decision rules during product evaluation. A customised scale was developed to measure this section of the study. Two sub-sections were presented. In the first sub-section, respondents were given 12 attributes to consider when evaluating artisan bottled preserved food products. Respondents were then asked to choose the five most important attributes and rank them from one to five, one being the most important attribute and five the least important attribute. From the attributes that remained, respondents were asked to select two attributes that they regarded as least important and rank these attributes 11 and 12. In the following sub-section, respondents were given the same set of attributes and given the opportunity to provide an alternative order of the same attributes they had chosen in the previous section. Therefore, they could shuffle their order or replace one of the attributes on their list. This investigated their tendency to compensate or non-compensate when prioritising product characteristics.
- **Section C** contained questions pertaining to the demographic characteristics of respondents. This section was intentionally placed at the end of the questionnaire to reduce sensitivity about personal information concerning gender, age, level of education, population group and area of residence.

Consulta, a South African market research company handled the data collection by uploading the questionnaire on their database that was then distributed electronically, via electronic mail to willing respondent nationwide who were part of the Consulta consumer panel. These respondents were screened electronically prior to receiving the questionnaire and were selected with this study's specific prerequisites in mind. Data collection took place in a cross-sectional time of April/May 2015. A total of 939 usable questionnaires were retrieved by closure of the data collection period of four days.

1.6 DATA ANALYSIS

Pre-testing the questionnaire was necessary to ensure reliable and valid findings as suggested by Leedy and Omrod (2013:230-231). Pre-testing was done by involving ten potential respondents who

fitted the prerequisites for the sample. They completed hard copies of the questionnaire before it was converted to an electronic format. Minor alterations were made to correct the questionnaire after discussion with the statistician.

Data analysis was done with the assistance of a qualified statistician. Descriptive statistics were used to present the results as frequencies, percentages and means. This allowed for pattern recognition and enabled statistical inferences between demographic variables of the population (Leedy & Ormrod 2013:179; Salkind, 2012:161; Zikmund & Babin 2007:325). More advanced statistical procedures included exploratory factor analysis, calculation of Cronbach alpha, t-tests, Anova and regressions were also done as indicated in Table 3.1: Conceptualisation and operationalization.

1.7 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

Food choice among consumers is a complex form of human behaviour that is influenced by a multitude of interrelated factors (Shepherd & Raats, 2006:347). Various authors have identified models describing the effects of factors that influence consumer food choices. Amongst others, was the work of Khan and Hackler (1981) who identified food selection patterns and preferences. Randall and Sanjur (1981) conceptualised food preferences as a food concept and the relationship between it and consumption. Shepherd's model of food preferences (Shepherd, 1989) was chosen for this research study as it is based on the factors that influence consumers' food preferences. The variables used were divided into three main categories: food, the person and the economic and social environments (MacFie & Thomson, 1994:204).

The "food" category included the intrinsic, the extrinsic and their related food product characteristics, the focus area of this study. The factors referred to the chemical and physical properties of food that a person perceives and experiences when accommodating all the sensory attributes such as aroma, taste, flavour, texture and appearance. A person's preference for one or more of these attributes may determine and influence a person's choice of a specific food (MacFie & Thomson, 1994:204-205).

Preserved bottled food products are differentiated by their product characteristics that consumers take into account when purchasing this type of food product. Chemical factors would refer to the amount of carbohydrates, sugars and proteins that that particular food item contains (Shepherd &

Raats, 1996:347). First, their extrinsic characteristics are price, brand and brand image, packaging and labelling, product origin and store image. Second, their intrinsic value lies in their aroma, texture, taste and flavour, visual appearance and product safety. Third, their characteristics as an integrated product, are price and brand quality, brand equity and product uniqueness from which consumers would deduce the quality or value for money when having limited time or experience to evaluate the product properly. The social and economic environments are highly influential in consumers' product choices as they determine the context in which products are chosen and used (Shepherd & Raats, 2006).

The term "person" refers to factors associated with the consumer's personality (Shepherd, 1989). For example, how they make the choice to either trial or purchase artisan bottled preserved food products or not. In this study, the consumer's profile, as reflected in their demographic characteristics, represents this construct and the way in which a specific consumer segment would generally evaluate bottled preserved food products (Shepherd & Raats, 2006).

The "external economic and social environment" refers to the environment in which these food choices are made (Shepherd, 1989). This incorporates certain societal changes that have occurred over the past few decades, such as women entering the workforce and the increased presence of a more urbanised population that now has different product needs. Marketing, cultural, religious, demographic, social and economic factors all influence a person's attitudes and beliefs that, in turn, influence a person's food choices (Shepherd & Raats, 2006). This study is about the local South African food environment in which consumers would purchase artisan bottled preserved food products from a range of alternative sources, such as farmers' markets, exclusive artisan food markets, food festivals occurring once a year and food delicatessen venues. These offer only an exclusive range of superior, high-end artisan bottled preserve food products, whereas a few food retailers will also stock a range of these high-quality artisan foods. Some artisans open their own restaurants or food shops in addition to exhibiting at local food markets, such as Capital Craft that stocks artisan craft beers, and DV Chocolate (De Villiers' family handcrafted chocolate) situated on the Spice Route in the Western Cape where they even show visitors and tourist consumers how they make their artisan chocolate. Something similar can be introduced by entrepreneurs of artisan bottled preserved food products to promote the artisan craft of preserving food.

1.8 PRESENTATION AND STRUCTURE OF THE RESEARCH

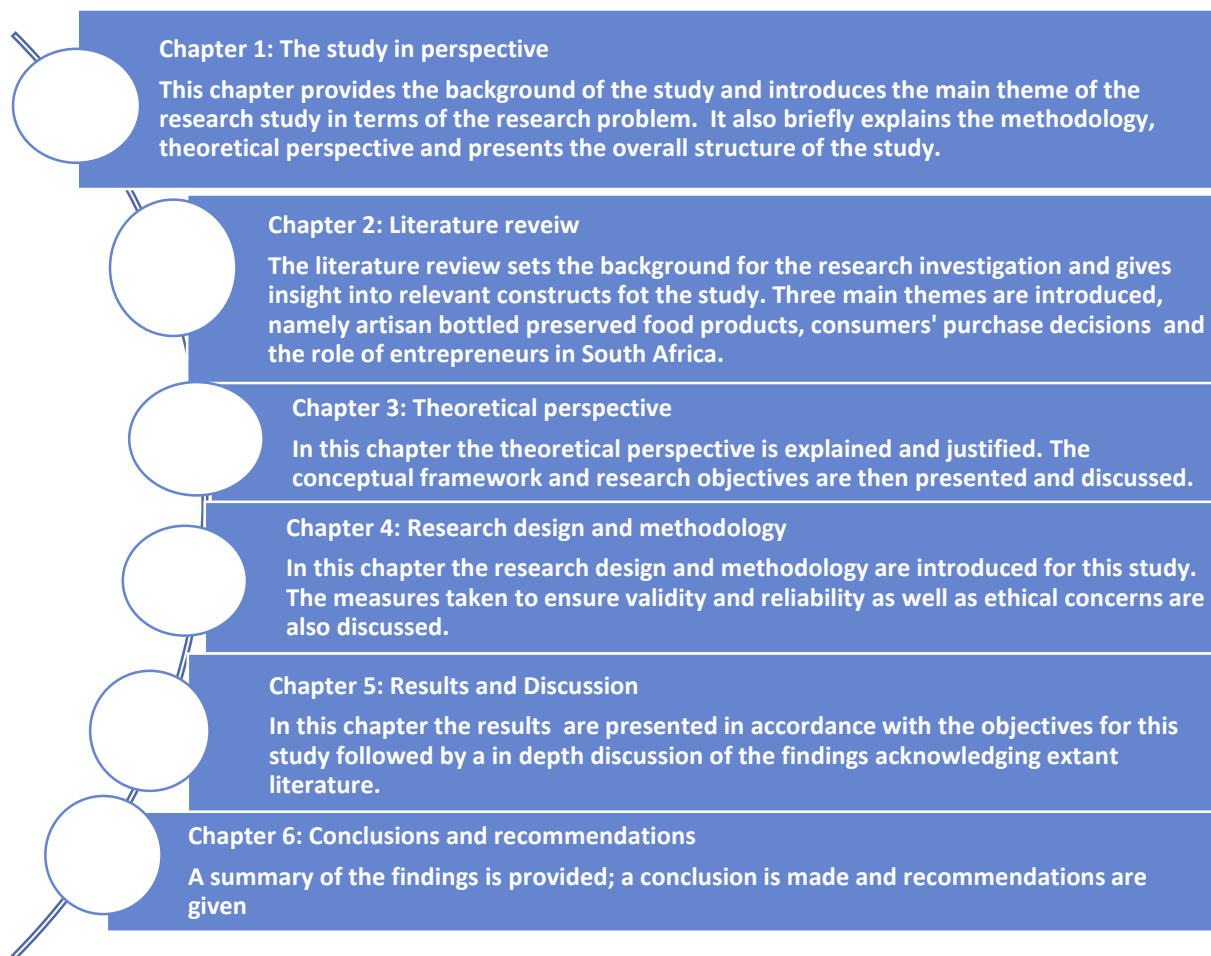


Figure 1: Structure of the research study

1.9 ETHICS: A MATTER TO CONSIDER

Ethical issues within academic research can be viewed from two perspectives according to Walliman (2011:335). The first perspective relates to the personal integrity of the researcher conducting the research study. The second perspective concerns the courtesy, consent and confidentiality that the researcher places on the specific research issue on hand, as well as considering all the relevant parties who are affected by the research.

Respondents who took part in this study have done so voluntarily. Therefore the selection of respondents was unbiased. No difference was made between respondents based on gender, level of education, population group, area of residence or financial status. Only respondents who formed part of Consulta Research Company's database could have taken part in this study. The questionnaire was only distributed to medium- and high-income earning respondents whom

Consulta Research Company identified beforehand as the subjects to be targeted as participants in this research study. Personal details such as name, identity number and contact details were not requested so respondents could take part anonymously with peace of mind without being concerned about being identified. At no point was sensitive information asked in the questionnaire.

The purpose of the study was explained to the respondents on a cover screen before they commenced completing the questionnaire on their own computers. Included in the given information was the time taken to complete the questionnaire, its length, an offer to withdraw from the study at any time for any reason, to only complete questions with which they were comfortable and a description of the potential benefits this study could hold for society. The respondents were asked to accept the accompanying conditions to ensure that an ethical code of practice was followed. The consent form the respondents had to acknowledge had been approved by the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences at the University of Pretoria at the outset of the study and the research was ratified before the data collection commenced.

All the literature resources used in this particular research study can be accounted for and are acknowledged through proper citations, and are recorded in the reference list. Necessary acknowledgements prevented plagiarism. Honest practices were applied throughout the course of completing this research in order to disallow unreliable information filtering into academic work in any way. All data and its interpretation sprouting from this study was used and this account was compiled in a truthful manner. This researcher did not want to be guilty of the unethical practice of only utilising certain sections of the collected data. The confidentiality of each respondent was preserved.

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Chapter 2

Literature Review

The literature review sets the background for the research investigation and gives insight into relevant constructs for the study. Three main themes are introduced, namely artisan bottled preserved food products, consumers' purchase decisions and the role of entrepreneurs in South Africa.

2.1 ARTISAN BOTTLED PRESERVED FOOD PRODUCTS

Humans have been preserving food for more than 5 000 years through various methods such as drying, freezing, fermenting, curing, pickling, canning and making jams and jellies (Kalia & Parshad, 2015; Buckow & Bull, 2013; Floros, Newsome, Fisher, Barbosa-Cánovas, Chen, Dunne, German, Hall, Heldman, Karwe, Knabel, Labuza, Lund, Newell-McGloughlin, Robinson, Sebranek, Shewfelt, Tracy, Weaver, Ziegler, 2010; Brown, 2008:537-552; Marshall, 2000). Due to food starting to spoil the moment it has been harvested, people in ancient times started preserving food for later use (Nummer, 2012; Dickerman, 2010). The preservation of food came about in Westernised cultures in an effort to supply in the consumer demand for certain food products throughout the year which otherwise would only have been available in certain seasons (Kalia & Parshad; Buckow & Bull, 2013; Dickerman, 2010; McWilliams, 2008:487) and in the twenty-first century to prevent food shortages (Wilson, 2013).

Most historians believe food was not only preserved for sustenance but also for cultural reasons, and these preserved foods were likely to be at the centre of celebrations and religious gatherings, a practice which is far from what takes place in this day and age where consumers “have been removed from a rural self-sufficient way of life” and mostly procure foods on a commercial scale (Braun, 2014; Nummer, 2012). This is of great concern as the majority of these modern Westernised families tend to consume 50% of their food intake outside of their homes, causing this age-old artisan craft of preserving foods to be lost. Today the majority of consumers do not even know how to preserve foods nor are they in a position to even pass this craft on to the next generation of consumers who now have to rely on food service workers, processors and manufacturers to sustain the craft of preserving food (University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 2015; Braun, 2014). The age-old craft

of preserving food, which formed part of an associated culture and tradition within a community is now diminishing as social change comes about with the migration, relocation and/or urbanisation of consumers (Braun, 2014). Thus this craft has been left behind as consumers have moved on, adapting to a more modern lifestyle.

The earliest methods known for preserving food was through the addition of honey and sugar (Haugaard *et al.*, 2014). Fruit, in all shapes and sizes, was kept in honey to increase its shelf life. In ancient Greece, fruits, like quinces, were dipped in honey and dried slightly before being put into jars. As time passed, the Romans started cooking the fruit and honey together to yield a more solid, textured product. Later on, countries trading with India were exposed to sugar cane. Because northern countries did not have enough sunlight to dry foods, housewives learned to preserve foods by heating the fruit and sugar together (Nummer, 2012). Microorganisms are the basis of food preservation in the form of jams, jellies and preserves and sugar creates an unfavourable osmotic pressure that kills them. The addition of a fairly large amount of sugar therefore prevents spoilage of the product for an extensive period of time. These bottled preserved food products can then be stored at room temperature for more than two years (McWilliams, 2008:487,494). Consumer demand for products that are preserved through the addition of natural preservatives, such as sugar, vinegar or salt rather than chemical based ones is on the increase (Delves-Broughton, 2012).

The food preservation method used has a direct effect on a range of important attributes of the preserved end product, such as its nutritional quality; the safety aspects of the food environment in which the natural food grew and was harvested and the finally preserved in; its organoleptic qualities reflected in its texture, taste level and flavour; the wholesome nature of that product; and, most importantly, its consumer appeal as the end product available on food shelves (Bhat, Alias & Paliyath, 2012).

This study focused specifically on artisan bottled preserved food products produced through high-temperature preservation methods and through the addition of sugar, resulting in jams, preserves, marmalades and chutneys. These types of food products are generally commercially either canned or bottled in glass jars (Marshall, 2000). In February 2014, Euromonitor International (Euromonitor International, 2014) reported an expected growth in preserved food products in South Africa through product innovation and the expansion of current product ranges because people are yearning for products that create a feeling of nostalgia associated food products and flavours they often consumed or to which they were exposed to whilst growing up (Autio, Collins, Wahlen &

Anttila, 2013). Increasingly more consumers are desiring food products that are reviving and embracing old traditions, reminiscent of their grandmother`s cookery books. This trend is referred to as “the old in the new” (Autio *et al.*, 2013; Euromonitor, 2011). Consumers view local artisan foods as tasting better than their imported alternatives. Moreover they associate local artisan products with a high level of craftsmanship (Autio *et al.*, 2013).

However, some challenges do arise with the marketing of preserved, bottled food products as a growing number of consumers are refraining from purchasing preserved food products in an effort to consume more healthy foods, realising that preserved food products often have a high sodium and/or sugar content (Euromonitor International, 2014). When marketing artisan bottled preserved food products the issue to confront is to find the balance between consumers purchasing their products for nostalgic reasons and those consumers desiring a healthier lifestyle of living. An additional concern for entrepreneurs and marketers of food products is that it is difficult to market a product without an existing brand image (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:201), as is the case with artisan bottled preserved food products.

Smaller home industry shops that are nowadays found all over towns and cities across South Africa, are types of businesses where, apart from a selection of handcrafted items, interesting baked and preserved food items are found usually produced by talented bakers and home cooks from the region. Home industries are characteristic to rural towns and suburban shopping areas in South Africa and were started in an effort to preserve local and regional baking traditions and heirloom recipes. Home industries generally boast a great selection of cakes, tarts and regional specialities, especially bottled preserved products such as jams and preserves, which form the core of home industries across South Africa (Campbell, 2012).

Some consumers do yearn to preserve their own food products at home, yet a large variety of cookery books with recipes for preserving food and methods that explain the step-by-step process of how to preserve foods for later use, are not available at local book stores. Consumers often opt for faster preservation methods such as cooking jams and preserves in the microwave due to the fast-paced lifestyles in society today. Moreover, few people own or have access to a large fruit orchard or vegetable garden that offers a suitable quantity of fresh produce that can be preserved. Consumers who wish to do so have to purchase produce in smaller, but more expensive quantities (Braun, 2014).

2.1.1 Food product characteristics

In general, food products are evaluated in terms of extrinsic and intrinsic characteristics. **Extrinsic product characteristics** represent features which, when changed, will not alter the product physically, for example, the brand name, brand image, place of origin, the place where it is sold, promotion, advertising, product price, packaging and labelling (Piqueras-Fiszman & Spence, 2015; Hoppert, Mai, Zahn, Hoffmann & Rohm, 2012; Brown, 2008:1; Linneman, Benner, Verkerk & Van Boekel, 2006; Steenkamp 1989). In short, extrinsic food cues are those that are somehow related to the food product but are not physically part of the food product itself (Piqueras-Fiszman & Spence, 2015).

Intrinsic product characteristics are those characteristics that form an integral part of the product itself i.e. the physical features which cannot be changed without changing the physical product itself (Piqueras-Fiszman & Spence, 2015; Bello Acebron & Calvo Dopico, 2000). These features include the sensory properties of the product such as aroma, texture, taste, colour and visual appearance of the product contents, as well as the physical quality level of the product as perceived by the consumer. Other intrinsic quality characteristics are nutritional value, freshness and the safety of the food product.

Both extrinsic and intrinsic product attributes evoke different responses which mutually determine a consumer's decision to purchase the product or not (Hobbart *et al.*, 2012; Menichelli, Olsen, Meyer & Næs, 2012; Enneking, Neumann & Henneberg, 2007). It is crucial to gain some understanding of the influence of different product attributes during consumers' food product decisions before introducing a new product to the market (Enneking *et al.*, 2007). It is said that consumers' perception of the intrinsic and extrinsic product attributes (i.e. how they perceive the sensory attributes as well as the physical quality of the product), as well as their expectations of the extrinsic product attributes (e.g. the price, brand image) are the main features that influence food product choice (Köster, 2009). This may, however, be more intricate than it seems at first, because the interaction of the different attributes of the product may influence consumers' purchase behaviour significantly. For example, when a product is cheaper, its colour may become less important.

Noteworthy in most cases of artisan bottled preserved food products, is that consumers are only able to evaluate its intrinsic attributes once they have purchased the product and taken it home to

consume. This happens because it is not always possible to evaluate these attributes in advance. For example, to taste the products in a food aisle in front of the shelf containing all the preserved bottled food products in order to test the taste before purchase.

2.1.1.1 Extrinsic food product attributes

Consumers are not able to judge a food product or beverage without having access to numerous sources of contextual information through multiple sensory inputs that are present at that specific time (Piqueras-Fiszman & Spence, 2015). In many cases intangible extrinsic cues such as the store image or origin of the product, different from the obvious ones such as price, brand or packaging, may influence a consumer's product choice. A range of psychological and physiological processes are initiated in the brain every time someone interacts with food (Spence, 2011). It then integrates previous experiences of times prior to consumption of that particular food item, in the form of visual appearances, orthonasal olfactory cues and, even on occasions, distal food sounds like the sizzle of a fried egg, with new extrinsic cues to form powerful expectations of the new food item that is about to be experienced (Spence & Piqueras-Fiszman, 2014; Woods, Poliakoff, Lloyd, Dijksterhuis & Thomas, 2010). Even after the first bite, a certain expectancy is created about what the rest of that food item will taste like (Dijksterhuis, Boucon & Le Berre, 2014).

The level of familiarity that consumers have with a food product influences their expectations about that product which means that the more consumers use a product, the more specific their expectations will become as they will then know exactly what to expect from the product every time they use it (Ludden, Schifferstein & Hekkert, 2009). When buying a product they know well, consumers will have certain expectations. These are based on three factors, namely, the personal characteristics of the observer, the observer's prior beliefs as reflected in their expectations about the product and its context, especially the store or market where it is sold (Piqueras-Fiszman & Spence, 2015). The particular aspects a purchaser considers when choosing a product can be identified as price, branding, brand image, packaging, labelling, store image, origin of the product and the store image. An in-depth discussion of each will now follow:

Price: Price as a concept is perceived by consumers as a monetary sacrifice made to possess and consume a product (Du Plessis, Rousseau, Boshoff, Ehlers, Engelbrecht, Joubert & Sanders., 2007:147). The price of a product may influence the degree to which consumers make decisions regarding the acquisition, usage and disposal of a product (Hoyer, MacInnes & Pieters, 2013:19). The product price perceived by consumers should mirror the value consumers receive from a

specific purchase they have made. Consumers' perception regarding the pricing of a product, whether high, fair or low, greatly influences consumers' intention to purchase a specific product or not. Moreover, it either leads to whether consumers experience purchase satisfaction or not. When consumers perceive a product price to be unreasonable they may feel exploited and might refrain from purchasing a product (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:193,194). Often perceived price fairness plays an important role in consumer product satisfaction (Bei & Chiao, 2001). Consumers often compare the price of a product to other products on the shelf or even elsewhere. Alternatively, they may compare the price to prices they have paid in the past for the same or similar type of product to judge the value before purchase.

Another aspect will be the potential quantity bought. This is also subject to the price of the product and that of related products, substitutes or complementary products; the income of the consumer; the population to which the consumer belongs; and lastly, the consumer's product preference. Generally the more expensive products are, the lower the quantity purchased if consumers are price sensitive. Consumers are apt to compare the price of a product with their internal reference price which is based on previous product experiences or past prices paid for a product, as well as competing product prices (Hoyer *et al.*, 2013:254). Consumers tend to be less price sensitive towards basic foodstuffs and more price sensitive towards luxury goods (Du Plessis *et al.*, 2007:142). Consumers are also more price sensitive in tough economic times than in times of wealth and prosperity. Some consumers will return to their previous buying habits whereas some will continue with their penny-pinching ways (Hoyer *et al.*, 2013:254).

Even price expectations are formed from a product's visual cues, and the price expectation is created before the actual price of the product is even known to the consumer (Jun, MacInnis & Park, 2005; Niedrich, Sharma & Wedell, 2001). Price is also an indication of affordability. Consumers' price expectations are mostly based on an acceptable price range that influences their search for substitutes or the volume purchased (Murthi & Rau, 2012). That does not mean that the cheaper the better as consumers may also question the quality of a product if it is priced too low (Campbell, DiPietro & Ramar, 2014). They will have a reservation maximum price where a product is simply too expensive to purchase (Hoyer *et al.*, 2013:20; Du Plessis *et al.*, 2007:151).

Consumers do tend to assume that higher-priced products are of better quality. Product quality may signify a price premium and, together with a strong brand image, could assist consumers in deciding to be willing to pay the premium price (Anselmsson, Vestman Bondesson & Johansson, 2014). In

most cases, this assumption proves to be true as “you get what you pay for”. However, the situation can arise in which the price-quality relationship is not always justified (Solomon, 2015:84,91,203; Campbell *et al.*, 2014). Higher-priced products also attract consumers who seek products that signal status, and they consequently do not hesitate to purchase higher-priced items (Hoyer *et al.*, 2013:20) to meet this need.

If consumers perceive minor differences between brands, they tend to always purchase the brand that is being promoted, especially when consumers have a low involvement towards that type of product meaning that they don’t spend a lot of time and energy in deciding to purchase the product. The decision almost comes automatically (Hoyer *et al.*, 2013:253; Murthi & Rau, 2012). Literature indicates that consumers prefer products with odd form of pricing, like R9.99 rather than products with even pricing at a higher figure, like R10.00, surmising it is better value than prices that suggest they have been rounded upwards.

Price also means different things in different cultures. Japanese consumers seem less fond of price discounts while Indian consumers tend to be always willing to negotiate a product’s price (Hoyer *et al.*, 2013:204). The term “willingness-to-pay” can be described as consumers’ willingness-to-select or purchase an item or specific product in comparison to its price (Campbell *et al.*, 2014). Retail prices for locally produced foods fluctuate on a regular basis due to changing seasons, shipping and storage, the type of product, the type of outlet that sells the products and product availability (Campbell *et al.*, 2014). It ought to be acknowledged that artisan producers of bottled preserved food products purchase their raw food ingredients in smaller quantities than mass producers. Inevitably, this will affect the price that the final consumer will pay as small-scale producers cannot pass the benefits of economies of scale on to their customers that would lower the price.

However, consumers are often willing to pay more for local food products as they know the origin of these products (Campbell *et al.*, 2014). Consumers might also be more willing to pay a premium price for a local artisan food product due to its nostalgic connection (Campbell *et al.*, 2014). This happens when consumers have an emotional attachment to a particular food product that reminds them of a past experience or one that arouses a specific food memory that comes to mind when consuming a certain product. Consumer interest in local food products has grown immensely over the past few years (Carpio, Isengildina-Massa, 2009; Darby, Batte, Ernst & Roe, 2008) as local food is associated with improved quality, freshness, a better taste and more appeal (Delind, 2006).

Branding: The brand of a product indicates a name, term, design, symbol or any other characteristic of a product that assists in identifying the seller of the product as distinct from other competing brands available on the market (Kohli, Suri & Kapoor, 2015; Lamb *et al.*, 2008:228). Regarding artisan bottled preserved food products, many entrepreneurs manage to have a catchy name in an effort that this name will stick and that consumers will remember it. Examples are Nomu, Freckled Ginger or Whisk Away. A logo and sleek product design strengthens this product's image. However, there are many entrepreneurs who face the challenging task of creating a good and long-lasting impression with their new products.

The main goal of branding is to create brand loyal consumers. Brand loyalty is a two-dimensional concept defined as consumers who purchase a product or service repeatedly and become brand insistent (brand-loyal) as they will not purchase any other brand except for that of their own specific choice of product or service (Solomon, 2015:64; Kohli *et al.*, 2015). People often become brand loyal and use brand names as an indication of what they have become accustomed to, especially when new products are introduced with existing brand names (Solomon, 2015:64). When consumers are highly involved in a product purchase, meaning that they put a lot of consideration, time and energy into making a purchasing decision it could imply that the consumer is brand loyal (Solomon, 2015:64).

If the consumer is satisfied with a specific brand they will repeatedly purchase and make a conscious choice to purchase that same brand over and over again (Solomon, 2015:64), which is the ideal for any food entrepreneur of artisan bottled preserved food product. A brand name can therefore be very valuable as it is used as a heuristic device to deduce quality, acceptability, status or anything the consumer perceives to be relevant (Broyles, Schumann & Leingpibul, 2009; Brucks *et al.*, 2000; Teas & Agarwal, 2000). A brand loyal consumer will insist on buying the brand they trust, love, are passionate about and which they have a positive attitude towards and not simply purchasing out of habit (Solomon, 2015:64). Being brand loyal makes effortless decision making possible for consumers, and brand loyalty can be created through high product quality and sales promotions (Hoyer *et al.*, 2013:251).

Consumers are exposed to a vast number of products and brands that include manufactured brands (described as national brands), private brands, generic brands and niche food products that all differ with regard to packaging, price, quality grade, advertising information and the availability of supply. They all compete directly with one another, and in many cases, they are all located in one single

store (Parumasur & Roberts-Lombard, 2012:314, 315). Artisan bottled preserved food products have to compete with these private, generic and manufactured brands in terms of visibility as the use of available space on the shelves in supermarkets is determined by the company's sales figures in each particular context.

Branding is used in the food industry as a means to create a recognisable yet favourable image in the eyes of consumers to boost product sales (Keller, Kuilema, Lee, Yoon, Mascaro, Combes, Deutsche, Sorte & Halford, 2012). Consumers will also search for products based on their prior brand preferences and experiences (Hoyer *et al.*, 2013:203). Research has indicated that familiar brands boost consumers' food taste experiences and, in some cases, consumers will purchase familiar brands as it saves them time. The type of products being investigated in this study are artisan bottled preserved food products, which are seen as having new product status. When purchasing new brands consumers tend to spend more time deliberating whether or not they are willing to experiment and purchase the new product to try it out or keep to the familiar. In coming to a decision they will go through various steps in convincing themselves that it would be a wise choice to purchase the new product even though it does not have an established brand image versus a decision to purchase a familiar branded product (Paasovaara, Luomala, Pohjanheimo & Sandell, 2012).

Family members, relatives and friends may also heavily influence consumers' purchase decisions and sometimes individuals will simply conform and buy the branded product in that line (Hoyer *et al.*, 2013:311). For instance, one family member may favour the All Gold brand of tomato sauce above the Heinz brand and influence the purchaser accordingly. It often happens that an entire group of people likes one specific branded product and then it is highly likely that all the individuals within the group will always buy that one as they share the same stimuli for enjoyment (Hoyer *et al.*, 2013:311).

Although consumers base their purchasing decisions largely on the taste and quality of a product, the impact of the brand of a product cannot be ignored as it strongly influences a consumer's perceptions and decisions regarding that product (Dotson, Clark, Davé & Morris, 2012). In fact, branding is so significant that it can actually result in consumers perceiving a better taste that it really is due to the expectations a brand can create (Fornerino & d'Hautville, 2010) through its promotion and marketing strategies.

Traditional branding requires a large upfront investment (Kohli *et al.*, 2015), which can present a huge barrier for inexperienced entrepreneurs of new artisan bottled preserved food products who lack the necessary start-up capital to cover all the expenses involved, including that of branding. However, using social media can assist in building up a brand without the need for large capital investment where brand communities can be created (Scarpi, 2010). Social media can significantly alter consumers' purchasing behaviour and brand preferences of products (Kohli *et al.*, 2015; Rapp, Beitelspacher, Grewal, Hughes, 2013; Kim & Ko, 2012).

Product attributes that differentiate one brand from another facilitate establishing the foundation on which a brand is developed. Without these differentiating attributes, products will no longer be a brand and the opportunity to ask a price premium will be lost (Kohli *et al.*, 2015). Differentiation offers two very important advantages namely, allowing companies to control their prices and to command brand loyalty (Kohli *et al.*, 2015). Brands can be differentiated according to their physical attributes. However, building emotional connections with consumers make brands stronger and more successful (Labrecque, 2014; Kohli, Thomas & Suri, 2013).

New brands tend to have a high failure rate as markets have become overcrowded and new brands sometimes fail to appeal to consumers in a way that surpasses that of established competitors. The point of difference must be worthwhile for consumers before they decide to commit to purchasing the new product (Kohli *et al.*, 2015). An established brand has multiple advantages compared to a new brand namely, cost advantages through economies of scale, lower learning curves due to more experience in the industry and established relationships with key channel members (Kohli *et al.*, 2015). Consumers may still switch to a new brand if its point of differentiation is closer to their preferences.

Consumers with a strong preference for a specific brand will support a brand and its products for three main reasons: first, brand inertia, which is the desire to stay with the same brand if their needs are satisfied; second, assurance of product quality; and third, self-expression and personal aspirations (Kohli *et al.*, 2015). In terms of artisan bottled preserved food products, consumers would continue to support the product they know if it is successful in satisfying their needs. However, consumer needs may differ. For one consumer it may be to have a product that has an excellent taste and is of a high quality, whereas another consumer might need to have an interesting and special product to give as a gift for a friend.

The assurance of product quality can come in different ways. The percentage of fruit content that the product contains could be stated or that the product does not contain preservatives, monosodium glutamate (MSG) or chemicals could be stipulated. Some consumers might purchase certain products as a means of expressing themselves in the context of their social status and only buy exclusive artisan products that usually come at a price and which may not be as freely available as many other less expensive products. So having a product that is fairly scarce could make certain consumers feel specially privileged if they have that product.

Social media can be good and bad for introducing a brand entering the market. Consumers are more likely to trust the opinions of their peers and marketers therefore lose some degree of control of their purchase choice. However, social media can assist in building brand awareness and creating brand knowledge as it has the power for information to move faster and, in addition, to amplify it (Kohli *et al.*, 2015; Kim & Ko, 2012).

Brand image: The brand image of a product is the perceived position of the product in the mind of the consumer and all the existing impressions of the product, which determine the consumer's attitudes and knowledge about the brand (Parumasur & Roberts-Lombard, 2012:303). In other words, a brand image is the collection of ideas, feelings and attitudes consumers own regarding a brand (Schmitt, 2012). A brand image comprises those captured representations of an organisation that goes beyond the reputation or identity of an organisation and is linked to a brand name which makes it a more tangible concept (Schmitt, 2012). Hoyer *et al.* (2013:108) describes a product's brand image as a representation of what a brand stands for, how favourably consumers view the brand and what the brand can offer to the consumer that its competitors cannot. Similar to a product's brand name, its brand image comprises the product's attributes that distinguish an unoccupied, unique position in the mind of the consumer that differs from their competitors (Parumasur & Roberts-Lombard, 2012:154). A strong brand image has the power to influence and shape consumers' attitudes towards the brand itself, the product, as well as purchase actions and the perception of the organisation (Romaniuk & Nenycz-Thiel, 2013). Even the colour of a product can markedly affect the brand image and ultimately influence the consumer to either buy the product or not. The colour of products should be carefully considered (Ghaderi, Ruiz & Agell, 2015).

The challenge that niche products, such as artisan bottled preserved food products, face when being introduced for the first time is that there is no established brand image to enforce the quality of the product (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:201). However, if a high-quality product is constantly offered to

consumers, it will steadily build a strong brand image (Jin, Lee & Huffman, 2012). In most instances, consumers are not fully aware of all the product offerings available on the market. Searching for any unique product may be perceived as being costly, often difficult and time-consuming and results in reliance on familiar brands (Bellman, 2005). Therefore it remains imperative for entrepreneurs of artisan bottled preserved food products to create as much brand awareness as is possible in an effort to create brand familiarity.

Marketing communication needs to be repeated constantly to keep brand awareness high therefore regular advertising campaigns are vitally important as they create much needed awareness (Hoyer *et al.*, 2013:190). Consumers perception of price fairness does not concern a product's brand image but will rather affect consumer satisfaction with that product and, in the long-term, influence consumer loyalty towards a brand, positively or negatively (Jin *et al.*, 2012). In a study done by Wang (2015) it was found that a strong brand image has a positive effect on consumers' brand preferences and does not add perceived value to food products.

Consumers who have limited or no experience with products in a specific product category are likely to trust a familiar or renowned brand name because it provides some form of reassurance, quality, dependability and performance that reduces risk perception (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:202). A strong brand image has become exceptionally important for new and existing food products as they need to rise above the clutter created by the vast number of products available on the market, a situation which can be distracting for the consumer (Kohli, Harich & Leuthesser, 2005).

Packaging: The basic function of a product's packaging is to hold the product's contents together and to protect the goods inside as they move through channels of distribution until it is sold or consumed. In addition, the packaging should always aim to convey the image the brand aims to communicate to its consumers (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:187), as consumers are inclined to base their purchase decisions on a product's visual appearance, including the size and shape of the products (Rebollor, Lindon, Serrano, Martin & Fernandez, 2012; Fenko, Schifferstein & Hekkert, 2010; Raghbir & Greenleaf, 2006; Crilly, Moutlrie & Clarkson, 2004). This is especially so when little information about a new product is available and prospective buyers have never purchased the product before (Van Rompay, Pruyn & Tieke, 2009).

Consumers are less sensitive to packaging when only one element of a product is changed, such as its height or length rather than multiple elements being changed all at once (Hoyer *et al.*, 2013:81).

Consumers tend to evaluate each element of a product's packaging individually which, in turn, affects the consumers' overall response and likeability for that product (Becker, Van Rompay, Schifferstein & Galetzka, 2011). Packaging should suit the product and promote ease of product use for the consumer. Consumers make certain inferences about products according to the way a product is packaged. For example, consumers associate a large-sized package with it being a good buy or the product being value for money (Hoyer *et al.*, 2013:90).

Other functions of packaging include promoting the product and the brand itself, facilitating storage, use and convenience, facilitating recycling and most significantly, to establish a competitive advantage (Lamb *et al.*, 2008:222-224). One of the more seemingly obvious aims of packaging is to communicate information to consumers (Orth, Campana & Malkewitz, 2010; Simms & Trott, 2010). The information presented on a product's packaging influences consumers' perception of the specific product, and the way in which they evaluate the product during their decision making prior to purchase (Becker *et al.*, 2011; Ares & Deliza, 2010; Orth & Malkewitz, 2008).

A particularly important recent consumer concern is having the ability to make healthy eating decisions where possible when shopping for food for the household. This necessitates that nutritional information is printed on the product packaging itself (Kasapila & Shaarani, 2013). Researchers even argue that if certain nutritional information is available on the front-of-pack side of food products, consumers will make healthier food product decisions (Watson, Kelly, Hector, Hughes, King, Crawford, Sergeant, Chapman, 2014). Packaging can be so powerful that it can positively influence in-store purchases of low-involvement and impulse products (Deng & Srinivasan, 2010; Simms & Trott, 2010).

Packaging influences consumers' expectations of the functional as well as the sensory attributes of a product considerably (Rebollor *et al.*, 2012; Ares & Deliza, 2010; Puyares, Ares & Carrau, 2010). In the study done by Ares & Deliza (2010) it was found that the colour and shape of dessert packaging affects consumers' expected liking and sensory expectations of desserts (Spence, 2015; Spence & Piqueras-Fiszman, 2012). Another study about colour by Piqueras-Fiszman and Spencer (2011) showed that simply changing the colour of a packet of potato chips from blue to green dramatically affected flavour perceptions of that product in a more positive way. The picture on a product's packaging and its colour can significantly mould the sensory experience of a product (Mizutani, Okamoto, Yamaguchi, Kusakabe, Dan, Yamanaka, 2010). Consumers make certain taste inferences from the type of packaging used for a specific product, which these affect their buying and

consumption decisions considerably (Hoyer *et al.*, 2013:90). It is believed that consumers perceive unusual colours, names and flavours to communicate attributes of the product on its packaging better and more appealing than using more common, familiar colours and flavours (Hoyer *et al.*, 2013:90).

The majority of small- scale entrepreneurs use glass bottles for their artisan preserved food products. Such a glass container is easily sterilised and can withstand high temperatures that are necessary for the preservation process.

Labelling: At the core of any product`s packaging is its label (Hoppert *et al.*, 2012; Lamb *et al.*, 2008:226) as it contains information such as product content, manufacturing details and its origin that help consumers make proper product selections. The size and style of lettering used on product packaging is also part of the brand communication process to consumers. Using unique lettering allows consumers to recognise the brand and identify it instantly (Hoyer *et al.*, 2013:81). The location and placement of the brand image on the product`s packaging can influence the consumer`s perception and preferences regarding that product. For example, placing the image on the top left side of a product package can lead to consumers perceiving that product to be lighter in weight than if the image were placed elsewhere. Marketers should thus focus on placing images on these “lighter locations” (Hoyer *et al.*, 2013:81).

Persuasive labelling, on the other hand, focuses on a specific promotional theme or logo to strengthen the brand`s identity in the eyes of the consumer (Lamb *et al.*, 2008:226, 231). This would be crucial for artisan bottled preserved food products that do not have a well-known brand image because consumers still have to become aware of the existence of these products and position them in their minds. Since consumers' food demand is becoming more intricate and dynamic, food labelling now plays an increasingly important role in the marketing of food products (McCluskey & Loureiro, 2003). Food labelling influences consumer behaviour in terms of the overall liking of products (Ares & Deliza, 2010; Mueller & Szolnoki, 2010). Presenting the nutritional values on the label of the product enhances the possibility of consumer acceptance as knowing the specific nutritional benefit of the product could potentially lead consumers to purchase it to at least try the product (Ares & Deliza, 2010; Bailkova & Van Trijp, 2010). The nutritional benefit of artisan bottled preserved food products could encourage product trial since neither chemical preservatives nor any artificial colouring is added. Therefore artisan bottled preserved food products can be used to complement healthy snacks.

Apart from the spoken and written verbal description, pictorial cues that appear on the label of the product such as the colour and graphics as shapes and forms, tend to improve a consumer's expectations by affecting the sensory and hedonic perceptions of that food product (Spence & Deroy, 2014; Liang, Roy, Chen & Zhang, 2013). Cardello (2007:233) puts it as follows: "Especially influential in setting sensory expectations are pictorial and photographic representations on the labels of products because they provide direct information about the product's expected colour, shape, size and even its likely textural and moistness properties".

Modern-day health concerns have brought about innovation in product labelling with the use of "traffic light food labelling" that prompts consumers to think of their health when making healthier food product purchase choices (Sonnenberg, Gelsomin, Levy, Riis, Barraclough & Thorndike, 2013). Traffic light food labelling is a colour coded system that translates nutritional information and values for consumers, green representing the healthiest option (Brownell & Koplan, 2011). This system benefits consumers from all walks of life especially the functional illiterate as it leads to better understanding of healthier eating practices and hopefully more acceptance and participation in them (Morley, Scully, Martin, Niven, Dixon & Wakefield, 2013; Roberto, Bragg, Schwartz, Seamans, Musicus, Novak & Brownell, 2012; Carbone & Zoellner, 2012; Easton, Entwistle & Williams, 2010; Rothman, Housam & Weiss, 2006).

Store image: The store image is the environment in which products are sold (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:200). A variety of factors can contribute to a store's image such as the type of merchandise carried; product brands sold within the store; product price (Smeijn, Van Riel, Ambrosini, 2004); the store's location, merchandise suitability, knowledge and congeniality of sales staff (Solomon, 2015:384). The image of a retail store serves as a perceived quality indicator to consumers (Wu, Yeh & Hsiao, 2011; Martenson, 2007; Koo, 2003). In the case artisan bottled preserved food items, they are mostly sold by young entrepreneurs usually in a food or farmers' market setting where, strictly speaking, a store image does not exist.

However, food market images differ depending on the various food products on offer. Some food markets in Gauteng and in the Western Cape only focus on having artisan food exhibitors at their markets who offer what they preserve and create a market image in the mind of the consumer by having goods displayed as a store. Many of these markets such as Hazelwood Food Market (Pretoria), Neighbour goods markets, The Palms Market and Oranjezicht Farmers' Market in Cape

Town, The Sheds (Johannesburg) and similar initiatives established in many South African towns and cities. They all have a very exclusive artisan look and feel and are places where the goods sold are of a high quality and represent local craftsmanship.

In Pretoria alone, the market image of Hazelwood Food Market in Brooklyn and that of the Pretoria Farmers Market in Silverton differ greatly and draw different types of consumers from different social and status backgrounds. Items sold at the Hazelwood Food Market tend to be higher priced and more exclusive, whereas items at the Pretoria Farmer's Market are more general with a lower average price as consumers purchase products for everyday consumption rather than for luxury intentions.

Store ambience really influences consumer behaviour and has become a significant competitive element between retailers as each seeks to create a unique sensory experience to attract consumers (Spence, Puccinelli, Grewal & Roggeveen, 2014; Morrison, Gan, Dubelaar & Oppewal, 2011). Atmospheric effects can stimulate displays that will keep consumers in store aisles for longer which could increase the chances for consumers buying more products (Solomon, 2015:385). The music played within a store and the aroma present in the store while consumers shop can influence the store's image (Morrison *et al.*, 2011). When selling artisan bottled preserved food products at food markets, music plays an important role in creating a relaxed atmosphere for consumers to browse through products at different food stalls. Aroma is certainly the main lure for many consumers to purchase products, especially the smell of cinnamon from pancake stalls or the smell of tomato relish brewing on the gas stove ready to be drizzled over a boerewors (traditional South African specified sausage) roll.

Consumers are bombarded with a variety of products from which to choose, not to mention the choice they have to make between all the possible stores where they can buy these products (Solomon, 2015:384). Stores have unique "personalities" and a clearly defined store image (Solomon, 2015:384). However, small-scale entrepreneurs lack this luxury when exhibiting their products in informal store settings such as local food and farmers' markets. Nevertheless, in the same sense, they can use the outdoor image to their advantage where consumers might feel more relaxed browsing around for products and not always in a rush to get things done as fast as possible.

Even the size of a store plays a huge role in its store image. Smaller stores offering a smaller yet highly selective range of products tend to be highly profitable (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:200). It

could therefore be said that smaller stores selling products with a high-price image will gain a more favourable store image (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2010:200).

Store image should also provide consumer assurance when returning a product should this need arise or if adjustment to the product is required in the case of dissatisfaction (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:202). This is problematic for artisan bottled preserved food products that are sold at selected food markets and home industries where these products are not necessarily available on a continual basis. Returning a product can be troublesome to do in these situations.

A store setting does not necessarily have to be in the form of a brick and mortar store. Many food entrepreneurs opt for starting their own online store from which consumers can purchase their products without entrepreneurs having the additional expenses. Renting a brick and mortar store setting comes along with its own set of expenses such as water and electricity provision, a salary for store assistant and several hidden costs. However, online stores should still create a strong “store” image as they do not have the traditional store image to go by to influence consumers’ purchase behaviour. Therefore a quality website is imperative (Dickinger & Stangl, 2013).

Online stores limit tangible elements that consumers could possibly experience when they are in a retail store or at a farmers’ market where they might be able to taste a sample of the product and also touch and feel the product they are interested in purchasing (Simonian, Forsythe, Kwon & Chattaraman, 2012; Pan & Zinkhan, 2006). This emphasises why an online store presence needs to signal quality as consumers will search for visual cues that might signify quality and value before they will consider to purchase products online (Pan & Zinkhan, 2006). Consumers also shop as a pastime as shopping is experienced as a form of recreation for many consumers (Overby & Lee, 2006). This is one drawback for online stores but a significant advantage for patrons of artisan bottled preserved food products sold at farmers markets and similar facilities where consumers enjoy browsing around for interesting finds.

Origin: Knowing the origin of a specific product contributes to a consumer’s perception of a product’s quality as they see a product originating from some countries as having a better quality than products from certain others (Balestrini & Gamble, 2006; Verbeke & Ward, 2006). The image of the country from which the product comes thus plays a role in consumers’ quality perception of their products. Consumers are, in fact, willing to pay a premium price for selected products they know are produced locally or come from certain regions (Verbeke & Roosen, 2009). An example is

that preserved figs that originate from Prins Albert in the Karoo are a speciality of that region and are well-known for their superior quality that warrants a higher price.

Ethnocentrism is seen in the observation that consumers support locally produced products as a means to differentiate their home region from foreign regions (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2008; Henseleit, Kubutzki & Treuber, 2007). This is especially so if traces of a traditional recipe are used and the taste of the product is good making it a unique product of the particular locality (Bryla, 2015). Since some consumers feel more at ease knowing where their products come from they constantly seek reassurance. It is necessary for food product producers to pass information about legislation concerning food labelling and the traceability of a food product on to the general public (Savov & Kouzmanov, 2009).

Knowledge about a food product's country of origin can affect the way consumers view a product (Hoyer *et al.*, 2013). Consumers in developing countries often believe that products from foreign countries are of higher quality than those made locally. The opposite may, however, also be true because sometimes consumers believe that local products are superior to the imported versions (Hoyer *et al.*, 2013). Consumers even go as far as not supporting products from countries they dislike because of their social and political policies. This is especially true for products manufactured in Eastern countries where ongoing political unrest is taking place (Hoyer *et al.*, 2013).

Consumers perceive a difference in food safety aspects, the degree of freshness and taste as linked to certain food products from different countries of origin (Berry, Mukherjee, Burton & Howlett, 2015). Certain legislation in the United States of America compels retailers to make use of "Country-Of-Origin-Labeling". The aim of this type of labelling is to enable consumers to make informed decisions regarding the food products they purchase (Tonsor, Lusk, Schroeder & Taylor, 2013). Consumers link the authenticity of food products to the country of origin, a feature which is conveyed by certain elements such as: *time*, which refers to the history of the manufacturer of a product; the *place*, referring to the area where it is produced; the *element of socialisation*, referring to the local community in which it was made; and lastly, its *naturalness*, which refers to the raw materials used in the food product, (Bryla, 2015). Consumers perceive the level of authenticity of a food product in terms of its natural taste, its quality, the region of origin and labelling detail (Bryla, 2015).

From a marketing perspective, the origin of a food product is emphasised when promoting it. Consumers thus find certain products more alluring than mass-produced products that have dominated the food industry since the beginning of the twentieth century (Bryla, 2015). In modern cuisine context, origin food is associated with products that are produced in a traditional manner within a specific place, sold at a higher price, are of superior quality and are available in fewer distribution channels (Bryla, 2015). These elements are typical of artisan food products that are preserved and bottled raw materials that are found in a specific region. Examples are Clemengold marmalade that is made from clementines, a fruit typical of the Limpopo region in South Africa, and preserved golden figs indigenous to Prince Albert in the Karoo region.

2.1.1.2 *Intrinsic food product attributes*

Visual appearance: The visual appearance of a product is comprised out various parts such as colour (hue), shape, texture, size, contrast, symmetry, orientation and weight (Blijlevens, Creusen & Schoormans, 2009). When some of these parts are put together consumers may perceive a product's appearance in terms of its simplicity, modernity and unity (Blijlevens *et al.*, 2009).

Visual appearance is the single most important aspect of a food product according to some food specialists, which explains why food manufacturers use food-colouring ingredients in abundance (McWilliams, 2008:50). Expected and perceived sensory characteristics of a food product are often strengthened if colour is used (Wei, Ou, Luo & Hutchings, 2012). Colour influences consumers' expectations in terms of the sensory attributes such as the taste and flavour of food products and has become one of the most decisive factors during consumers' food selection and evaluation phases (Rebollor *et al.*, 2012; Afshari-Jouybari & Farahnaky, 2011; Fernández, Castellero & Aguilera, 2005). Colour prompts the mind to expect certain flavours. For example, a shopper would expect a red sauce to have chilli and/or tomato as an ingredient, which means that the product would generally be evaluated according to the known flavour of raw product (McWilliams, 2008:50). Some reactions to colour sprout from learned associations within certain cultures but they can also have different meanings across cultures. However, it is said that the colour blue has a consistent preferences across all cultures that share similar meanings (Solomon, 2015:197). Because colour can evoke different reactions amongst consumers, it is important to consider the colour of the product itself as well as in its packaging carefully as these decisions should not be made casually for the best effect (Solomon, 2015:199,200).

Colour can signify how ripe the raw food product initially was, the strength of its dilution and, in some instances, even the degree to which it may have been heated in its preparation for preservation. For example, jams will darken when cooked for an extended period as the sugar starts to caramelize. However, colour can also be deceiving as consumers might think if the colour of a product differs from a previous experience, the taste might not be the same (Brown, 2008:1). Consumers generally have a strong preference for high chromatic foods especially green and red coloured foods (Lee, Lee, Lee & Song, 2013). Apparently these tend to evoke a stronger taste or flavour than foods of a pale colour (Wei *et al.*, 2012). The colour consumers expect a food item to have significantly influences the colour hue preference for that food item (Deliza, Macfie & Hedderley, 2003). For example, consumers would generally expect tomato chutney to have a deep red colour, so if they come across a tomato chutney that is brown in colour, which is possibly due to caramelisation occurring during the manufacturing process, consumers are likely to reject that product.

Colours may also trigger certain emotions and feelings amongst consumers. The colour red is said to stimulate appetite whereas the colour blue creates a relaxed atmosphere and effect (Solomon, 2015:197; Hoyer *et al.*, 2013:81). Colour responsiveness changes according to the consumers' age profile. Research confirms significant differences between older and younger consumers' colour preferences. Older consumers prefer white and brighter colours rather than pastel colours that younger people would choose (Solomon, 2015:198). Furthermore these colour differences would also influence consumers' perception of product labels.

The colour of a product arouses consumers' visual perception of it. The product colour can be described and specified according to its hue which refers to the pigment contained in the colour. Colours can also be categorised as being warm, red, orange or yellow; or cool green, blue or violet. Colour can also be described in terms of its saturation, its intensity, or chroma, and its lightness (Hoyer *et al.*, 2015:81).

Colour specification even go as far as some companies being awarded the exclusive use of a specific colour hue because it has become so deeply entrenched in their brand. It then forms part of what is referred to as the "trade dress" of a company (Solomon, 2015:200). High Courts only award the exclusive use of certain colour if the company applying for it can prove that consumers interested in buying their product would be confused between their product and that of their competitors, should they have a similar colour for the same type of product (Solomon, 2015:200).

Aroma: The aroma refers to the characteristic odour, scent or smell of a product that the olfactory system located in an individual's nose picks up and from which the quality of the product can be perceived by (Labouré, Repoux, Courcoux, Feron, Guichard, 2014; McWilliams, 2008:51). The *aroma*, together with the *taste* of a product, forms what we know as the *flavour* of a food. Flavour is experienced when odour signals mix with taste messages that are sent from the tongue when food is consumed. The resultant flavour that a person experiences determines whether or not food is deemed acceptable or not and from which perception of its quality can be derived (McWilliams, 2008:49).

The aroma of a food product is often influenced by whether or not the product is served hot or cold. Its acceptability depends on whether or not the aroma is pleasing or not (McWilliams, 2008:51). A pleasing aroma will entice consumers to sample the product whereas strong aromas can, in some cases, even discourage consumers to purchase a food product or acquire it to try out (Hoyer *et al.*, 2013:84; McWilliams, 2008:51). Being able to sample a food product before purchasing offers some degree of reassurance for consumers willing to buy a specific food product item (Heilman, Lakishyk & Radas, 2011; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010: 202). In the case of sealed products, consumers cannot be afforded the opportunity of being exposed to the product's aroma. For artisan preserved bottled food products it is not always possible to allow for this to happen unless the entrepreneur selling these products offers a tasting sample for consumers to experience the aroma of the food product, the opportunity for promoting it will be lost as large food retail stores are not in a position to offer such a facility. Once consumers find the aroma favourable there is a better chance that they would buy it. Then post-purchase satisfaction would lead consumers to purchase that product in the future (Hoyer *et al.*, 2013:228).

The aroma of food products is regarded almost as important as appearance as a means to evaluate the "quality and desirability" of a food product (Hultén, 2013; Brown, 2008:2). The sensory response consumers have towards a product is based on a multi-faceted reaction to aroma, taste and texture and is not simply dependent on one single sensory attribute (Poinot, Arvisenet, Ledauphina, Gaillarda, Prost, 2013). Overall, the aroma of a food product does determine the acceptance of the product and its possible purchase to a great extent (Wena, Hea, Zhub, Lana, Pana, Lic, Reeves & Wanga, 2014). Consumers' responses to scents or aromas may originate from early associations that occurred during their childhood and trigger good or bad feelings about certain products (Solomon,

2015:200). Marketers use this phenomenon to explore consumer connections between smell, memory and mood (Solomon, 2015:200).

Labouré *et al.* (2014) point out that retro-nasal perception arises when humans eat food, contending it too is one of the key factors that influence food acceptability amongst consumers. When food is consumed, aroma compounds that are responsible for aroma perception are transferred from the food to saliva in the mouth, which then travels to the olfactory receptors in the nose. With modern day technology, scientists have created an electronic nose that rapidly assesses aromas within food (Hoyer *et al.*, 2013:83). Other marketers test new product ideas on consumer panels, and then make alter the product based on the opinions of these consumers before introducing the product to the market. However, these methods do not guarantee that new products will be successfully launched and be favourably accepted. It is estimated that up to 80% of all new products fail in the marketplace due to customer rejection (De Wijk, Kooijman, Verhoeven, Holthuysen & De Graaf, 2012). Reasons for consumer likes and dislikes are difficult to pin-point, yet their reasons form the basis of consumers' food choices (De Wijk *et al.*, 2012).

Retailers use certain food and even other aromas purposely in their stores as a means to create favourable atmospherics to entice consumers to buy a product (Bosmans, 2006). However, this only works for successful product evaluation if the aroma fits the context in which it is used (Bosmans, 2006). Consumers could even spend more time processing product information when exposed to pleasant aromas, and be likely to try various product alternatives within a specific product category (Solomon, 2015:200). Some aromas also have the ability to evoke certain emotions or create a calm feeling; other aromas invoke memories or relieve stress (Solomon, 2015:200). A growing interest in new products to control unpleasant odours has intensified in recent times as there are consumers who try to control certain unsavoury aromas in the environment in which they live and work (Solomon, 2015:200).

Taste: Taste receptors are part of human anatomy and contribute to how consumers experience food (Solomon, 2015:204). Taste has a noticeable impact on consumers' food choices (Drewnowski & Darmon, 2005). Together, the combination of taste and the blend of food aromas yield the final taste and acceptance of a food product (McWilliams, 2008:52), which is usually the most influential factor in consumer selection of food products (Brown, 2008:2). The taste of food products is also affected by outside influences such as the temperature at which food is served (McWilliams, 2008:52; Brown, 2008:2). Food industrialisation has specifically brought about processes like

freezing and canning, often at the expense of how these foods taste and their nutritional and sensory quality. Novel food technology is constantly improving this deficiency to overcome this hurdle to better serve consumer demands (Buckow & Bull, 2013).

Flavour houses develop new flavours to use in food production, on a continuous basis in an effort to satisfy the ever-changing palate of the consumer (Solomon, 2015:204). Even cultural factors play a noteworthy role in what flavours and tastes are found to be desirable amongst consumers (Solomon, 2015:205). Generally a new product would go through multiple taste tests among consumer panels before that product is introduced to the market (Hoyer *et al.*, 2013:83; De Wijk *et al.*, 2012).

Young entrepreneurs of artisan bottled preserved food product usually do not have the capital to invest in consumer testing panels to gain insight into their products. They usually have to depend on playing it by ear and alter their products according to direct consumer feedback they receive when selling or marketing their products at food markets.

Texture: The texture of a food product is also referred to as the mouth feel of food and is closely linked to the appearance of food products (McWilliams, 2008:52). Texture is also used by consumers to evaluate a product's quality and overall acceptability (Chen & Opara, 2013; Bult, De Wijk & Hummel, 2007). The texture of food products has many facets and cannot be referred by only one single descriptor; therefore the texture of food products may mean different things about different products to different consumers. The texture of a variety of different food products may be described as being gritty, sticky, crunchy, light, spicy, burning, cooling, moist, and a number of spontaneously voiced descriptors. "An acceptable mouth feel is vital to repeated consumption of food products and must be developed optimally for a product to be successful in today's competitive marketplace" (McWilliams, 2008:52).

An acceptable texture of preserved bottled food products may differ among consumers. Some may prefer marmalade to be smooth whereas other consumers may prefer visible chunks of fruit. From the point of view of marketers, it remains vital to determine what terms consumers use when describing the texture of food as a means to adapting packaging information accordingly to popular demand (Antmann, Ares, Varela, Salvador, Coste & Fiszman, 2011).

It is suggested that the way in which ageing consumers perceive and experience the texture of food tends to change as their propensity to distinguish differences fades (Hutchings, Foster, Grigor, Bronlund & Morgenstern, 2014). This is an important point for entrepreneurs to note when deciding on the ideal target market for their artisan preserved food products.

Generally food texture implies what happens in the mouth of the consumers, however, it is also important to note that consumers' judgements regarding food texture can be influenced by sensory cues such as haptic inputs directly through use of the product, or indirect cues such as product labelling (Fizman & Spence, 2012). In terms of artisan bottled preserved food products it can sometimes be difficult to judge the products texture without being able to open the jar and evaluate its contents. In some cases, the product label allows consumers to evaluate the product's texture by peeping through the glass jar to determine whether a marmalade or chutney is very chunky or smooth, and then base their decisions upon that as they are precluded from touching it.

Food safety: Having consumers demand that food products are safe is on the increase. During the past few decades many incidents of foodborne illness outbreaks have received extensive media coverage and the importance of food safety with regard to consumers' health is strongly emphasised (Motarjemi, 2014). Safety in food products is crucial for brand equity of products that are marketed and promoted to consumers in emerging markets (Wanga, Maa & Gale, 2014). Brand equity is discussed in-depth in the next section. Consumer confidence in the safety of food products is generally influenced by their previous experiences with that product (De Jonge, van Trijp, Goddard, Frewer, 2008). Consumers consider high-quality products as products that are safe to consume (Van Rijswijk & Frewer, 2008). As previously mentioned, the addition of sugar and the preserving food through the use of high temperatures are two key factors in the manufacturing of preserved bottled food products since this process prevents microbial spoilage for at least two years.

2.1.1.3 *Interaction between intrinsic and extrinsic food product attributes*

Rapid economic growth and modifications occurring within the food supply chain has led to the intensified interest of quality within the food sector (Van Rijswijk & Frewer, 2008). Research indicates that consumers use price as an indicator of quality (Garber, Hyatt & Starr, 2000), especially when a consumer has limited or no knowledge of the product (Parumasur & Roberts-Lombard, 2012:24,154; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:198). Many consumers have adopted a more value-conscious way of purchasing food products, even if they can afford to pay more. Consumers demand

products that hold a more inherent quality and value for the prices they are prepared to pay (Poloian, 2003:86).

The relationship between price and quality leads consumers to believe that buying the most expensive product within the product category is probably best in terms of the quality of the product, which reduces risk perception (Schnettler, Vidal, Silva, Vallejos, and Sepúlveda, 2009). Risk can be perceived by consumers as the personal consequences they may experience from buying, using or disposing of a product or service offering (Hoyer *et al.*, 2013:58). If the perceived risk is high, consumers tend to collect more information prior to making a purchase decision than in cases where the perceived risk is low and their decision to purchase almost comes automatically (Hoyer *et al.*, 2013:58). Consumers perceive various types of risk and these are discussed in detail later in this chapter (Section 2.2.2).

In cases where consumers use this **price/quality relationship**, they essentially depend on price as a quality indicator without properly evaluating the product often due to a lack of time or product knowledge (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:198,202). Quality plays a huge role in product demand. Manufacturers have to produce products at different quality levels as a way of providing different price levels for consumers. Subsequently consumers make trade-offs between the price and quality of the product in order to purchase the most appealing product that fits their needs best (Rezapour, Hassani & Farahani, 2015). Marketers will often raise the quality of a product or reduce its price in an effort to increase consumers' perception of value (Yoon, Oh, Song, Kim & Kim, 2015). Perceived value is a mental trade-off between gains and sacrifices in the mind of the consumer (Yoon *et al.*, 2015). Marketers can also increase the perceived value of a product by increasing its level of quality and maintain a constant price (Yoon *et al.*, 2015); or maintaining the level of product quality but reducing product price (Porter & Helm, 2008); or altering both the product price and its quality (Chaudhuri & Ligas, 2009).

Retailers that consistently offer well-made products at fair prices will succeed in attracting value-conscious consumers (Poloian, 2003:86). Due to the interdependence of price and quality, cheaper products may unfortunately be perceived as lower in quality (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:198). The fact that artisan food products are generally more expensive could therefore be an advantage. Research indicates that the price-over-quality effect only occurs when consumers seek high-quality products at prestigious stores (Yoon *et al.*, 2015). Therefore the perceived price level, together with the perceived quality level, influences the store image among its targeted consumers (Yoon *et al.*,

2015). A good retail reputation may lead consumers to assume that the store offers products with high prices and with high quality (Caruana & Ewing, 2010; Lee & Shavitt, 2006). When consumers are confronted with products that have a new price or a change in quality, they tend to consider whether the difference between the new product price and its quality is significant of the value increment it has undergone, before deciding to purchase that product (Kim & Damhorst, 2010; Monroe, 2007). Price decreases and quality increases have different effects on consumers' perception of value, as consumers experience losses greater than they experience gains. Therefore marketers should always apply adjustments in a way that consumers perceive a gain and not a loss (Yoon *et al.*, 2015).

The fact that consumers may think that paying a premium price for a product yields a product that is higher in quality can be used to the advantage of entrepreneurs of artisan bottled preserved food products, as they can charge a premium price for their artisan crafted products and acquire a greater income from doing so.

A product's brand name is also used as a heuristic measure to deduce quality (Buil, De Chernatony, & Martínez, 2013). Advertising plays a pivotal role in creating brand awareness and to instigate a **brand-quality** inference in the minds of consumers (Rubio, Oubiña & Villaseñor, 2014). In the context of brand quality, Agrawal, Grimm, Kamat & Foscht (2011) identified six dimensions of brand quality that fall under external and internal signals of brand quality. *External signals* of brand quality are brand popularity; a retailer's name; and the volume of advertising done (Agrawal *et al.*, 2011). In terms of artisan bottled food products, most of the related products do not have these external signals of brand quality, as they only gain popularity when their brand awareness increases. At the early stages of product introduction, brand awareness is fairly low and the cost of high volume advertising of branding them is prohibitive and, in many cases, too expensive for young entrepreneurs who find the action unaffordable. Barriers to entering the market are unsurmountable for them and having retailers sell artisan products seems to be out of their reach. The *internal signals* of brand quality are the brand name, price and the country of origin (Agrawal *et al.*, 2011). For artisan bottled preserved food products a well-thought-out, intriguing name might attract consumer interest for this type of product, in addition to asking a premium price for it. As mentioned before, following a premium pricing strategy may signal a high-quality product to consumers. Young entrepreneurs can use the "Proudly South African" or "Produced in South Africa" slogan to their advantage as consumers tend to want to support local producers. Consumers trust certain brands and in most cases are brand loyal to a specific brand because they trust the quality

of the products of that brand. For young and up-and-coming entrepreneurs wanting to introduce artisan food products in the market, this poses a challenge as the brand quality and price relationship has not yet been established. Thus the heuristic reality of the brand-quality relationship does not exist for consumers.

Consumers who can afford expensive products find them very desirable due to their symbolic meaning. Novel, artisan food products could therefore be purchased for their potential status-enhancing value (Parumasur & Roberts-Lombard, 2012:24, 25, 305).

Brand equity can be viewed from a consumer-based or a finance-based perspective. Consumer-based brand equity is defined as the awareness, attitudes, associations, attachments and loyalties consumers have towards a brand with which they are familiar (Keller & Lehmann, 2006). Financially based brand equity refers to the value of a brand to a company (Kim, Kim, Kim, Kim & Kang, 2008). In other words, the brand remains profitable for the company to still continue producing it, and that the product performs well in the market against other competitors.

Brand equity consists of four interrelated dimensions namely: brand awareness, perceived quality, brand loyalty and brand associations (Lu, Gursoy & Lu, 2015). Factors that build brand equity are high advertising spending, high prices, high distribution intensity and distribution of products through retailers with a good store image. The authenticity of brand also contributes to the brand equity (Lu *et al.*, 2015). Artisan bottled preserved food products that enter the market cannot rely on brand equity as consumers have limited experience of their products.

Brand equity can further be enhanced through product attributes (Chitturi, Rajagopal & Vijay, 2008), which refer to the functional or physical attributes of products as well as the hedonic benefits consumers receive by using the product. Consumer experience is the nature of the interaction between the product and the consumer that ensures the utilitarian function of using the product, which can also enhance brand equity (Gentile, Spiller & Noci, 2007). In the same way that brand equity can be built, it can also be tarnished. Brand equity can be diluted by negative online and word-of-mouth criticism (Bambauer-Sachse & Mangold, 2011). Thus positive experiences with novel products are crucial to building brand equity.

Consumer brand loyalty is influenced by brand associations consumers make. Collectively these dimensions drive brand equity (Buil, Martínez & de Chernatony, 2013). A strong brand personality

forms a reliable source for building consumer-based brand equity (Lieven, Grohmann, Herrmann, Landwehr & Tilburg, 2014). Ensuring a strong brand image will continuously contribute to a firm's brand equity and positively influence consumer choice of a specific brand repeatedly (Lu *et al.*, 2015).

A **product's uniqueness** is defined by its users that are represented by a range of entities, family, regions, countries, social classes and social environments (Favalli, Skov & Byrne, 2013). The uniqueness of a product says much about the consumer's food identity (Favalli *et al.*, 2013). Current food trends indicate that consumers show much interest in particularly differentiated food products, products that are more authentic and unique than the run of the mill, mass produced food products currently dominating retail food shelves (Stolzenbach, Bredie & Byrne, 2013).

Some consumers seek unique food products as a means to forming their own identity as a person; therefore one can say that consumers differentiate themselves through the purchase of unique food products that would make them feel good and special (Guerrero, Claret, Verbeke, Vanhonacker, Enderli & Sulmont-Rossè, 2012; Guerrero, Claret, Verbeke, Enderli, Zakowska-Biemans & Vanhonacker, 2010; Guerrero, Guardia, Xicola, Verbeke, Vanhonacker & Zakowska-Biemans, 2009; Chambers, Lobb, Butler, Harvey, Bruce Traill, 2007; Fandos & Flavian, 2006). Therefore it has become extremely important to determine which elements and characteristics within a food product make that food product unique and exclusive, to better satisfy consumer demands and determine what consumer preferences are with greater accuracy (Guerrero *et al.*, 2012; Almi, Verbeke, Vanhonacker, Naes & Hersleth, 2011; Kühne, Vanhonacker, Gellynck & Verbeke, 2010). This study focuses on consumer prioritisation of product attributes applicable to a specific product category. The intended outcome is that entrepreneurs will succeed in business by optimising what is important to the consumer.

Unique food products are rarely developed in industry for mass consumption. The need to place greater emphasis on developing line extensions that reach lower risk consumers who already know the brand arises. When introducing new unique food products that do not have a strong established brand image to which consumers can refer, this problem should be addressed (Dawson, 2010). An opportunity therefore exists in the market for the promotion of authentic food products that are distinct and of superior quality, compared to mass produced food products. Unique foods offer the potential for exploiting substantial product differentiation for producers. Thus, the development of unique products may be an ideal opportunity to expand global segmentation for the producers and

entrepreneurs of typical products, and the creation of small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Tourism would be an avenue to support this endeavour as visitors desire to discover products typical of a specific country or region and their purchases would boost sales (Mattiacci & Vignali, 2004).

2.1.2 The product life cycle and artisan bottled preserved food products

A product's life cycle can be divided into four phases, the introductory, growth, maturity and declining phase. When products are in the introductory phase of the product life cycle, consumer acceptance must be gained from those who are innovative enough (innovators) to try novel products. Products which survive this phase are often purchased by "early adopters". Should this phase endure due to satisfied, loyal, product insistent consumers who repurchase the product/s, an increase in product sales will put the product into a growth phase which is the ultimate ideal (Cant, Strydom, Jooste and Du Plessis, 2008:242). It is estimated that of the 500 to 1000 new products launched annually in the Australia, less than 1% will succeed (Baker, 2002).

Innovators and early adopters would be highly important in terms of the introduction and eventual success of artisan bottled preserved food products as they are less risk averse and do not rely on the image or reputation of established brands when choosing products (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:459). They generally initiate the diffusion process of new products and help to spread new ideas amongst fellow consumers (Du Plessis *et al.*, 2007:117). Innovators are mostly young and well educated and are usually part a large social network within the community (Cant *et al.*, 2008:242).

Early adopters are generally young, very creative, well respected by their peers and/or regarded as opinion leaders within their communities (spreading new ideas through word-of-mouth), are the best connected with sales personnel and mass media making them ideal sources for information (Cant *et al.*, 2008:242). Innovators and early adopters are of particular interest for this investigation. Early majority consumers would be of little value to entrepreneurs who wish to introduce new products because they generally avoid risk and would only try a new product if it has proven to be successful. Late majority and laggard consumers are set in their ways and highly unlikely to make a contribution to boost the sales of artisan bottled preserved food products as they are very cautious and may even be suspicious of new products (Du Plessis *et al.*, 2007:118).

2.2 THE FOOD PRODUCT AND CONSUMER DECISION MAKING

Making sense of the role of the food product array during a consumer's decision-making process is an important facet of this study. Emphasis thus is placed on consumers' need recognition, their evaluation of alternatives and then their purchase decision that follows. That the entrepreneur applies this procedure is of major importance when introducing a new artisan bottled preserved food product. The information search stage is not of importance to include in this study at this point in time as this study is interested in how consumers evaluate alternative products and how these lead to making a purchase decision.

2.2.1 Need recognition

Need recognition occurs when the consumer is faced with a problem (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010: 484) and realises an unfulfilled need (Lamb *et al.*, 2008: 69). This has a bearing on the types of products consumers are looking for, their information search, number of shopping trips, and the importance placed on information sources (Thiagarajan *et al.*, 2009:212). In terms of artisan bottled preserved food products, the need might be to obtain unique products for entertaining guests on a set occasion and to impress these guests with something unique. A consumer in this situation is more likely to search at unusual selling points, such as a select food market, and not necessarily at the corner store or the nearest supermarket down the road.

Needs motivate consumers to make certain product choices (Hoyer, *et al.*, 2013:52). However, some consumers are not even aware of their needs and marketers then jump at the opportunity to make consumers aware of these "hidden" needs (Hoyer, *et al.*, 2013:52). Take a young entrepreneur promoting artisan pestos as an example. When the entrepreneur explains that these pestos can be used over chicken or with cheeses on a cheese platter, the consumer may have been unfamiliar with the possible uses for this artisan product. Through demonstration, the entrepreneur makes the consumer aware of the product's value thus instigates a need for it. Solomon (2015:42) classifies needs of consumers as three categories, namely; the need for affiliation, the need for power and the need for uniqueness. The latter meets the need of making a consumer feel special through the product's distinctive qualities (Solomon, 2015:43).

Food needs can be fairly intricate as food is considered to be an indicator of ethnic, social, religious and cultural identity. Food is also seen as a luxury item, and most predominantly regarded as a

symbol of status and power (Curet & Pestle, 2010). Status consumption fulfils the need for having luxury items (Chan & Chu, 2015). There is much variation in what people eat, which, in turn, reflects substantive variation in the status and power of consumers in society, which differentiates into those who are rich or poor, sick and healthy, overfed or undernourished. Generally, middle and high-status individuals tend to have a more sophisticated taste for food products (Curet & Pestle, 2010). With a larger disposable income, urban consumers have to consider a wider range of products and services compared to those in rural areas who have restricted access to products (Osman, Osman, Mokhtar, Setapa, Shukor, Temyati, 2014). Artisan bottled preserved food products can be seen as luxury items as the quality of these items generally justifies a premium price. It is therefore regarded as an item not many consumers can afford.

Consumers have multiple needs. For some, the need for status products is important, which explains their search for products that are unique. Luxury products are often associated with wealth and indicate specific social standing within a specific social and cultural setting. The luxury goods market has grown steadily the past few years where a large number of consumers are willing to spend large sums of money on luxury items, regardless of their income level or social standing (Chan *et al.*, 2015). Status-seeking may be the motivation for some consumers to purchase artisan bottled preserved food products as a means to impress family and friends with this high-quality, superior product which is a unique find, compared to readily available manufactured, branded products.

Due to the rise in the cost of living in recent years, food prices have rocketed (Yousif & Al-Kahtani, 2013). Therefore consumers have become much more cautious about the food products they purchase, and are more reluctant to venture out to try new food products due to their risk perception association (Fischer & Frewer, 2009). This requires increased reassurance concerning the quality and value of products when introducing novel niche products to the market, as risk perception increases when consumer are uncertain (Costa & Jongen, 2006). Risk can take on many forms that include being financial-, functional-, physical-, social-, psychological- and time-related (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010: 202). Low risk perceivers are more likely to purchase new innovative food products (Costa & Jongen, 2006). It might help young entrepreneurs to offer a tasting sample of their artisan bottled preserved food products to consumers browsing at farmers' and other food markets to reduce their risk perception when being introduced to unknown products. After experiencing the taste sample, consumers could be enticed and convinced to try this new product.

2.2.2 Evaluation of alternatives

For decision makers, choosing between the array of alternatives can be a daunting task, as each alternative has a unique set of characteristics that complicates product evaluation (Tavana, Caprio & Santos-Arteaga, 2015). Choosing between alternatives involves weighing up the different alternatives against each other (Bos, Dijksterhuis & van Baaren, 2011). Consumers' evaluation of alternatives involves a search for information to reduce their risk perception regarding the product they intend to purchase (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2010: 201). For example, personal information (such as speaking to family, friends, people whose opinions are regarded as valuable, sales personnel); and non-personal information that includes all forms of printed information such as media, labels and other means of communication.

Decision makers' perceptions of what alternatives are available may not always be a true reflection of what really is available in the market (Tavana *et al.*, 2015). After searching for information, consumers start evaluating options and identifying an evoked set of potentially suitable alternatives. During this process consumers may even seek reassurance in the form of money-back guarantees, warranties and pre-purchase trials. In the case of food products, this includes being able to sample products before purchasing them (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:202, 485). Guarantees are not necessarily available with artisan bottled preserved food products. However, these products can often be tasted (sampled) when sold at food markets but this is not always possible in major food retailers.

Certain balancing behaviours occur as a result of certain consumer beliefs concerning alternatives within a product choice set (Chernev & Carpenter, 2007). Balancing behaviour might not always occur for every different product attribute a specific product has, but rather across all the alternative products within a choice set. Just as beliefs of low and high value products within the same choice set, certain characteristics will balance others out (Chernev & Carpenter, 2007). Consumers may, for example, perceive that the negative evaluations of an attribute of one product may be counterbalanced by positive evaluations for the same attribute in another product within the same choice set (Chernev & Carpenter, 2007).

Consumers may apply different decision rules when making product choices. In some instances, innovators apply compensatory decision rules to justify a premium priced new food product for its acceptable features, superior quality or exceptional taste. Brand loyal, late majority and laggards

are set in their ways and do not easily conform to new product offerings. They would then apply non-compensatory decision rules whereby a low priced food product does not compensate for a negative evaluation of the brand on some other attribute, for example, quality. Therefore these consumers purchase specific brands and would normally not try out new products. An ideal situation for entrepreneurs of artisan bottled preserved food products would be that consumers become brand loyal to their products, and follow these non-compensatory decision rules by not being willing to try other brands (Solomon, 2015:79). In other words, consumers would demand a specific food brand and will not be prepared to sacrifice it for a novel niche food product.

Compensatory decision rules imply that consumers are exploratory in nature and enjoy trying out new products (Solomon, 2015:79). This too can be beneficial for entrepreneurs of artisan bottled preserved food products, as consumers would typically try a novel brand as compensation for the lack in variation in a familiar brand category.

Within this research investigation, the term “*food*” refers specifically to artisan bottled preserved food products within a niche consumer market. Niche markets offer entrepreneurs an enormous opportunity when they are forced to compete with larger competitors obtaining cost advantages with scale economies (Thilmany, 2007:1). Within the food sector, local products and heritage varieties present alternative product choices that are sought after by specific consumer segments, known as niche consumer markets (Thilmany, 2007:1).

The choice of alternatives may also depend on the level of risk consumers perceive when considering to purchase an artisan bottled preserved food product. The following forms of risk may influence consumers’ food purchases (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:202) and are applied to the food product investigated in this study:

- Functional risk: “The risk that the product will not perform as expected”. When a consumer buys an artisan bottled preserved food product and expects a certain type of flavour from the product and comes home to taste it and the product does not match the expected flavour.
- Physical risk: “The risk to self and others that the product may pose”. The risk of a product being infected and posing a health risk when consumed; or if there are traces of gluten, nuts or dairy for consumers intolerant to these substances that give rise to an allergic reaction when the contents are consumed. Novel artisan bottled preserved food products are not necessarily labelled in the same way that mass produced products are.

- Financial risk: “The risk that the product will not be worth its cost”. Paying a premium price for a very exclusive artisan bottled preserved food product may pose financial risk if the consumer finds that the product for some or other reason is not worth the money paid for it.
- Social risk: “The risk that a poor product choice may result in embarrassment”. Purchasing a store branded product that friends and peers might frown upon.
- Psychological risk: “The risk that a poor product choice will bruise the consumer’s ego”. If a consumer purchases a product which is disappointing and contrary to the individual’s lifestyle and food beliefs, for example, a low quality product.
- Time risk: “The risk that time spent in product search may be wasted if the product does not perform as expected”. If certain artisan bottled preserved food products are only available at exclusive stores, and consumers have to travel some distance to purchase these products, spending a lot of time to source a product only to find that the product is inferior or disappointing is irritating.

A consumer’s willingness to buy refers to what a consumer is willing to forsake in a certain situation, that is the risk that the person is willing to take on (Gibbons & Gerrard, 1998; Hafenbrädl, Hoffrage & White, 2013). Packaging also influences consumers’ willingness to buy and risk perception, as the format, shape, colour and labelling of the packaging (Ares & Deliza, 2010; Puyares, Ares & Carrau, 2010) increases or deters product acceptance (Rebollor *et al.*, 2012).

If no other product information is available to support a consumer’s purchasing decision or to reduce the degree of risk perception, consumers tend to trust the judgement of the merchandise buyer of the retail store to have made mindful decisions in selecting certain products for sale within the store. A retailer’s store image therefore reduces risk perception as it provides assurance that a product may be returned if necessary. The risk is therefore transferred to the retailer. With artisan bottled preserved food products there is not always a retailer image that could support the buying decision.

2.2.3 The purchase decision

Consumers’ purchase decisions entail a choice from their evoked set of products i.e. the selected three to five products of preference (Lamb *et al.*, 2008:71). In the general, retail setting, consumers do not encounter and evaluate one single product option but are involuntarily forced into making a selection from an array of different products (Hoppert, 2012). It is important to note that consumers

do not function in seclusion, but are influenced by personal and environmental factors during their purchase decision (Paramasur & Roberts-Lombard, 2012:251). It is hence important for marketers to determine who the typical decision makers within consumer households are and how they are influenced, to target them more effectively (Kim, Choi, Agrusa, Wang & Kim, 2010).

Family decision making has been a central topic for researchers and marketers alike for the past fifty years (Bronner & de Hoog, 2008). Family structure influences purchasing decisions greatly. Purchasing decisions made mainly by the wife or the husband tend to differ. Parents can be easily influenced by their children (Kim *et al.*, 2010). Researchers have found that children aged 16 and older influence which products are purchased in households immensely (Dauphin, Lahga, Fortin & Lacroix, 2011).

Three types of consumer purchases exist, namely trial, repeat and long-term commitment purchases. A trial purchase takes place when a consumer buys a product or brand for the first time and is purchased in smaller quantities than repeat purchases (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:497). In the context of artisan bottled preserved food products, consumers might initially only purchase a small bottle of coffee infused caramel and first try out the product before buying a larger quantity. Trial purchases are part of the exploratory phase of the purchase stage in the consumer decision making process. Artisan bottled preserved food products can be viewed in the light of a trial purchase context as consumers still need to gain awareness about these new-to-the market products. If a consumer is satisfied with the product after its trial purchase, it could lead to the repeat purchasing of the product in larger quantities. To the contrary, long-term commitment purchases usually involve the purchasing of durable goods, such as washing machines and refrigerators, without ever having the opportunity to trial the product (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:497).

Consumers are not always able to sample a food product before purchase. Therefore consumers have to rely on previous experiences of similar products on which to base their decision (Ginon, Ares, Issanchou, Laboissière & Deliza, 2014). In addition, with food products consumers have many attributes to consider for each potential product option (Charters & Pettigrew, 2007). It is important for marketers to understand the process consumers go through when making product purchasing decisions as this ensures that their marketing efforts are more effective (Kim *et al.*, 2010).

Consumers also have pertinent **shopping styles** that influence their product decisions and the way in which they evaluate product alternatives available. Eight consumer shopping and decision making

styles have been identified in the literature (Sproles & Sproles, 1990; Sproles & Kendall, 1986). The *perfectionist* or high-quality conscious consumers are those who look carefully and use a systematic process in searching for the best quality products. *Brand conscious consumers* believe that price equals quality and tend to purchase more expensive, well-known national and other brands. Consumer who are *novelty conscious* eagerly search for new and innovative products as these products are a great source of excitement to them. *Shopping conscious consumers* shop for products purely for recreational satisfaction as they find shopping a pleasant and a fulfilling activity in their spare time. *Price conscious consumers* search for products that provide value for money, and are more attracted to products that are on sale, or products that are in general cheaper. *Impulsive consumers* tend to buy on the spur of the moment and are not easily discouraged by the amount they spend, or concerned about getting the best buys available. *Confused-by-over-choice consumers* often feel overwhelmed by the variety of brands available they need to choose from and easily experience information overload. *Brand loyal consumers* are often those consumers who purchase the same loved brand or purchase products habitually at the same store over and over again. Consumers do not necessarily follow one single shopping style in all the shopping decisions they make. They may be price conscious when it comes to choices regarding bread, but brand conscious when it comes to a washing powder, which they believe to be effective and trustworthy. The purchaser to target for selling artisan bottled preserved food products should be the perfectionist, the novelty and shopping conscious, impulsive consumer interested in novel products.

The way in which a consumer explores a shopping context plays a meaningful role in their style of shopping and how they go about making purchase decisions. ***Exploratory consumer buying behaviour*** refers to activities in the buying process that alter actual behaviour to a reach a satisfactory level in preparation for a purchase (Baumgartner & Steenkamp, 1996) and has two dimensions. The first dimension is the exploratory acquisition of products when consumers tend to seek sensory stimuli in their product purchase through making risky and innovative product choices. These consumers are delighted by purchasing new, innovative and unfamiliar products. They regularly change their purchase behaviour as a means of continuously being stimulated by the experience of purchasing, and merely not purchasing products out of pure habit.

The second dimension is exploratory information seeking when consumers look for cognitive stimulation relevant to their existing consumption-related knowledge, instead of sensory stimulation, during the purchase of products in general. They like to browse among products and enjoy window shopping and are drawn to any form of promotional and marketing material that

provides information. They often enjoy talking to fellow consumers about their product- and consumption-related experiences. Baumgartner and Steenkamp (1996) developed a 20-point scale to measure exploratory buying behaviour among consumers. In this study this scale was adapted to investigate the likelihood of consumers being willing to subject artisan bottled preserved food products to a trial, and to bring to light what actually convinces them to purchase an artisan bottled preserved food product just to try.

2.3 SOCIAL– ENVIRONMENTAL INFLUENCES ON CONSUMERS` PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR

Consumer purchase behaviour and the social environment are two forces that influence one another in a continuously dynamic fashion. Urbanised populations are on the increase, with consumers, especially in these environments, continuously looking for products that offer convenience, and save time. Packaged and bottled food products have made their way into the retail sector replacing traditional ways of cooking with hassle-free convenient food products where one simply has to open the jar or package and eat its contents (Osman et al., 2014).

2.3.1 Changes in household cooking methods

The current state and presence of domestic cooking has caused great concern and angst within the media and academic circles the past few years (Braun, 2014). Academia contends that the breakdown of traditional domestic roles associated with increased female participation in the workforce and the effect that new technologies have on society today contributes to this phenomenon. Both of these contributing factors have led to deskilling in this area of expertise taking place and cooking in home kitchens disappearing. This trend results in further trickling down to the fact that children are now not able to experience a home cooked meal and absorb its benefits (Braun, 2014; Olsen & Mai, 2013; Meah & Watson, 2011). This has led to the realisation of researchers that consumers are no longer able to make rational and appropriate decisions regarding a product's true quality (Jaffe & Gertler, 2006).

In contrast, other literature shows a renewed interest in practising home food preservation that has become part of the larger food trend in which consumers are seen to distrust the global agri-food system. This has prompted consumers to source and/or buy more artisan preserved food products

that are not necessarily sold in the mass market, as well as actively practising home food preservation (Braun, 2014; Shove & Pantzar, 2005).

2.3.2 Modern society's food concerns

Amongst all the food-related concerns in modern society, such as over-nutrition, food safety, the cost of following a healthy diet and the relationship between consumer health as well as the anxiety about the living environment of people today. A decrease in food-related practices and activities such as preserving foods, is noticeable. This has sparked significant public interest and academic enquiry into the “impoverished state of domestic cooking” (Braun, 2014; Olsen & Mai, 2013; Meah & Watson, 2011; Fonte & Papapolous, 2010; Bruckmeier et al., 2006; Short 2006). At the other end of this food predicament, research indicates that mainstream agricultural commodities and food retail chains are failing to meet the needs of consumers and their food-related concerns are not being addressed, such as preparing the freshest, healthiest, most sustainably sourced food products (Braun, 2014; Jaffe & Gertler, 2006). Thus some consumers are relearning the skills of obtaining or growing, preparing and preserving their own foods in an effort to resolve their own food-related problems and in many ways fulfilling in their own needs.

The burst of interest in food-related skills in the garden, kitchen and canning industry is due to the fact that consumers want to take control of their fate and learn more about their food (Braun, 2014; Wittman, Beckie, Hergensheimer, 2012; Click & Ridberg, 2010; De Lind, 2006). This trend is described by Matchar (2013) as “homemade”, “from scratch”, “DIY” (do it yourself), “straight from the backyard”, “fresh-baked” and “artisan” foods. Food agriculture has undergone massive restructuring in recent decades causing a continuous increase of spatial and social distance between the manufacturing, processing and consumption of food, now being referred to this as “the food from nowhere” (Wittman *et al.*, 2012; Fonte & Papadopoulos, 2010). At the same time consumers have adapted to society's pressures by demanding greater convenience, speed and casual, fuss-free experiences which have all led to a dramatic alteration of consumers' food habits, their family life as well as their consumption rituals within their own individual families (Jaffe & Gertler, 2006). These demands have led to the general consumer population losing their food skills, “usurping the long-held knowledge, skills, values and cultural traditions surrounding the growing, preserving and cooking of food” (Fonte & Papapolous, 2010; Bruckmeier, 2006). This is a positive factor for artisan preserved bottled food producers as consumers would rather choose to buy their products than make them themselves due to the pressures associated with modern lifestyle living.

Farmers' markets, community-supported agricultural schemes and local food restaurants all fall under the umbrella of local food initiatives that strive to facilitate re-creating community relationships along with consumers relearning the art of gardening, cooking from scratch and preserving their own food which, in turn, rebuilds resilience amidst of their food concerns (Braun, 2014; Wittman et al., 2012).

Four influencing factors, identified by Braun (2014), shape the level of traditional food knowledge amongst consumers. They are: experiencing food *scarcity*, going without it; strongly entrenched *normative expectations* of how to procure, prepare and preserve food as something you “just made all by yourself”; the *strong influence and presence of family* relationships and social networks based on support by friends and communities; and lastly, *food knowledge* and community practices. The feeling of experiencing *scarcity* refers to some families that are not within the medium to high income bracket that enables them to purchase high end artisan foods as they simply cannot afford it. Their restricted access to income greatly influences their level of skill and attitudes towards home preservation of food (Braun, 2014). One can visualise two main powers working on the decreased prevalence of food preservation worldwide. On the one hand, there are women who simply do not have the time to preserve foods due to their changing social roles and their greater need for convenience options (Osman *et al.*, 2014; Buckley, Cowan & Mcarthy, 2007) while on the other hand income restrictions preclude some women from actively practising some food preservation options (Braun, 2014).

Normative expectations regarding the procurement, preparation and preservation of food refer to the fact that our modern society constantly brings about certain changes (Osman *et al.*, 2014; Buckley *et al.*, 2007), such as the size of living spaces. Years ago many consumers lived on large plots of land, growing their own vegetables and fruit and, to a large extent, being very self-sufficient (Braun, 2014; Shove & Pantzar, 2005). However, today modern consumers live in highly concentrated living areas in structures such as flats, small apartments and lofts, which often do not include a garden or space that allows for growing fresh produce (Braun, 2014; Shove & Pantzar 2005). It would be common practice for most women living in the earlier, more settled times, to have their own garden, preserve their harvest and have the necessary equipment to do so, with access to an abundance of knowledge from family members regarding the methods of preservation and cooking a meal from scratch on a daily basis (Braun, 2014; Shove & Pantzar, 2005). As consumers they then gained a certain level of pride and satisfaction from being so self-sufficient and their

success was further motivation to preserve their own harvested foods (Braun, 2014; Shove & Pantzar, 2005). Decades ago it would be “normal” to say that one regularly preserves food. Today the word “normal” has become a dynamic ever-changing concept where it is not so “normal” to preserve food as consumers simply do not have the time or skill to do so (Braun, 2014; Osman *et al.*, 2014).

The *strong influence and presence of family* stems from the fact that faithful practitioners knowing the art and skill of preserving food passed them on to the next generation to ensure its practice continued and this could be achieved as communities lived close together (Braun, 2014; Shove & Pantzar, 2005). *Close social networks* are still able to preserve current food knowledge even though food preservation now might have new and effective ways. Methods, expertise and passion about food preservation are constantly shared amongst members of close social networks and so the food knowledge is built upon and increases in community settings (Braun, 2014; Shove & Pantzar, 2005). This is, however, still the exception rather than the norm in many societies today.

2.4 THE ENTREPRENEUR’S ROLE IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN ECONOMY

An entrepreneur is an individual “who sees an opportunity in the market, gathers resources, creates and grows a business venture to meet these needs, bearing the risk of the venture and is rewarded with profit if it succeeds” (Gedik, Mimam & Kesici, 2015; Nieman & Nieuwenhuizen, 2009:9). Generally, when entrepreneurs decide to start a business, it is to exploit a market opportunity by addressing a specific consumer need that is currently not adequately satisfied a *gap* in the market (Lamb *et al.*, 2008:36). A typical entrepreneur can be described as someone who pursues business activities for which they have a passion, like to be in charge of their own lives, have a need for independence and achievement, are creative and innovative, willing to take risks and have determination and persistence to achieve their goals (Nieman & Nieuwenhuizen, 2009:32,33). Entrepreneurs must, most importantly, be innovators as unique ideas sprout from thinking differently (Gedik *et al.*, 2015). The art of starting a business is also knowing to do it at the right time and to base it on efficiency, timing and affordability (Gedik *et al.*, 2015).

2.4.1 Characteristics of entrepreneurs

Before starting a business, an entrepreneur should ensure that they have the following characteristics (Gedik *et al.*, 2015):

- Have the ability to set certain goals within a business plans in terms of finance, sales, production, marketing and personnel
- Have excellent communication skills, be able to sell their product concepts with great confidence, being capable to discuss, explain, sell and market their products to their target market
- Be able to see the unique selling points of their product, showing great marketing skills resulting in the purchase of their products by consumers
- Have intrapersonal abilities regarding establishing and maintaining favourable relationships with employees, customers, suppliers, investors, accountants, financial lenders and lawyers
- Have great management skills and in cases where the business grows exponentially, have the ability to employ a suitable candidate to conduct all management tasks
- For the survival of a business it is imperative that entrepreneurs have strong leadership skills and motivate their employees continuously to pursue the vision of the business
- Before starting a business, entrepreneurs should do thorough research regarding possible reasons why some businesses have failed
- Be passionate about what they do and persist with their idea and dream to make their business concept a success since the majority of great entrepreneurs have failed multiple times before finding a business concept that leads them to success
- Have the ability to solve problems with ease
- Ideally entrepreneurs should identify a business mentor who is successful and move within the same industry; gain advice from experienced and young and up-and-coming entrepreneurs; over and above this list entrepreneurs should constantly read books and network with other entrepreneurs and leaders in other businesses.

Entrepreneurship is regarded to be the best employment opportunity that exists within any country. They are also referred to as catalysts for business growth in modern day society (Nieman & Nieuwenhuizen, 2009:4). South African entrepreneurs are continuously affecting the local economy at a fundamental level and are seen as “the primary creators and drivers of new businesses” (Nieman & Nieuwenhuizen, 2009:29). Employment is closely linked to the level of growth in the economy. Therefore, if growth does not occur, fewer job opportunities are available (Nieman & Nieuwenhuizen, 2009:4). Entrepreneurial activity ensures growth within the local economy (De Vita, Mari & Poggesi, 2013) as entrepreneurs are responsible for creating jobs, a solution to unemployment.

More than 95% of all entrepreneurial activity in South Africa lies at the heart of small, medium and microenterprises (SMMEs). These businesses employ 55% of individuals previously employed by the private sector, and contribute 43% of the total value of salaries and wages paid in South Africa (Nieman & Nieuwenhuizen, 2009:3). Entrepreneurs can therefore play a crucial role in the improvement of the South African economy as well as any other economy worldwide. Micro-entrepreneurship is responsible for the majority of employment creation and income generation within West Africa (Otoo, Ibro, Fulton & Lowenberg-Deboer, 2012), showing the potential for entrepreneurship on the African continent.

The food industry has become the main source of income for many young and up-and-coming food entrepreneurs (Rahman, Ahmad, Mohamad, & Ismail, 2011). An increasing number of individuals nowadays have no other choice but to create their own employment by becoming an entrepreneur as a result of their circumstances, especially women and the youth. SMMEs are recognised as ensuring the advancement of prosperity in their local communities (Nieman & Nieuwenhuizen, 2009:30). Young graduates who possess a business background and sound product knowledge, such as Consumer Science graduates, potentially have a very good chance to succeed in the business world provided their products are well thought through as they possess many of the prerequisites for success.

Entrepreneurial sophistication is based on the type of entrepreneurial activities performed and can be found at different levels, employing different numbers of individuals (Nieman & Nieuwenhuizen, 2009:30). The five categories are: **basic survivalists** who are unaware of their own potential, illiterate and undertake few income generating activities; **pre-entrepreneurs** are collectivist and follow a welfare-orientated approach, but do not expect to be self-sustaining; **subsistence entrepreneurs** are self-employed and independent in terms of income generation, however, they lack experience in business management; **micro-entrepreneurs** employ up to nine employees, own an operating licence from a local authority, work from a fixed workshop but struggle to secure funding; **small-scale entrepreneurs** employ 10 to 49 employees, qualify for a loan from a bank, are better educated and possess adequate collateral to apply for a loan from financial institutions. A young graduate may start as a micro-entrepreneur and grow into the small-scale entrepreneur category. The skills and mind set of female entrepreneurs are the two leading sources influencing an accelerated entrance into the formal workforce industry (Nieman & Nieuwenhuizen, 2009:37, 38).

2.4.2 Challenges faced by entrepreneurs

Entrepreneurs also face a variety of tough challenges when deciding to start their own business. The majority of SMMEs fail within the first two years of their existence, mainly due to cash flow problems that occur because they fail to manage growth within their businesses (Otoo *et al.*, 2012). Some of the challenges are financial in kind, difficulty in accessing markets, appropriate technology and resources and, in some cases, also lacking business experience (Otoo *et al.*, 2012; Nieman & Nieuwenhuizen, 2009:35).

Female entrepreneurs, who represent 42% of all entrepreneurs around the world are the heartbeat of the small business world economy yet face other challenges (De Vita *et al.*, 2013). Although female entrepreneurs have been successful within the business sector, they are mostly overworked due to household responsibilities, not adequately equipped to face the business world on their own, restricted by limited financial resources, and even discriminated against within this industry that tends to be male-dominated. The skills and mind set of female entrepreneurs are the two leading resources that accelerate entrance into the workforce generally, yet culture and tradition still hamper women's entrance into any business environment negatively affecting their progress (Nieman & Nieuwenhuizen, 2009:37, 38).

Due to these various challenges entrepreneurs face, it is important to ensure that entrepreneurs have various points of innovation within their business so as to serve the market and their customers better than their competitors (Gedik *et al.*, 2015). Being innovative does not mean being inventive or aiming to reinvent the wheel. It can simply mean to adapt to new consumer trends (Gedik *et al.*, 2015). For example, producing artisan bottled preserved food products that are sugar-free and without carbohydrates as a means to supply the demand for banting diet consumers, who are consumers following the Tim Noakes line of thought where it is advised to follow a diet high in protein and medium fat without any sugar or carbohydrates at all.

Gedik *et al.* (2015) has identified five steps in innovation on a business enterprise level. First, to conduct a market analysis about the environment, consumer needs and preferences as well as what competitors are currently doing (Gedik *et al.*, 2015). For artisan bottled preserved food producers and entrepreneurs this entails doing research about gluten-free, banting diets and Paleo-friendly preserved products and the lifestyles behind these dietary beliefs. It may be that the entrepreneur needs to physically visit food markets and see what type of products are sold that will satisfy these

dietary needs to see what their competitors are currently doing. It may be that there might not be any preserved food products available to supply in the demand.

Second, to inspire and empower employees in terms of motivating innovative thinking as having an innovator spirit will be key to the success of a business (Gedik *et al.*, 2015). In the case of marketing artisan bottled preserved food products, the source of an innovative ideas cannot be guaranteed this it is an imperative to create an environment where employees feel free to make innovative suggestions as this could lead to a breakthrough. Third, to improve the strategic planning of the business with innovation lying at the core (Gedik *et al.*, 2015). If involved in an artisan bottled food product project, young and up-and-coming entrepreneurs need to realise that only if the continuously think up with new and fresh ideas and innovative strategies to stay ahead of competitors who will be doing the same thing, will lead they lead the pack and make their products more noticeable in the eyes of the consumers.

Fourth, connecting with employees and customers through facilitating information exchange is important for improving production processes and products (Gedik *et al.*, 2015). This can easily be done for artisan bottled food products just by talking to consumers at food and farmers' market venues, Discuss serving suggestions or even ask consumers how they use these products to gain consumer interest and insights, If necessary, make certain changes or alterations to the products to maximise their use to increase product sales. Fifth, seek advice from other entrepreneurs successfully implemented an innovative campaign and take advantage of their business acumen, advice for accessing possible grants and resources available to young entrepreneurs (Gedik *et al.*, 2015). Target food entrepreneurs specifically those who have been successful with innovative food concepts and products and replicate the strategy for marketing artisan bottled preserved food products.

Due to the rekindled and specialised interest in learning the skill of preservation of foods in the home, consumers have become aware of food as an item of interest in the context of social reproduction. In this case the focus would be to directly influence and increase the amount of interest in local food production, and inculcating again a sense of value in being self-sufficient within the family structure (Wittman *et al.*, 2011; Delind, 2006). This approach has changed the way consumers look at food and has led to the dramatic exponential growth in farmers' markets, not only involving purchasers of preserved products but also food entrepreneurs selling them in their own right (Wittman *et al.*, 2011). In the field of food provision this development has reshaped the

agri-food industry significantly to such an extent that altogether it can be said to have become an alternative food movement (Braun, 2014; Click & Ridberg, 2010). According to Click and Ridberg (2010) “food preservation presents an opportunity to alternative food practices away from consumer-orientated politics to politics based upon relationships to self and others”.

2.5 SUMMARY

The preservation of food has long been practised in a effort to consume seasonal crop varieties throughout the year. This particular artisan craft has, however, become lost in recent decades as a result of challenges emanating from modern lifestyles. Artisan bottled preserved food products have thus posed an opportunity for entrepreneurs to offer these products to consumers. Food products can be evaluated according to their extrinsic and intrinsic characteristics.

When consumers find themselves amidst the wide variety of food products that is available today, they are faced with the challenging task to make a choice on what to purchase. Consumers then go through the stages of the decision-making process in order to do so. From where the need for artisan products is recognised to the point where they realise certain risks are perceived about products the consumer knows little about. Consumers also have specific characterised shopping styles that differ from person to person that they exhibit during the process of making a purchase decision.

Certain social and environmental influences impact on consumers purchase behaviour. Household cooking methods have undergone a dramatic change the past few years as women have entered the workforce and the number of consumers adapting to effect of urbanisation are two of several reasons for this recent development, to name a few. Modern lifestyles have given rise to food concerns such as over-nutrition, food safety and the cost of living a healthy lifestyle.

The role of the entrepreneur is unmissable in the economy of South Africa where entrepreneurs are referred to as the catalysts for business growth in a emerging economy. Entrepreneurs are also faced with various challenges when starting up their own businesses.

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Chapter 3

Theoretical perspective, conceptual framework and research objectives

In this chapter the theoretical perspective which was used to structure the study, is explained and justified. The conceptual framework and research objectives are then presented and discussed.

3.1 THE RELEVANCE OF SHEPHERD`S MODEL OF FOOD PREFERENCES

The theoretical perspective chosen for this study was the Shepherd`s Model of Food Preferences (SMFP) which was used to organise main concepts, indicators and discussions throughout the study.

3.1.1 Introduction

Factors that influence consumers` food preferences are the basis of Shepherd`s model. These variables fall into three main categories namely: food; person; and the economic and social environments (MacFie & Thomson, 1994:204) as depicted in Figure 3.1.

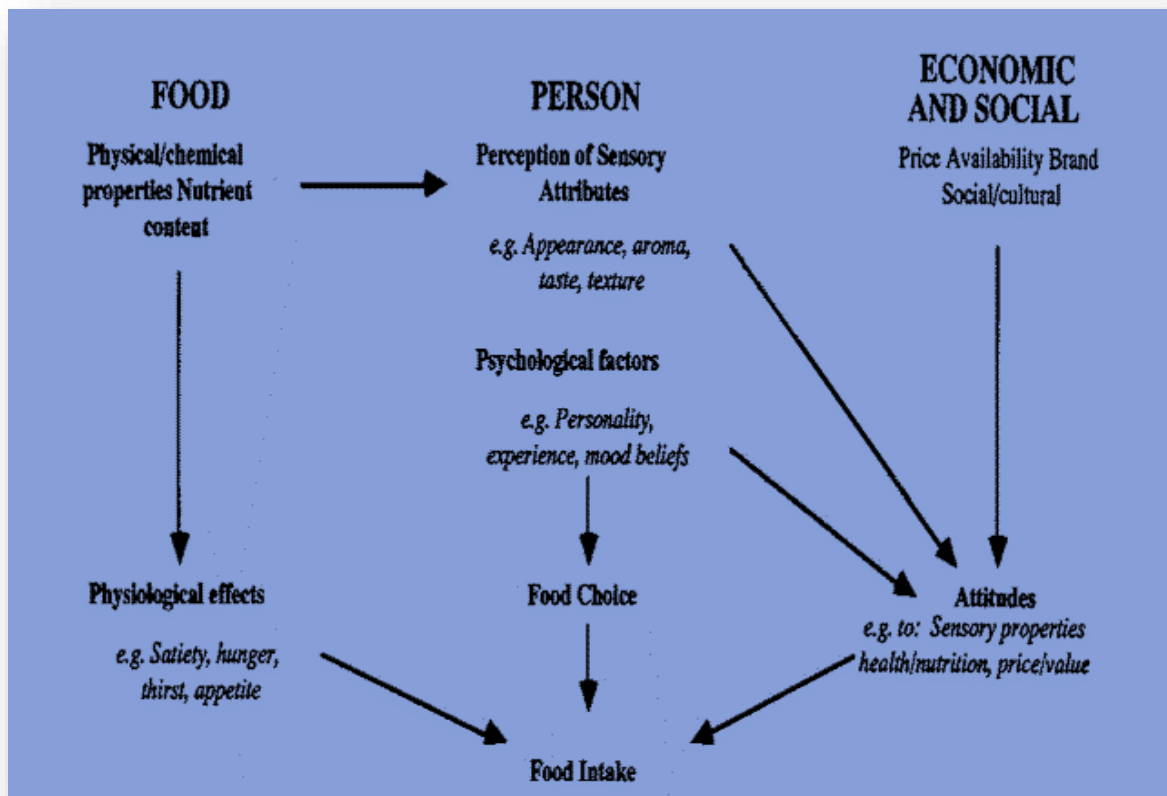


FIGURE 3.1: SHEPHERD’S MODEL OF FOOD CHOICE (SHEPHERD, 1989)

3.1.2 The “Food”

“Food” in the context of this study includes factors that are related to artisan bottled preserved food products. These variables have “chemical and physical properties” and are perceived and experienced by the person “in terms of sensory attributes such as flavour, texture or appearance”. A person’s liking in one or more of these attributes determines and influences preferences for a specific food (MacFie & Thomson, 1994:204,205). Food in this study represents the extrinsic, intrinsic and integrated food product characteristics although, within the Shepherd’s Model of Food Choice, food can also relate to the level of satiety, thirst, hunger and appetite consumers experience in terms of the physiological effects they experience with regard to food choice and food intake (Shepherd, 1999).

Eating, drinking and food choices are the most recurring consumer behaviour choices (Koster, 2009). Consumers in a modern day Westernised society face a vast array of food products from which to choose and are in search of products that best fit their needs (Linder, Uhl, Fließbach, Trautner, Elger & Weber, 2010). Making a simple choice of buying a food product has now become a more

challenging task as food products are so differentiated in terms of each offering at point of sale, and different pricing strategies. Unique and diverse sensory experiences as well as nutritional content are also influential in terms of food choices (Shepherd & Raats, 2006:ix). It is easy to become confused when having to decide on which food products are the best and what “good” food means. Is it for example food that is organic, fair trade, local or ethically produced? (Joose & Hracs, 2015). The variety of food products is continuously changing and the attributes of food products are constantly increasing in complexity which challenges consumers’ ability to make the “right choice”. Making these choices has thus become more time-consuming for many consumers although food applications on cell phones and collective buying groups have, to some degree, assisted and even influenced consumers in making these choices (Joose & Hracs, 2015). It seems as if consumers are in search of “real” and “true” foods that have become entrenched within their personal and shared social histories (Autio, Collins, Whalen, Anttila, 2013).

Many consumers have become increasingly concerned about their food choices (Joose & Hracs, 2015). Consumer food consumption has gained an extraordinary level of importance and has even become a major structuring power in consumer society (Joose & Hracs, 2015). More and more consumers are seeing local foods as a more sustainable option in their daily food choices than before. They perceive local foods to be safer than some foods from their imported competitors. They are showing stronger ethical associations with local producers and, most importantly, recognise that local products taste better than their imported versions (Autio *et al.*, 2013). It has also come to light in a Finnish consumer study that consumers place more value on products that have been self-produced and self-processed, associating local foods with a greater level of craftsmanship and artisan production (Autio *et al.*, 2013). This leads one to believe that consumers may be willing to produce their own artisan products although in smaller quantities and not necessarily for selling but rather for personal satisfaction.

Food preference is based on a consumer’s comparison of two or more foods from a larger set from which the consumers then make their food choice (Rozin, 2006:24). Two very important facts to take note of when looking at food preference is first, that it is one of many influencing factors of food intake and not the sole influencing factor; and second, that food preference is related to food liking but food preference does not equal food liking (Rozin, 2006:24). For example, a sugar-free apricot marmalade may be preferred above its full-sugar substitute for health reasons but, in fact, the consumer might like the full-sugar substitute more. So what is preferred and what is liked is not always the same thing.

Many consumers have now gained preference for ethically sourced and produced foods and, in many ways, this has shaped food choice behaviour among consumers (Clarke, Cloke, Barnett & Malpass, 2008) as many want to make sound moral food choices (Christensen, Godsken, Hanssen, Quitzau & Røpke, 2007). Consumers do have specific food preferences. Modern consumers prefer food products that comply with certain ethical standards. An example of this is “fair trade” products that fit into the concept of ethical consumerism where the social and environmental concerns are taken into account when producing and manufacturing food products. Consumers are also apparently willing to pay a premium price for these products (De Ferran & Grunert, 2007). Food preferences will finally determine whether consumers will purchase a product or not, and it is key to create food products that fall under this type of consumer preference (Clarke *et al.*, 2008).

Food, and food choice for that matter, pervades human life and activities on every level possible (Rozin, 2006:19). Food preference also dictates food choice that, in turn, is strongly governed by its availability as well as economic and geographical factors (Rozin, 2006:24). Food choices are not exclusively based on the nutritional value gained from its consumption since many other factors, particularly appearance, lifestyle, image and level of healthiness (Milošević, Žeželj, Gorton & Barjolle, 2012) too play a role in the decision made. The appearance of food is one of the most important factors that affect consumers’ food choices. It depends on whether they perceive it to be favourable or not before they choose to purchase and eat it. Food choices relate closely to consumers’ lifestyles as convenience, their level of activity and the type of diet they follow are dominant criteria. Food choices are also made in conjunction with a certain image consumers seek to portray by using a certain product that may be an image of status or luxury (Milošević *et al.*, 2012). If certain foods are not concurring with this image, consumers will not purchase or consume that product.

For some people, the health value of the particular food will determine whether or not they will choose to eat that product or not (Milošević *et al.*, 2012). Even the information and images on food product labels may affect consumers’ food choice decisions (Linder *et al.*, 2010). From a marketing perspective, determining consumers’ motives behind food choices can assist in tailoring media messages and marketing communication to better position products in the market (Milošević *et al.*, 2012). Even people’s level of employment influences their food choices (Blake, Wethington, Farrell, Bisogni & Devine, 2011) in terms of time demands, the level of job strain and the accessibility of food within or near the workplace (Devine, Nelson, Chin, Dozier & Fernandez, 2007). Working parents make certain food choice coping decisions in their daily lives such as deciding to consume

meals away from the home in the form of convenience foods and, in some cases, family members skip a meal during the day, a situation often found in single-parent households (Blake, *et al.*, 2011). Home-cooked meal consumption is more prevalent in families where one spouse works and the other spouse stays at home (Blake *et al.*, 2011). Therefore food choice also depends on work schedules, marital status, partner's employment and the number of children within a family (Blake *et al.*, 2011).

Over and above all these facts, women still remain in the majority as gatekeepers to their family's diet, of food purchasing and food choices (Jilcott, Laraia, Evenson & Ammerman, 2009). In a study done by Jilcott *et al.* (2009), it was found that the food choices of co-workers markedly affected working women's food choices, which illustrates the influence of a surrounding work environment on food habits. Food choices made at home are predominantly influenced by what family members feel like eating on that particular day, the health concerns of family members as well as the need for convenient food items due to a lack of time and/or even skills (Jilcott *et al.*, 2009).

According to Shepherd's Model of Food Choice, consumers experience certain physiological effects in terms of consuming food, itemised as satiety, hunger, thirst and appetite (Shepherd, 1999). In modern Westernised culture the traditional consumption structure of consuming three meals per day is changing to a more individualised eating pattern that is adapted to individual needs and lifestyles (Bilman, Van Trijp & Renes, 2010; Jastran, Bisogni, Sobal, Blake & Devine, 2010). Work roles, lifestyle changes and family organisation has caused greater prevalence of irregular meal consumption moving away from fixed meal times and moving closer to small in-between meals throughout the day (Bilman *et al.*, 2010; Jastran *et al.*, 2010). Promoters of artisan bottled preserved food should take note of these changing consumption patterns and utilise these trend changes as an opportunity to come up with more interesting food options for consumers, especially those on the go. Convenient yet high quality products that are easy to eat and appropriately meet their needs are their main choices. An example of this would be a healthy hummus spread rich in omega oils, high in fibre and sugar-free. It should appeal to children and adults alike and entrepreneurs could market this product by simply using dipping vegetable sticks with it. It would be a balanced lunch option. The same applies to vegetable dips and different kinds of pestos, all falling in the artisan bottled preserved food group. The important fact is that consumption out of the home is on the rise (Orfanos, Naska, Trichopoulos, Slimani, Ferrari, van Bakel & Trichopoulou, 2007; Ribas-Barba, Serra-Majem, Salvador, Castell, Cabezas, Salleras & Plasencia, 2007), and entrepreneurs involved in an artisan bottled preserved food products business should take notice of this advice.

Recent consumer studies have indicated that snacks, items eaten between meals, constitute more than 40% of consumers' daily food intake (Rangan, Schindeler, Hector, Gill, Webb, 2009; Rangan, Randall, Hector, Gill, Webb, 2008). Consumer snacking behaviour is triggered by feelings of hunger and the desire to eat something. It is done for two reasons, namely, satiation to reduce the feelings of hunger or to temporarily bridge the time gap until the next large meal is eaten (Benelam, 2009; Bellisle, 2008). Therefore snacking food behaviour can pose a great opportunity for young entrepreneurs to come up with healthy artisan bottled preserved food products to complement their snacks and fulfil this need of modern consumers.

3.1.3 The "Person"

Person, accommodates those variables that relate to a person, in this study, a consumer making the choice as to whether to try or purchase artisan bottled preserved food products or not. A person's personality can also influence their food preferences as well as demographic factors that apply to them, their age, occupation, income, gender and other personal characteristics. Every person has a set of specific beliefs regarding food. These beliefs contribute and have a distinct bearing on the food choices made on a daily basis (Shepherd, 1999) In this study, the term "person" represents consumers, their demographic profile, shopping styles as well as any forces that can impact the way in which they evaluate bottled preserved food products in general.

Upon purchasing any product a consumer expects a certain outcome from using the product. The degree to which these expectations are met determines the level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction of the consumer (Lamb *et al.*, 2008: 72). Consumers' satisfaction with a product results from their expectations and the real performance of the product (Bao *et al.*, 2007).

The increased number of women entering the workforce has stimulated the demand for convenience food products as working women have less available time to conduct their traditional house and family responsibilities in (Buckley, Cowan & McCarthy, 2007).

3.1.3.1 Age

Consumers in different age groups have different product needs, as age is a key factor in marketing products to the consumer (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010: 78). Age also influences the consumer's purchasing priorities in that younger and middle-aged consumers tend to purchase luxury products

whereas older retired consumers, in contrast to this, tend to be careful in making luxury purchases as they work more sensibly with their income (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010: 78). Studies have found (Mortimer & Clarke, 2011) that younger consumers tend to undertake the task of grocery shopping together, rather than as separately as a male or female. Older males, in contrast to younger males, prefer to shop with shopping lists as they believe this assists them in navigating throughout the store and to locate specific departments or sections from which they make their product choices (Thomas & Garland, 2004:632). Age may also impact the degree to which the task of shopping is enjoyable for the consumer. Younger men tend to be disengaged and mostly unhappy when shopping, whereas older men lean towards being either bored or disinterested (Otnes & McGrath, 2001:136).

Consumers are also typecast in certain age categories commonly referred to as baby boomers, the X-generation and the Y-generation, also known as the millennials - each consumer generation has its own personality and food habits (Detre, Mark & Clark, 2010). **Baby boomers** are those consumers who were born between 1946 and 1965 (Hunter & Worsley, 2009). Almost 80% of these consumers tend to prepare meals from scratch, and only a small percentage of them rely on convenience foods (Hunter & Worsley, 2009). Baby boomers gravitate to special offers and cheaper food brands (Hunter & Worsley, 2009).

Consumers referred to as the **generation X** were born between 1960 and 1980 (Taylor & Keeter, 2010). The basic differences between generation X and generation Y is that generation X tends to use internet and social media platforms less, are more brand loyal to certain food products and more risk averse during their purchasing experiences (Reisenwitz & Iyer, 2009). Some of the differences between baby boomers and the millennials are that baby boomers value in-store experiences and service quality more so than millennials do (Parment, 2013). For baby boomers the process of purchasing starts with trusting the retailer from whom the products are purchased, and from whom they then seek advice about which product is the best to buy. Therefore, in short, the relationship is more important than the product (Parment, 2013). In the case of millennials, the process of purchasing starts with the product and building a relationship with a retailer is not of paramount importance to them (Parment, 2013).

Millennials also fall in the green consumer category where they support the conservation of food and animals through responsible food purchasing, such as only buying local foods that part of fair trade and are farmed ethically (Furrow & Knott, 2009). These consumers are even shifting spending

towards food manufacturers who share the same social values as they do (Mangold & Smith, 2012). Millennials are the teens and twenty-something consumers who approached adulthood at the start of a new millennium (Detre *et al.*, 2010). Millennials were born between 1980 and 2000. They are confident, upbeat, freely expressive and open to change (Mangold & Smith, 2012; Taylor & Keeter, 2010). This generation is more highly educated and technologically connected than other generations, and differ greatly in terms of attitudes, lifestyles, value systems, beliefs and behaviours (Taylor & Keeter, 2010). Millennials refer to social media when in need of important product information. They have thus changed the role that social media plays in the daily life of the consumer forever since they, as consumers, purchase in groups and socialise more (Mangold & Smith, 2012). These consumers are exposed to multiple product reviews of other consumers posting their product experience on social platforms like Facebook (Mangold & Smith, 2012). Millennials are also referred to as the online-generation. Artisan bottled preserved food products would flourish under these conditions providing a great opportunity for entrepreneurs in this field.

The food sector has realised that they have to become more mindful of what millennials seek in food products, and what their needs and desires are when it comes to food (Detre *et al.*, 2010). Food brands that might have been popular with their parents are no longer preferred by millennials (Mangold & Smith, 2012). Millennials are generally most concerned with practising a healthy lifestyle, and opt for fresh food products instead of fast food alternatives (Detre *et al.*, 2010). Farmers' markets have, for this reason, become a very attractive destination younger consumers to purchase foodstuffs, as they perceive products from farmers' markets as being a better quality, offering a wider variety and being better priced in comparison to retail alternatives (Detre *et al.*, 2010). However, it is also important to note that farmers markets are not always easily accessible for all. Those who are unable to travel far are thus not exposed to the wider variety of fresher and better quality products markets offer and are not generally found elsewhere (Detre *et al.*, 2010).

It is important for all entrepreneurs of artisan bottled preserved food products to have insight into and be aware of these consumer age groups' characteristics and foibles - how they act and make certain decisions regarding the food they consume - in order to better target an ideal consumer group to accommodate all groups and with their preferred range of products. Millennials are certainly a very important market to serve and should not be underestimated nor ignored (Mangold & Smith, 2012), as they have the numbers and purchasing power that can change a country's economy (Noble, Haytko & Phillips, 2009).

3.1.3.2 Changing gender roles

Previous research has indicated that gender plays a significant role in how consumers behave and what products they choose to purchase and consume (Vandello, Bosson, Cohen, Burnaford & Weaver, 2008). Clear product associations and expectations exist that relate to gender preferences (Vandello *et al.*, 2008). Consumers abide by certain gender norms which serve as guidelines for consumer product choices and their preferences (White & Dahl, 2006). An example is portion sizes of meat ordered in restaurants, as in the case of a “man-size” fillet versus a “lady’s rump” or a given weight, (500g vs 120 g) to recognise gender sensitivity.

Joint gender consumption has become a popular topic in recent consumer research investigations. Products purchased for dual consumption can provide important information on whether the decision maker took family members’ preferences into account or if the product is what the decision maker prefers (Yang, Chartrand & Fitzsimons, 2015).

Family grocery shopping has also been viewed to be a traditional activity performed exclusively by women (Mortimer & Clark, 2011). However, modern social and demographic movements have come to change traditional gender roles within the family structure, and men have become more comfortable conducting the task of grocery shopping (Parumasur & Roberts-Lombard, 2012:122; Mortimer & Clark, 2011). In light of this, men are currently engaging in grocery shopping more spontaneously and frequently than before (Mortimer & Clark, 2011). Males tend to voice their opinions on social media platforms more than females do especially with regard to food product experiences (Mangold & Smith, 2012). Men have also become more knowledgeable about household goods and practice than they were in past years (Parumasur & Roberts-Lombard, 2012:126).

By tradition, men have always been less involved in family shopping activities although recently this has started changing partly as a result of increased female participation in the workforce, and partly because of the shifting role expectations of men due to the drive towards equality of the sexes (Parumasur & Roberts-Lombard, 2012:126). Therefore retailers should take cognisance of men’s views and roles in the context of the differences in decision making styles between men and women. Retailers often ignore the idea of men as retail shoppers while young males particularly are now emerging in a more prominent purchasing role (Bakewell & Mitchell, 2006).

A dramatic increase in the number of women entering the labour market in a full-time capacity has resulted in a greater need for one-stop shopping, fast food outlets and time-saving devices (Poloian, 2003:82). More recently online shopping and grocery delivery services are only some of the many time-saving devices that have become more common for multi-task individuals to use (Poloian, 2003:86) and a range of other consumers to benefit from these kind of facilities that are tending to expand.

3.1.3.3 Consumers' financial ability and the role of status

The increase in consumer debt has resulted in the proportion of households' discretionary income declining (Fornell, Rust & Dekimpe, 2010; Guttman & Plihon, 2010) over the past few years. Food has, however, still remained a key component of consumers' overall monthly expenditure (Shepherd & Raats, 2006:ix). The increase in consumer debt influences consumer demand for certain food products as it constrains the consumer's budget and their ability to spend their income on certain consumables especially luxury products of which as artisan bottled preserved food products would be an example (Fornell et al., 2010). Consumers also go under certain social pressures with regard to the brands they buy, the clothes they wear, the car they drive and even the type of food they eat and where they buy their food (Thomas & Wilson, 2012). Consumers across the world are taking on more and more debt to comply with these social standards and cope under these social pressures (Thomas & Wilson, 2012). It is important to note that not all consumers would be able to afford artisan bottled preserved food products that are exclusive. This characteristic automatically eliminates low income consumers as well as consumers who do not venture out and break away from the norm to buy such products from unique stores and food markets that are not generally readily available at large retail stores. Whatever the circumstances, food choice has become such an integral part of the food industry as it impacts food production, food manufacturing, food retail, catering and collectively all these parts contribute to the national economy (Shepherd & Raats, 2006:ix).

However, several factors have contributed to the rising standard of living among certain consumers sectors in the twenty-first century. An increase number of dual income families, a rise in the level of sophistication amongst well-educated individuals, higher paying occupations within technological fields and an increase in wealth due to growth in stock markets (Poloian, 2003:84) have contributed to this trend. Nevertheless customers' food product decisions and buying behaviour are determined by the funds available in their disposable as well as their discretionary income allocations (Mansoor & Jala, 2010; Poloian, 2003:84). A consumer's disposable income is the amount of money available

for purchases after taxes have been deducted. Discretionary income is the amount of money available for non-essential purchases after taxes, and basic food, clothing and shelter expenses have been paid. Retailers are mostly interested in the discretionary income of consumers as it allows for luxury and impulse purchasing (Poloian, 2003:84). Food choice and the quality of consumers' diets are directly related to food cost. What consumers can afford in tough economic times versus times in a booming economy differ (Miller & Branscum, 2012). During tough economic times food choice may be altered as healthier foods tend to be more expensive and consumers gradually change their diets to cheaper foods rich in refined grains, fatty proteins and added fats signifying a drop in socio-economic status (Darmon & Drewnowski, 2008; Beydoun & Wang, 2008).

The majority of modern consumers are now being referred to as "conspicuous consumers" consuming a large amount of status products in order to enhance their social standing and thus to favourably influence social comparisons (Thomas & Wilson, 2012). Artisan bottled preserved food products come at a premium price and fit perfectly into the need some consumers have to purchase and consume status products. Artisan bottled preserved food products are in this category as they are usually produced in limited quantities thus making them exclusive.

Individual and family income reflects a household's social class standing (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2010:341). Affluent consumer households have become an especially attractive, targeted market segment as their earning incomes provide a disproportionately large amount of discretionary income that enables them to afford luxury purchases to fulfil the "want" rather than the "need" of this consumer sector (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:347). Yet there are also two different types of affluent consumers in society, the passionate and the logical affluent consumers (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:348). Passionate affluent consumers are consumers who love the sophistication of shopping in a luxury and indulgent environment and who are willing to pay the full price of the product on offer (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:348). Logical affluent consumers, on the other hand, might not grow up being exposed to the brands that they now can afford to purchase. They therefore will search for some form of discounts or savings or require the brand to prove itself because they tend to seek value for money (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:348).

3.1.3.4 Consumers' product preferences

Brand preference refers to the propensity consumers have to select a specific brand or product from a group of known available brands (Paramasur & Roberts-Lombard, 2012:304,305). Two conditions influence brand preference. First, when consumers are exposed to various brands, consumers must

feel that one specific brand satisfies their needs in such a unique way that no other brand is able to meet the same level of satisfaction. Second, brand preference is a direct outcome of efficient consumer decision making that comes from past experiences and reinforcement of previous purchases that yield efficiency during consumer shopping decisions (Paramasur & Roberts-Lombard, 2012:304,305).

An ultimate outcome from the consumer decision making process would be that of creating brand preference sprouting from the trial of artisan bottled preserved food products. Consumers have knowledge of several brands (Parumasur & Roberts-Lombard, 2012:304,305) available on the market that sprouts from their evoked, inept and inert set of experiences (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010: 488). Their span of knowledge changes over time as they are exposed to new products, product prices and feature changes. Many niche products may form part of the inert set of composed brands that are being overlooked (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010: 488). Consumers hold positive attitudes towards some brands due to past experience and interactions with certain products of the same type. Upon evaluation of products, the consumer feels that one specific brand among all others available is more satisfying. The consumer will base their judgements according to certain values of which enhancement of self-image and status is one. These positive attitudes then develop into behaviour that result in a product purchase of the consumer's most favoured brand. During the process where consumer attitudes change into consumer behaviour, brand switching may occur due to a change in a product's brand image or a positive or negative product experience, or the favourable exposure of a new product (Parumasur & Roberts-Lombard, 2012: 304).

Vulnerability exists to a certain degree among brand loyal consumers who may buy a certain brand but still like other brands equally well or better. Consumers then become vulnerable and susceptible to abandoning their brand loyalty to another brand induce brand switching as a result (Parumasur & Roberts-Lombard, 2012: 307). Therefore one could say that entrepreneurs of artisan bottled preserved food products could utilise the opportunity created by brand loyal consumers of private or national products switching to artisan bottled preserved food products after a favourable trial and even lead to repeat purchasing of these preserved food products.

Consumers' preference for artisan bottled preserved food products can be voiced as the type of product they prefer to purchase for several reasons relating to their *product preferences*: being value for money and rather than a mass-produced item an artisan crafted product that is more exclusive and of higher quality. Or are *brand preferences* more important? Do consumers prefer

mass-produced readily available brands or unique products that might not have a brand image yet but are in the growing phase of creating stronger brand awareness. *Store preferences* too can motivate purchase choices; some consumers prefer scouting for products at interesting food markets rather than going to familiar stores and purchasing the same products again and again. In rural towns, shops are few and far between, but these shops tend to stock speciality products creating an ideal environment in which artisan bottled preserved food products would thrive as tourists and visitors flock to these artisan towns like Dullstroom in Mpumalanga, Parys and Clarens in the Free State and others in the country. In urban areas too, speciality food markets are becoming more prevalent and expanding their market sphere but products sourced here usually come at a price, tending to be more expensive because of their artisan nature.

3.1.4 The “External economic and social environment”

The ***external economic and social environment*** refers to certain societal changes that have occurred over the past few decades, in particular, more women entering the workforce and the greater presence of a more urbanised population that now has different product needs. Marketing, cultural, religious, social and economic factors all influence a person’s attitudes and beliefs and result in influencing a person’s total food choice array (Shepherd & Raats, 2006). The external environment in this study also refers to the environment in which consumers purchase artisan bottled preserved food products, be it at a deli, food markets, farmers’ markets, in a retail store setting, online, at farm stalls or any another suitable venue.

In their study, Jilcott *et al.* (2009) point out that women living in rural and those in urbanised settings have different perceptions of food choices. Rural settings tend to have fewer supermarkets and fast food restaurants and outlets compared to urbanised areas that, in turn, tend to have fewer fresh produce stands. Those who commute from rural homes to urban places of work notice this difference too.

It is important to take note how interrelated these three categories of variables are, the “food”, the “person” and the total “socio-economic environment”. Shepherd’s (1999) viewpoint stresses that a “person’s” set of beliefs influences their food choice to a remarkable degree. Yet these beliefs are formed and influenced by another force or factor, namely, the external economic and social environments that constitute other sub-forces, particularly marketing, cultural factors, price and

availability of products, brands, health and nutrition, and the value sought from a product (Shepherd, 1999).

Artisan food products may present a convenient food item for the working mother as well as the status conscious individual (Parumasur & Roberts-Lombard, 2012:24, 25, 305) who aims to make a social statement by purchasing a premium priced food product. These assumptions are often applicable to the case with artisan food products that do not benefit from the economies scale associated with the manufacturing process (Thilmany, 2007:1). Preserved artisan food products are not always predominantly sold within traditional distribution channels, such as being available on retail store shelves. They are also found in more informal settings such as farmers' markets, local food markets and small food delicatessens, which also allow consumers to sample products. This practice is not always possible when a consumer stands in front of a retail store shelf trying to decide which product to purchase (Wittman *et al.*, 2011). Sampling a food item would play a pivotal role in convincing a consumer to purchase that product (Heilman, Lakishyk & Radas, 2011). Offering free samples to consumers is very effective when encouraging a consumer to purchase a product as a trial experience to test the product. This is especially useful for a consumer who knows very little about that product, may not have ever seen it before or ever been exposed to it (Heilman *et al.*, 2011). Sampling the product could even go as far as switching from a planned brand purchase to the brand that is being promoted via the sample (Heilman *et al.*, 2011).

3.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Preserved bottled food products are differentiated and characterised by different product features and criteria that consumers take into account when purchasing a particular type of food product.

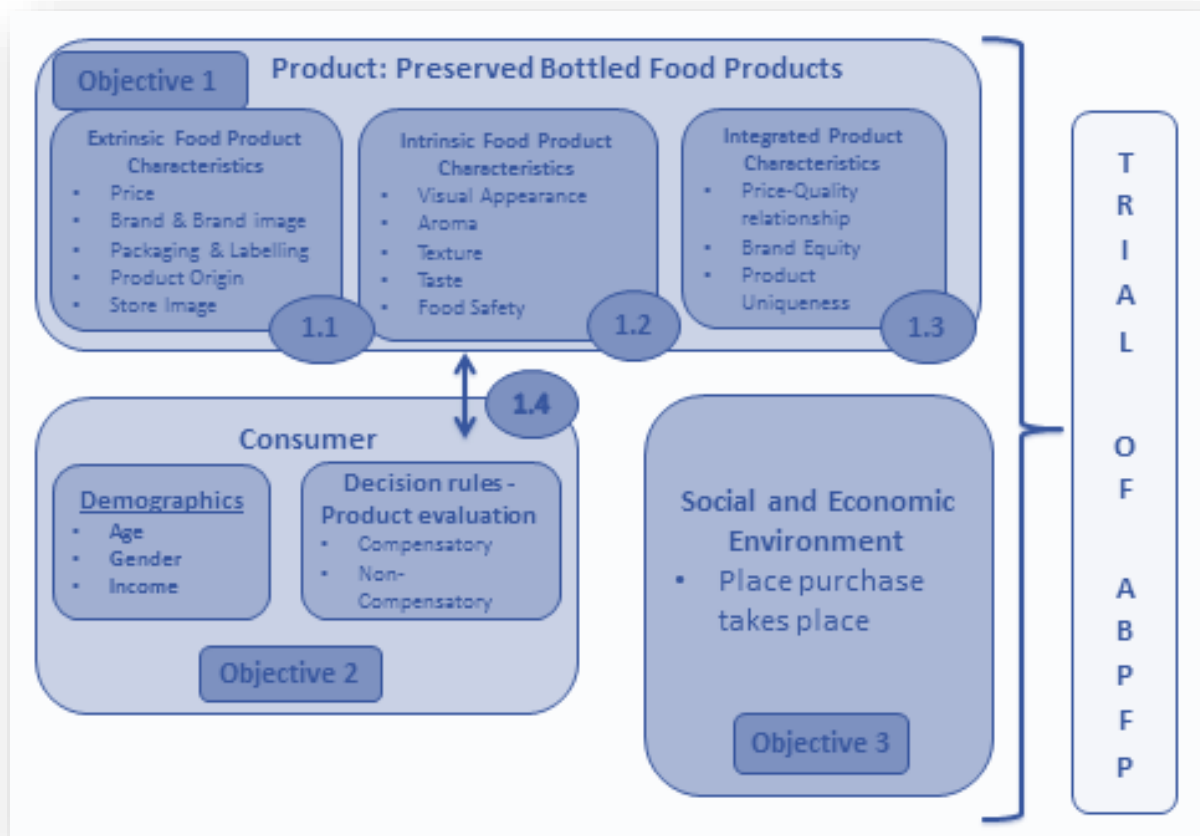


FIGURE 3.2: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Food product characteristics are categorised as extrinsic (price, brand and brand image, packaging and labelling, product origin and store image); intrinsic (aroma, texture, taste and flavour, visual appearance and product safety); and integrated product characteristics (price-quality, brand-quality and brand-equity and product uniqueness). These aspects may be used to deduce quality or value for money when consumers have limited time or experience to properly evaluate products. The social and economic environments are highly influential in consumers' product choices as their components determine the context in which products are chosen and used.

3.3 AIM OF THE STUDY AND RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

In essence, this study aims to provide empirical evidence that entrepreneurs can use to introduce consumers to artisan bottled preserved food products. Specific evidence about **product characteristics** that would favourably impress consumers and encourage them to try the products

is sought, as well as knowledge of **consumer characteristics** as reflected in their shopping styles and demographic profiles that might be useful predictors of viable target markets.

Objective 1:

To investigate and describe the importance of selected extrinsic, intrinsic and integrated product attributes during consumers' evaluation of artisan bottled preserved food products; it is necessary to investigate and describe the following aspects of consumers' evaluation of bottled preserved food products in genera that reveals consumers' prioritisation of products' characteristics regarding the importance of selected:

- 1.1 **extrinsic characteristics:** store image, price, brand, brand image, packaging, labelling and product origin
- 1.2 **intrinsic characteristics:** aroma, texture, taste and visual appearance and product safety
- 1.3 **integrated product characteristics:** the price-quality relationship; the brand-quality relationship; brand-equity and product uniqueness.
- 1.4 **extrinsic, intrinsic and integrated product characteristics.**

Objective 2:

To investigate and describe consumers' application of compensatory and non-compensatory decision rules when purchasing preserved bottled food products as an indication of their exploratory buying behaviour and/or willingness to compensate when evaluating product characteristics.

Objective 3:

To investigate and discuss consumers' prioritisation of product characteristics when evaluating bottled preserved food products in terms of their gender; level of education; population group; geographical area and financial status in order to make recommendations in terms of the positioning of artisan bottled preserved food products.

dbdb

Chapter 4

Research design and methodology

In this chapter the research design and methodology for this study are introduced. The measures taken to ensure validity and reliability as well as ethical concerns are also discussed.

4.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design of any study can be defined as a “plan of action” that clearly specifies the methods and processes that are followed to collect and dissect the information that is needed to conclude a research study (Zikmund & Babin, 2007:52). The nature of this research study was exploratory and descriptive. As Bearden, Ingram and Laforge (2007:103-111) explain, it is an useful approach to adopt in the initial phase of a study as its main purpose is to first clarify and describe the nature of the problem being addressed and to create a platform from which future studies can be based. This study was primarily conducted to gain a better understanding of what consumers favour most with regard to artisan food products in terms of extrinsic, intrinsic and integrated food product characteristics. Of secondary importance, it was to expose consumers’ compensatory and non-compensatory methods of decision making. This was done by determining characteristics consumers were willing to sacrifice or not when purchasing an artisan product. Lastly, the level of innovativeness consumer exhibit and the extent to which consumers show a form of exploratory behaviour, if any, with regard to the trial process, and possible purchase and then recurring purchase of artisan food products.

This research study also follows a quantitative approach and is explorative and descriptive in nature. Quantitative research explores the relationships amid variables in the study with the main purpose of clarifying, forecasting and directing phenomena (Leedy & Omrod, 2013:94).

The quantitative data for this research study was captured using a structured questionnaire (Addendum A) within a cross-sectional context within a given time frame. A questionnaire was applied as a research tool to gather data within the field of Social Science. Denscombe’s (2002) guidelines were followed since they provided valuable advice for the researcher. Using a questionnaire as a research instrument gives precise figures and results upon which researchers can

base their conclusions (ibid. 2002:12). A researcher must take the necessary time beforehand to ensure that the questionnaire is neutral and free of any inconsistencies. A neutral questionnaire guarantees unbiased responses from respondents completing it; if a questionnaire is consistent throughout, it means that it should yield similar results if other respondents on a different occasion are asked the same questions (ibid.:103,108).

This research had a survey-based design, using structured questionnaires presented in electronic format to gather quantifiable data. Both primary and secondary data was used: primary data had been collected using a structured questionnaire. Extant secondary data (Salkind, 2012:47; Walliman, 2011:177) was obtained from reliable and accredited journals to compile a literature review and to conceptualise constructs for this study. The literature review set the background and overall theme of the study and enabled the researcher to describe relevant concepts on the basis of previously published scholarly work (Salkind, 2012:46, 47; Walliman, 2011:35).

4.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.2.1 The sampling plan: population, the sample and sampling

A *population* is defined as a specific group where the individuals within this group have a similar set of characteristics (Zikmund & Babin, 2007:265). The *unit of analysis* is defined as being the smallest entity that is included in the study and the population is described as being the collective of all those units (Salkind, 2012:103). The population of this study are all consumers residing within South Africa's borders. The unit of analysis for this study consisted of male and female adult consumers of 25 years or older, of all population groups in medium to higher income segments residing in South Africa. This specific income group was chosen as previous research has shown that these consumers are in a position to choose from a wider variety of products available in the market without their choice being restricted by the size of their disposable income. Respondents aged 25 years and older were selected as they have gained a reasonable amount of purchasing experience. Literature states that consumers who purchase niche food products generally come from high and medium-income group backgrounds, explaining that some consumers will purchase this kind of product to signal their status in society. How these units are selected is referred to as the *technique of selection* which, in this case, was convenience sampling. The *sample size* refers to the number of respondents included in a research study (Salkind, 2012:103). There were 939 respondents in this research study.

The process of sampling is the manageable number of individuals selected from the population from which conclusions about the total population can be drawn from (Leedy & Omrod, 2013:144; Strydom, 2011:223; Zikmund & Babin, 2007:265).

This research study adopted convenience sampling, a type of non-probability sampling, as its strategy which entailed recruiting a set of respondents who were convenient to access, and who were readily available to take part in the research study (Zikmund & Babin, 2007:273). The respondents in this study completed an online electronic questionnaire. Non-probability sampling means that the chance of selecting a specific unit of the population is unequal or unknown – it occurs by chance only (Strydom, 2011:231). The judgement of the individual(s) collecting the data determines the selection of the units (Bearden et al., 2007:140), which in this case were representatives of Consulta Research Company. Sampling is an essential and critical procedure within any research study as it is impossible to collect data from the whole population (Leedy & Omrod, 2013:206). Extreme care was taken during the sampling process for this study to prevent bias, and preventative measures ensured that data remained credible, valid and reliable.

Due to the type of sampling method that was used in this research, generalisations can unfortunately not be made about the entire population. Time constraints, logistical factors and financial concerns were the main limitations that prevented the recruitment of a larger representative sample. The main aim of this research study was not to be able to make generalisations but rather to gain better insight as to what characteristics influences consumers' trial and purchase of artisan food products. The ultimate intent was twofold: to communicate these findings to entrepreneurs who want to ensure having a sustainable business that would thrive in the food sector because they would have a better understanding their consumers; and most importantly, to create a platform for future research on similar research topics.

The entire procedure of gathering data was conducted by Consulta who took responsibility for the recruitment of suitable respondents that met the criteria for the study. Consulta proved to be the most reliable and fastest option to use at the time the research investigation was conducted. Respondents who were approached to complete the questionnaire had to be any age above over 25, from middle to high income and education levels, representing all population groups within South Africa.

It is essential that a reliable measurement tool be used as an accurate indicator of what is being measured and that it is easy and efficient to use (Blumberg et al., 2008:447). This study made use of a structured questionnaire, with established scales as well as a few self-developed scales that could not be found in literature. A structured questionnaire enables the researcher to obtain primary, quantifiable data (Grewel & Levy, 2012:273). The quality of the data correlates directly with the quality of the questions in the questionnaire (Zikmund & Babin, 2007:230). It is important to note that a questionnaire should at all times aim to reach three objectives. These are to translate the information that is required into detailed questions that each respondent is able to answer; to stimulate interest and encourage respondents to answer all the questions in the questionnaire; and, lastly to reduce response errors by keeping the questionnaire short and concise, paying attention to the type and complexity of wording used in the instructions as well as the scales used within the questionnaire (Cant et al., 2008:118). The questionnaire used in this research study was available in English and developed in accordance with the objectives for the study. The questionnaire was assessed by experts from the Department of Statistics as well as the Department of Consumer Science at the University of Pretoria to clarify wording, to ensure linguistic quality and use of concepts, layout and practical sequence as well as the relevance of proposed questions to the objectives of the study. Accuracy was established by attending to the level of reliability and validity that will be addressed later in this chapter.

Basic guidelines (Zikmund and Babin, 2007:236-240) needed to be followed when constructing the questionnaire which, in turn, gives rise to the best quality results possible. First and foremost, ambiguous and complex language should be avoided at all times as the questionnaire is to be presented to average consumers who might not have been exposed to certain jargon or academic terms. Second, using a light, conversational style throughout the questionnaire makes respondents comfortable when completing the questionnaire as it is also more readily understandable for the respondents. All the items in this questionnaire (Addendum A) regarding artisan food products were kept clear and were concisely stated. Academic jargon was converted to everyday language. Third, leading questions should be avoided during the compilation of a questionnaire (Zikmund & Babin, 2007:236-240). Within the questionnaire of this particular study each question only focused on a single construct. Every construct was tested several times through different wording to strengthen the end result. Fourth, care was taken that no assumptions were made regarding the level of knowledge or experience of respondents who would be likely to complete this questionnaire. Furthermore, questions that might be burdensome were also avoided as Zikmund and Babin (2007:236-240) advocate.

The degree of freedom that consumers are given when answering the questions within a questionnaire can be categorised as two types of questions, open-ended or fixed-alternative questions (Zikmund & Babin, 2007:231). The first type, open-ended questions are also referred to as unstructured questions which give the respondent the opportunity to answer and explain their line of thought in their own words (Grewel & Levy, 2012:273; Zikmund & Babin, 2007:231). The second type of questions namely fixed-structured questions provide the respondent with a limited set of alternatives with specific options (Grewel & Levy, 2012:273; Zikmund & Babin, 2007:232). At the beginning of a questionnaire it is best to use open-ended questions rather than fixed-structured type of questions as this warms the respondent up to the process of questioning and sets them at ease making them feel more comfortable. Existing scales as well as developed scales were used in the compilation of the questionnaire.

The questionnaire comprised the following sections:

- **Section A:** Statements pertaining to consumers use of intrinsic, extrinsic and integrated product characteristics of artisan bottled preserved food products. A number of existing scales were used and adapted to suit the needs of this study. They were the price perception scale designed by Lichtenstein et al., (1993); the brand experience scale by Brakus, Schmitt and Zarantello (2009); the price-quality schema scale by Lichtenstein et al., (1993); the quality of branded products scale in the work Strizhakova, Coulter and Price (2008); and the uniqueness scale of Tian, Bearden and Hunter (2001). For the remaining concepts not covered by these scales, the researcher developed her own scales using the literature as a guideline.
- **Section B:** Questions investigating the application of decision rules during product evaluation: the compensatory and the non-compensatory. A customised scale was developed to measure this section of the study.
- **Section C:** Questions investigating the exploratory tendencies of consumers using the exploratory buying behaviour scale by Baumgartner and Steenkamp (1996) and investigating the level of innovativeness present among consumers using the consumer innovativeness scale by Manning, Bearden & Madden (1995).
- **Section D:** Demographic information of respondents who completed the questionnaire.

4.2.2 Pre-testing the measuring instrument

Pre-testing the questionnaire is necessary to ensure reliable and valid findings (Leedy & Omrod, 2013:230,231). Pre-testing was done where ten potential respondents were selected. They fitted the pre-requisites for the sample and were asked to complete hard copies of the questionnaire before it was converted into electronic format. Alterations were then made to correct and improve the questionnaire where necessary, in consultation with the statisticians from Consulta Research.

4.2.3 Data collection

Consulta, a South African market research company, conducted the data collection. Respondents who participated in the study had to register on the Consulta website in order to become part of the consumer panel from which respondents were selected to participate in this research study as they met the specified criteria set out for this investigation. Consulta collected the data by uploading the questionnaire on their database which was distributed via email to willing respondents from all walks of life within South Africa. These respondents were screened electronically according to the specified criteria before they were allowed to complete the electronic questionnaire. A request to complete the questionnaire was sent to suitable consumers via email where a link to the questionnaire was given for the respondents to follow. By being registered on the Consulta consumer panel, consumers receive regular emails requesting them to take part in research surveys and questionnaires. However, the obligation to be free to do so remained. This questionnaire only took approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. The data collection for this study took place in a cross-sectional time frame from March to April 2015. A total of 939 usable questionnaires were collected.

The set criteria were that respondents could be male or female, 25 years or older, from all population groups in medium to higher income segments, earning a total monthly household income of R25 000 and more, residing anywhere in South Africa. The prerequisite for respondents were that they had to be involved in food purchases within their home. This formed part of the criterion questions asked before respondents could continue with completing the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was available in English only and was developed in accordance with the objectives for the study. The questionnaire was assessed by experts from Consulta Research to clarify wording

and use of concepts, layout and practical sequence as well as the questions in terms of the objectives of the study. Existing scales as well as self-developed scales were included in the questionnaire.

4.2.4 Data analysis

Data analysis, as defined by Zikmund and Babin (2007:56), is the application of thought in order to comprehend the sets of data collected for the purposes of a study. It entails the selection of suitable techniques for analysis as dictated by the nature of the gathered data, the research design characteristics and the researcher's requirements for information. Fouche and Bartley (2011:249) explain that the analysis of quantitative data requires the conversion of data into a numerical format after which the results are subjected to statistical analysis. Processing and analysing data can be an intricate process to go about. However, the support of electronic data analysis software as well as a detailed data processing plan, assists greatly in simplifying the step within the methodology of a particular study (Fouche & Bartley, 2011:248), as was the case in this study.

Data analysis was done with the assistance of a statistician after being coded by Consulta Research Company. The outcomes originating from this step were verified by comparing it to existing literature and established theoretical paradigms and perspective, a point Fouche and Delpont (2011:76) also make. Descriptive statistics were used to present the data from the questionnaire as frequencies, percentages, means and medians. This allowed for pattern recognition and statistical inferences could also be made about the demographic variables of the population in order to draw conclusions as commonly done in research practice (Leedy & Ormrod 2013:179; Salkind, 2012:161; Zikmund & Babin 2007:325). More advanced statistical procedures included were: exploratory factor analysis, the calculation of Cronbach Alphas, t-tests, analysis of variance (ANOVA) and regression values as indicated in Table 1: Conceptualisation and operationalisation.

4.3 OPERATIONALISATION

Table 4.1 exemplifies how the statistical procedures were used and the concepts delineated in this study.

TABLE 4.1: CONCEPTUALISATION AND OPERATIONALISATION: OBJECTIVE 1

Objective 1: To investigate and describe the importance of selected extrinsic, intrinsic and integrated product attributes during consumers' evaluation of artisan bottled preserved food products:				
Sub-objectives	Dimensions	Indicators	Items	Measurement
1.1 To investigate and describe consumers' prioritisation of product characteristics in terms of the importance of selected extrinsic characteristics , namely, store image, price, brand and brand image, packaging and labelling and product origin	Extrinsic food product characteristics	Store image Price Brand Brand image Packaging Labelling Product origin	V1.1-1.3; 1.11; 1.12; 1.18-1.20; 1.25-1.30	Descriptive analysis 5-point Likert-type scale Exploratory Factor analysis
1.2 To investigate and describe consumers' prioritisation of product characteristics in terms of the importance of selected intrinsic characteristics , namely aroma, texture, taste, visual appearance and food safety.	Intrinsic food product characteristics	Aroma Texture Taste Visual appearance Food safety	V1.4-1.7; 1.14; 1.15; 1.21; 1.22; 1.24; 1.31; 1.32	ANOVA t-tests Means Standard deviations
1.3 To investigate and describe consumers' prioritisation of product characteristics in terms of the importance of selected integrated product characteristics on consumers' evaluation of artisan bottled preserved food products, namely the price - quality relationship, brand-equity and product uniqueness	Interaction between extrinsic and intrinsic food product characteristics	Price-quality Brand-equity Product uniqueness	V1.8-1.10; 1.13; 1.16; 1.17; 1.23	R ²
1.4 To investigate and describe consumers' prioritisation of product characteristics in terms of the relative importance of extrinsic, intrinsic and integrated product characteristics	Extrinsic, intrinsic and integrated product characteristics	Store image Price Brand Brand image Packaging Labelling Product origin Aroma Texture Taste Visual appearance Food Safety Price-quality Brand-equity Product uniqueness	V2.1-2.19	Descriptive analysis Ranking scale

TABLE 4.2: CONCEPTUALISATION AND OPERATIONALISATION: OBJECTIVES 2 and 3

Objective 2:				
To investigate and describe the extent to which consumers are exploratory in their approach towards purchasing artisan bottled preserved products in accordance with selected demographic characteristics, specifically in terms of:				
Sub-objectives	Dimensions	Indicators	Items	Measurement
Exploratory buying behaviour	New product purchases	No brand loyalty Constantly looking for new products Not cautious in trying new products	V4.1-4.8; V5-11	Descriptive statistics 5-point Likert-type scale Exploratory Factor analysis ANOVA t-tests Means Standard deviations R ²
Objective 3:				
To investigate and discuss consumers` choice of artisan bottled preserved food products				
Sub objectives	Dimensions	Indicators	Items	Measurement
3.1 Financial status	Income	Amount earned monthly	V9	Descriptive statistics
3.2 Gender	Gender	Male or female	V6	5-point Likert-type scale Exploratory Factor analysis ANOVA t-tests Means Standard deviations R ²

4.4 ENSURING OBJECTIVITY, VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

Presenting a good quality study is of utmost importance so that the findings are true facts that can be disseminated in current literature and on which future academic research can be based. Therefore the quality of the research design and methodology was carefully assessed, as were the validity and the reliability of all measuring instruments used in this study. The concepts of reliability and validity form the backbone of a research study particularly in terms of the quality of the quantitative measurements.

Validity in a research study refers to the accuracy, significance and credibility of the study as a whole. A research study is only valid when “meaningful and defensible” conclusions can be drawn from the data that is obtained (Leedy & Omrod, 2013:101; Bearden *et al.*, 2007:143). In short, validity means that the study should measure what it is supposed to measure. Various types of validity exist. For the purpose of this study the focus will fall on construct validity. *Construct validity* “examines whether test performance reflects an underlying construct or the set of related variables”. This type of validity enables one to link “practical components of a test score to some underlying theory or model of behaviour” (Salkind, 2012:125).

Reliability is defined as a study poses “the same questions to a similar sample” and then produces “the same findings” (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010:58). Put briefly, it means the test measures the same thing more than once and the results have the same outcomes, giving consistent results (Leedy & Omrod, 2013:91; Salkind, 2012:115). The reliability of the study could be ensured under certain conditions or changing the circumstances. For instance by increasing the sample size (the greater the sample the greater the chances are of the study being representative and reliable); by removing ambiguous items (If an item is unclear it is unreliable); by standardising test conditions and moderating them at all times (If a test is too difficult or too easy, it will not reflect true occurrences); and maintaining consistent scoring procedures, especially when coding completed questionnaires.

During the pre-testing phase of preparing the questionnaire, unclear indicators were removed from the questionnaire. This resulted in building the reliability of the measuring instrument as refraining from doing so may have solicited varying responses. The more precise the indicator is, the more detailed the information coming from it will be. In other words, phrasing statements and questions in a questionnaire using everyday language and not ambiguous jargon that respondents might not understand what is asked of them, is important.

Conducting the data collection under standard, normal conditions also yields greater reliability; therefore these should be kept as constant as possible. In the case of this particular study, conditions remained the same, as the questionnaire had to be completed online which means that all factors would be kept constant.

The level of difficulty of the questionnaire also determines the extent to which the questionnaire is reliable or not. When the questionnaire is either too easy or too difficult the result will not be a true reflection of the responding consumers' opinions and thoughts on a certain subject. Wording and instructions should be simple and concise. The scoring procedures should also remain unvarying. In the case of this study, a 5-point Likert-type scale was used throughout, except for Section B where a ranking scale was used. Most importantly, the relationship between reliability and validity remains extremely important. As Salkind (2012:127) stated, a test within a study can be reliable but not valid, however, a "test cannot be valid without first being reliable".

4.4.1 The importance of a strong research design and methodology

It was crucial for the success of this study to weigh up the advantages and disadvantages of the chosen methodology and research design so as to yield the highest quality study as possible. Time constraints were taken into account in deciding to approach the marketing research company, Consulta, to collect the data. Convenience sampling was chosen for this study and the high participation rate was only possible because of the large number of respondents throughout South Africa who were willing to participate. They took time out of their day to sit down and complete the online questionnaire sent out to them. Their willingness is indicative of voluntary response as they did so without receiving any form of remuneration for the time spent completing the online questionnaire. When Consulta sent out a request to suitable respondents on their consumer panel, there was no guarantee that all the respondents would agree to completing the questionnaire but the final result was gratifying.

There are many advantages to convenience sampling. First and foremost is the fact that it is fairly inexpensive to do, saves a great deal of time in the selection process of potential suitable respondents, and is a most effective sampling method for academic research (Zikmund & Babin, 2007:271). The sample size of this study was 939 which is a fairly large sample and therefore contributes to the claim that the findings of this study can be regarded as reliable. In discussion with

the statistician it was envisaged that the sample size of 350 respondents would suffice for statistical analysis. However a larger sample would be more appropriate to also include lower income consumers as well as consumers that were not obviously expected to be the target market of the product. The eventual sample of 939 therefore surpassed minimum required by far.

Certain issues among respondents may arise during the completion of the questionnaire. Fouché et al., (2011:154-155) draws attention to six of these about the **selection of participants**, making the point that the extent to which participants differ is great and could complicate the research study's final results. The manner in which this study dealt with their itemised concerns is now addressed. First, they contend that **pre-testing sensitisation** may occur when the group of respondents chosen to partake in the pre-testing of the questionnaire does not take the process seriously. The result of this eventuality is that respondents become desensitised which, in the end, obfuscates the true results. In this research study, none of the respondents participated in the pre-testing of the questionnaire as a separate group of respondents was selected so pre-test sensitisation did not occur. Second, **testing**, also referred to as the nuisance effect, takes place when respondents become aware of what is being tested or, in other instances, where respondents' general awareness of being observed causes them to act in an unnatural way. In such circumstances the respondents then modify their behaviour to what they perceive would be acceptable and satisfactory in the eyes of the researcher. This, however, is counter-productive for the study as the main goal of the research is to obtain and gather respondents' true feelings, behaviours and perceptions. The third issue Fouché *et al.* (2011:154-155) list is that of **instrumentation** changes being made to the measuring instruments or procedural changes during the data collection phase which could result in inconsistencies arising in the execution of the study. In this particular study, all measuring instruments used stayed the same.

Fourth, the **morality effect** may also occur during the data collection stage of a research study. This is also sometimes referred to as the "wear and tear" of respondents during their participation in the study. Respondents might terminate their participation at some stage and refuse to continue with completing questionnaire. Fouché *et al.* (2011:154-155), however, see the advantage of this effect occurring as it could distinctly affect the validity of the study the statistical comparisons and inferences the researcher makes would be adversely affected. In this specific study, respondents were not forced to complete the questionnaire, and could, at any time, cease their participation in it. Fifth, and similar to the morality effect, is the **demand factor**, where respondents become aware of what the study aims to measure and they then adjust their behaviour and opinions to that what

they think is demanded or expected of them. In this study the demographic questions were placed at the end of the questionnaire in an effort to put the respondents at their ease so that they would not pretend being a certain type of person that they are not (Fouché *et al.*, 2011:154-155).

Finally, the **Hawthorne effect** which is similar to the morality effect and the demand factor, causes respondents to react differently to questions in the questionnaire than they would normally do, just because they are taking part in a research project. This possibility was overcome as respondents took part in the questionnaire anonymously and there was no way in which answers could have been linked to a specific person. This allowed the respondents to feel at ease about giving true answers in response to the questionnaire questions.

4.5 ETHICS

Respondents who took part in this study did so voluntarily. Since anyone from any population group could have participated in this study, differences based on race were ignored. The questionnaire was only distributed to medium- and high-income earning respondents whom Consulta Research Company identified beforehand. Respondents' personal details such as name, identity number and contact details were not requested; therefore respondents could be involved anonymously with peace of mind and not concerned about being identified. The purpose of the study was explained thoroughly to the respondents who have decided to partake in the study. Before respondents completed the questionnaire, they were asked to sign a consent form. This supported the practice of an ethical code of conduct throughout the study, the purpose of the study, the duration of the completion of the questionnaire phase with the offer of withdrawal from the study at any time for any reason and to only complete questions with which they were comfortable. The potential benefits this study might have for society in general were also mentioned. The informed consent form serves to ensure ethical behaviour throughout the study (Salkind, 2012:86). The consent form was first approved by the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Natural and Agriculture Sciences at the University of Pretoria. The confidentiality of each respondent was preserved as no names or personal details were required except for supplying a cell phone number or any other contact information to assist in the identification process.

4.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The research design and methodology was chosen after careful consideration of all possible options. This was done so in an effort to ensure the best possible research methods were paired with the stated vision for this research, keeping in mind what would fit the best in terms of the available resources. Data collection was conducted using a structured electronic questionnaire that inherently yields quantifiable data. The unit of analysis was male and female respondents, the age of 25 years and older, residing within South Africa who was the main decision makers within their households. A high level of quality was constantly aimed for throughout the duration of this study. Ensuring constant reliability and validity throughout the course of this research study was a constant focus and ethical research guidelines were followed to ensure that the quality of this study measured up to acceptable standards.

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Chapter 5

Results and discussion

This chapter presents the results in accord with this study's stated objectives. An in-depth discussion follows on the findings drawn from this research investigation. Interpretation acknowledges existing literature.

5.1 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE

The demographic data was gathered in an effort to describe the type of consumer, in this case referred to as the sample of the study, according to selected demographic facets. The various indicators that were chosen as relevant to this study were gender, age, level of education, total monthly household income, population group and the province in which consumers currently reside. This particular section was placed at the end of the questionnaire (Section D of the questionnaire in Addendum A) to induce greater participation as well as to support the possibility of more honest responses.

5.1.1 Gender

Respondents who took part in this study were not restricted by their gender nor were limitations placed on the number of males or females who were allowed to participate in this research investigation. Therefore, gender was not used as a controlled element within this research study. Respondents were selected by means of convenience sampling methods (Section 4.2.1). The gender distribution of respondents who participated in this research study is shown in Table 5.1.

TABLE 5.1: GENDER DISTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY (N = 939; missing: n = 172)

Categories in the questionnaire: Gender	n	%
Male	131	14.0
Female	636	67.7
Missing	172	18.3

The majority of respondents (N = 939) were females (67.7%). Instructions for completion of the questionnaire requested that individuals who are involved with food purchases in their homes, should complete the questionnaire. It is unfortunate that almost 20% of the sample did not indicate their gender. This will, however, not influence further analyses adversely.

5.1.2 Financial status

TABLE 5.2: MONTHLY INCOME DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE (N = 939; missing: n = 288)

Categories in the questionnaire: Monthly income	N	%
Less than R9999	24	2.6
R10 000 to R14 999	101	10.8
R15 000 to R24 999	157	16.7
R25 000 or more	303	32.3
R50 000 to R99 999	66	7.0
Missing	288	30.6
TOTAL	939	100

Unfortunately, 30.6% of the sample did not declare their monthly income. Of those who did, just more than half (56.7%) earned more than R25 000 per month. For this study it was important to know into which category the majority of consumers fell as this would enable the potential market for artisan preserved food products to be assessed. The target market for young and upcoming entrepreneurs in this area could be accurately determined.

During data collection, low-income earners were not excluded from the questionnaire as literature states that low-income earners tend to purchase artisan products from time to time for the purpose of gifting and for special occasions. This was important to take cognisance of.

5.1.3 Level of education

The level of education was another demographic indicator used in the study to obtain more information regarding the type of consumer purchasing artisanal food products in an attempt to better describe and profile this particular group of consumers. To simplify educational categories for the purpose of statistical analysis, certain categories were combined as shown in Table 5.2. From the eight categories presented in the questionnaire (Addendum A), categories were collapsed into four main categories. The categories labelled “Some secondary schooling”; “Grade 12” and “Undergraduate” were combined to form one category of respondents with no further education

beyond Grade 12. The categories labelled “Honours degree”, “Master’s degree” and “Doctoral degree” categories were also combined to form a single category labelled the “Postgraduate category”.

TABLE 5.3: RESPONDENTS` LEVEL OF EDUCATION (N = 939; missing: n = 203)

Categories in the questionnaire	n	%	Categories in the questionnaire: Highest level of education	n	%
Some secondary schooling	21	2.2	Some secondary schooling/Grade 12/undergraduate (currently busy with after school graduate studies)	268	28.5
Complete secondary schooling (Grade 12)	198	21.1			
Undergraduate (currently busy with after school graduate studies, therefore no further qualification than Grade 12)	50	5.3			
Degree/Diploma	295	31.4	Degree/Diploma	295	31.4
Honour’s degree	92	9.8	Postgraduate	173	18.4
Master’s degree	81	8.6			
Doctorate	18	1.9			
Missing	203	21.7	Missing	203	21.7
TOTAL	939	100	TOTAL	939	100

The majority of respondents had a first degree or a diploma (31.4%). An almost equal percentage (28.5%) of the sample had an education level not higher than Grade 12. Almost 20% of the sample had a postgraduate degree. Unfortunately 21.7% of the sample did not indicate their education level (21.7%). Due to the electronic design of the questionnaire, respondents were not stopped from continuing to complete the questionnaire when demographic information was incomplete. It was therefore possible to withhold information by purposefully omitting to answer a particular question. This possibility was an oversight in the compilation of the questionnaire. Due to the sample size, those who provided detailed information were enough to ensure useful data.

5.1.4 Population group

It is important to note that this research never intended to distinguish between the perceptions of different population groups. However, the questionnaire did request respondents to indicate the population group to which they belonged. This allowed the researcher to describe and profile the type of consumer purchasing artisanal products more easily. A response from each respondent was recorded for one of seven categories given in the questionnaire. From these three groupings were devised to simplify analysis and create more meaningful categories.

TABLE 5.4: REPRESENTATION OF DIFFERENT POPULATION GROUPS IN THE SAMPLE (N = 939)

Categories in the questionnaire	n	%	Categories in the investigation	n	%
White	510	54.3	Whites	510	54.3
African	139	14.8	Africans	139	14.8
Asian	8	0.9	Other	81	8.6
Coloured	42	4.5			
Indian	29	3.1			
Other	2	0.2			
Prefer not to say	209	22.3		209	22.3

Of the 939 respondents in the sample only 730 disclosed their population group identity of which the majority were white (54.3%). Other population groups were not as well represented, with almost 15% of the respondents claiming to be Africans. It is to be noted (Table 5.3) that more than half of the respondents who took part within this study were from the white population group with (54.3%), demographically a minority group in national context. African respondents represented 14.8% of the sample.

5.1.5 Geographic location of respondents

As such, the province of residence of the respondent, as a demographic indicator was not used as a control element within the investigation but the information collected does indicate the province in which the respondent lives (Table 5.5). The questionnaire was distributed across South Africa. Each of the nine provinces was included in the sample. The three provinces with the highest gross domestic product by province were placed in separate categories.

TABLE 5.5: GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION OF RESPONDENTS (N = 939; Missing: n = 186)

Categories in the questionnaire	n	%	Categories in the investigation	n	%
Gauteng	378	40.3	Gauteng	378	40.3
Western Cape	140	14.9	Western Cape	140	14.9
Kwa-Zulu Natal	104	11.1	Kwa-Zulu Natal	104	11.1
Eastern Cape	34	3.6	Other	131	13.9
Free State	28	3.0			
Limpopo	17	1.8			
Mpumalanga	24	2.6			
North West	24	2.6			
Northern Cape	4	0.4			
Missing	186	19.8	Missing	186	19.8

For the purpose of this study, ten categories presented were collapsed to four categories within the questionnaire to create more meaningful results on which discussion could be based. Although the geographical area was not used for statistical analysis, it is interesting to note that most of the respondents in the sample came from Gauteng (40.3%). Again almost 20% of the sample did not indicate their province of residence.

5.2 INTRINSIC AND EXTRINSIC PRODUCT CHARACTERISTICS OF ARTISANAL FOODS

Respondents, as consumers, were presented with a list of 33 statements in this section of the questionnaire (Section A). Eleven food product characteristics represented intrinsic, extrinsic and integrated food product characteristics. They were chosen from statements based on: price; brand; brand image; packaging; labelling; product origin; store image; aroma; texture; taste; colour (visual appearance); product safety; price-quality; brand-quality; brand equity and product uniqueness. Each food product characteristic had three statements that measured the respondent's beliefs of that specific food product characteristic as a consumer. All the statements were shuffled and were not presented in any specific order in an effort to limit any biased opinion from respondents.

The price perception scale used by Lichtenstein, Rigdway and Netemeyer (1993) measured the concept of *price* and the *price-quality* relationship of products. *Brand* was measured by statements about the brand experience according to the scale designed by Brakus, Schmitt & Zarantello (2009). The scale Strizhakova, Coulter and Price (2008) devised gave an indication of the *brand-quality* relationship of food products. Product *uniqueness* was evaluated using the uniqueness scale of Tian, Bearden and Hunter (2001). The researcher developed scales for the remaining concepts that were: brand image; packaging; labelling; product origin; store image; aroma; texture; taste; colour; product safety and brand equity.

Factor analysis was done to determine which statements respondents associated with which characteristics. Exploratory factor analysis, specifically Principal Component Analysis (PCA) was done, using a Promax rotation to identify the coherent factors that made sense if the meaning of the derived components. A data matrix may have a large number of variables from test scores, test items and questionnaire responses. These items might relate to one another. When variables do relate to one another, they represent underlying dimensions called factors that, in turn, explain specific variables. Factor analysis therefore looks for patterns among the variables to discover if an

underlying combination of the original variables can summarise the original set in terms of coherent factors. A correlation matrix is then generated from the original set of data (Mazzocchi, 2008:221, 222). This can be done in a number of ways but the most frequently used method is applying Principal Component Analysis, which was used in this study. This method transforms a set of variables into a new set of composite variables, called factors. These account for the variance in the data as a whole. The best combination makes up the first factor. Once all the variance is accounted for the process ends. Correlation coefficients between the factor and the variables represent the factor loadings. Factor loadings greater than ± 0.50 are considered to be significant.

Factor analysis is not a true multivariate technique in that it is not used to predict a dependent variable or variables. Factor analysis is rather an interdependence technique used to consider all variables and how they relate to each other at the same time. Factor analysis can be used to either summarise or reduce data. In the case of this study, the primary purpose of using this technique was to summarise the data. Factor analysis derives the underlying dimensions or factors within the collected database from which a smaller number of concepts can be created. Thus, those variables used for analysis are fewer in number than the original variables selected for the study. During data reduction, the scores are calculated for each of the factors, then these scores are substitutes for the original variables (Garson, 2008:1; Mazzocchi, 2008:222).

Factor analysis can also be used for exploratory and confirmatory purposes. In an exploratory context, factor analysis is used to search for a possible underlying structure in the variables, without forcing items into specific factors. In a confirmatory context, as indicated by the results of factor analysis, the researcher evaluates how similar the actual structure of the data is to the expected structure, which is usually derived from literature. The main difference between exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis is that the researcher has formulated hypotheses about the underlying structure of the variables when using factor analysis for confirmatory purposes (Garson, 2008:1).

The first output from the factor analysis procedure produced components that did not make sense as the combinations of factors were shuffled in a meaningless way. Target matrices were employed to define the required final factor pattern. At all times Cronbach Alpha values were calculated for the appropriate factors of the components to determine their internal consistency. The factor analysis procedure started off with the 15 factors that produced unsatisfactory Cronbach Alpha values for several factors. Thus the process was extensively repeated until the six-factor solution

provided an option that produced the best fit in terms of the internal consistency of the factors, and supported the coherence of each component in terms of the items that were grouped together.

In terms of this study, **brand**, **brand image** and **price-quality** were grouped together to form **brand relevance** as a factor. The statements measuring the concepts of **taste**, **aroma** and **texture** within the questionnaire were split up to form two new factors namely **exploration** and **sensory aspects**. The three statements measuring consumer beliefs about the colour of the product stayed the same and did not change, however one statement measuring texture was added to form **colour and quality** factor. **Price** and **labelling** was combined to form **price** as a factor. Statements from **packaging**, **uniqueness** and **brand image** were combined to form the factor **exclusivity**.

TABLE 5.6: INTRINSIC AND EXTRINSIC ARTISAN FOOD PRODUCT CHARACTERISTICS

Factor Name	Statements	Factor loadings						Cronbach Alpha
		1	2	3	4	5	6	
Brand relevance	A brand name is a useful sign of the quality of a product	0.724						0.885
	Generally, more expensive products are of better quality	0.681						0.892
	The price of the product is an indication of its quality	0.670						0.893
	I trust a product more if it has a good brand image	0.611						0.888
	I prefer brands that I am familiar with	0.606						0.895
	I choose brands because of the quality they represent	0.575						0.892
	You always have to pay a bit more for the best product	0.508						0.895
	A unique brand name is an indication of the exclusivity of the product	0.498						0.893
	The brand image of a product will determine whether or not I will buy it	0.457						0.890
	I find branded products interesting	0.411						0.892
	I am passionate about my favourite brands	0.341						0.898
Exploration	I will buy a new product, although it is not always possible to evaluate the texture beforehand		0.909					0.717
	I will buy a new product, although it is not always possible to test the aroma beforehand		0.826					0.773
	I will buy a new product, although it is not always possible to taste it beforehand		0.689					0.876
Colour and quality	The colour of a product is an indication of its quality			0.739				0.739
	A product's colour greatly influences whether I will buy that product or not			0.718				0.708
	I will only buy a new product if the colour is to my liking			0.555				0.787
	The texture of a product is an indication of the quality of the product			0.538				0.780

Factor Name	Statements	Factor loadings						Cronbach Alpha
		1	2	3	4	5	6	
Price	The money saved by finding lower priced products is usually worth the effort				0.754			0.554
	I will shop at more than one store to take advantage of special price promotions				0.701			0.595
	I am willing to make an effort to find cheaper products				0.577			0.673
	I read the information on product labels before purchasing the product				0.167			0.612
Sensory aspects	The taste of the product will determine my decision to purchase a product again					0.527		0.741
	The texture of a product determines whether I will purchase the same product again					0.525		0.684
	I prefer certain products mainly for their taste					0.523		0.739
	The aroma of the product determines whether I will purchase the same product again					0.493		0.687
Exclusivity	I often look for exclusive products						0.541	0.712
	A products packaging draws my attention when doing shopping						0.510	0.731
	The type of packaging used influences my purchase decisions						0.464	0.716
	The brand image of products is important to me						0.448	0.733
	I use unique products to show other people who I am						0.416	0.743
	I often try to find a more interesting version of ordinary products						0.291	0.764
	Means (Maximum score: M = 5)	3.38	3.34	3.05	3.50	4.11	2.99	
	Cronbach Alpha	0.900	0.852	0.804	0.702	0.770	0.768	
	% variance exp.	28.16	8.17	6.07	5.39	5.00	3.87	

Cronbach Alpha coefficients for the eight factors indicate acceptable internal consistency of the data ($\alpha > 0.7$). For the purpose of interpretation, means were interpreted as follows:

$M \geq 4$: Highly relevant; $M \geq 3 < 4$: Relevant/ Some interest; $M \geq 2 < 3$: Neutral; $M < 2$: Not particularly relevant.

Factor 1, Brand relevance: An overall mean of 3.38 (Maximum score: 5) suggests that brands are relevant when consumers are deciding to purchase food products. Although a mean of 3.38 does suggest relevance of the brand, consumers are not necessarily very meticulous about the brand. This is a positive sign for entrepreneurs who wish to produce artisan food products with unfamiliar

labels because at least one is assured that they will not be rejected outright. Since consumers do not appear to be drawn to only one specific brand of artisan food products, this finding indicates that they are not brand loyal and therefore one can assume that consumers are somewhat open to trying out new artisan food products entering the market.

F2, Exploration: The overall mean of 3.34 (Maximum score: 5) indicates that consumers are open to exploring new artisan food products available on food markets, i.e. they will show interest. Consumers are willing to try new artisan food products even if it means that they cannot evaluate the texture and taste of that food product before purchasing it. This is often the case in a retail store setting when consumers are not often given the opportunity to sample a product before placing it in their shopping basket. This finding is particularly favourable for young and upcoming entrepreneurs selling artisan bottled preserved food products at local farmer and food markets where the opportunity to offer a sample of their products for consumers to taste is not only possible but also very beneficial. Results indicate consumers are somewhat open to exploring new artisan food products and prepared to purchase a product to try out.

F3, Colour and quality: The overall mean of 3.05 (Maximum score: 5) suggests that consumers regard the colour and quality of preserved bottled food products as relevant although the colour would not be crucial to deduce its quality and to stimulate the trial of an artisan food product. This can be used to the advantage of food entrepreneurs as some consumers may prefer marmalade which is light in colour while others may prefer a darker marmalade. The colour of preserved products tends to vary as raw ingredients are not purchased in bulk and colour variances of fruit would vary between cultivars too. Pectin concentration in fruit also plays a role as the more pectin in the fruit the easier the preserved product will set. If the pectin content is low and the moisture content high cooking the product longer is necessary for the sugar to caramelize and the colour to darken. Pectin and moisture levels of fruit may differ from season to season, depending on how the good the harvest was and its overall quality (Liu, Wang, Liu, Wu & Jiang, 2013; Schmitz, Koch, Beekman, Koedam, Robert & Schmitt, 2012).

F4, Price: The overall mean of 3.50 (Maximum: 5) indicates that the price would be relevant when purchasing preserved bottled food products and that a product's price would be influential when considering artisan preserved bottled food products. This subsequently means that consumers will be hesitant to pay a price premium for artisan food products. Consumers are therefore not necessarily willing to pay high prices for unique products.

F5, Sensory aspects: A mean of 4.11 (Maximum 5) for the sample indicates that this is the aspect that is most relevant when purchasing preserved bottled food products. The aroma and taste of artisan food products could therefore greatly influence consumers purchase decisions when given the opportunity to taste these products. The taste and texture of food products are therefore highly important to consumers and the opportunity to taste these products in a farmer’s market setting should therefore be optimised by entrepreneurs who wish to enter the market. Product tasting will reduce consumers’ risk perception when considering novel products, even more so when this is a crucial factor in their product choices.

F6, Exclusivity: The mean of 2.99 (Maximum score: 5) indicates that the exclusivity of a preserved bottled food product is not a crucial factor when considering product alternatives, but that consumers are not entirely blasé about it. According to literature consumers gravitate to more exclusive products and they like to purchase those (Chan et al, 2015). However, this study could not confirm that exclusivity is highly important.

5.3 RELEVANCE OF INTRINSIC AND EXTRINSIC FOOD PRODUCT CHARACTERISTICS

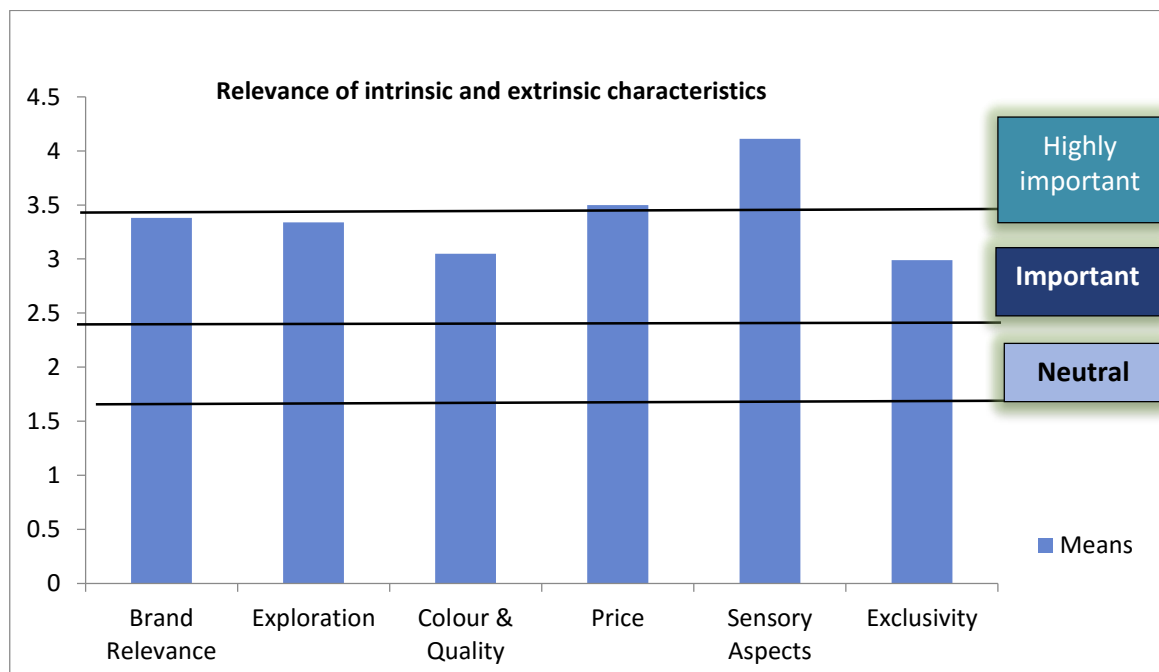


FIGURE 5.1: RELEVANCE OF INTRINSIC AND EXTRINSIC FOOD PRODUCT CHARACTERISTICS

For the purpose of interpretation, means were interpreted as followed: $M \geq 4$: Highly relevant; $M \geq 3 < 4$: Relevant/Some interest; $M \geq 2 < 3$: Neutral; $M < 2$: Not particularly relevant.

Figure 5.1 visually shows that the sensory properties of bottled preserved food products, which are intrinsic to the products, are highly relevant ($M = 4.11$) in determining whether or not they will purchase products or not. Price ($M = 3.34$) is the extrinsic product characteristic that also seems to be an important determinant in terms of a consumer's decision to purchase a bottled preserved food product or not. Artisan bottled preserved food products are generally fairly expensive compared to national brands. This study suggests that consumers might be hesitant when a product is expensive, but they would not necessarily be unwilling to explore new products as price is not crucial. The inclination is that other factors may convince consumers to oversee the price, for example if the sensory characteristics are impressive (remember that these products can often be tested/ tasted on the spot). Consumers would hence be willing to explore artisan bottled food products even if they are fairly expensive. The level of product exclusivity is not necessarily crucial ($M = 2.99$) but findings indicate that exclusivity is not irrelevant and that consumers could be persuaded to try novel products, which is good for entrepreneurs who wish to enter the market.

5.4 DIFFERENCES IN CONSUMERS' REGARD FOR INTRINSIC AND EXTRINSIC FOOD PRODUCT CHARACTERISTICS

One-way ANOVA was used to seek significant differences across different demographic groups. In cases where evidence of significant differences occurred, relevant post-hoc tests were done to specify the nature of the differences more explicitly.

5.4.1 Gender differences

Gender differences in terms of the relevance of the six factors when evaluating preserved bottled food products were investigated and are presented in Table 5.6.

TABLE 5.7: GENDER DIFFERENCES IN THE IMPORTANCE OF PRODUCT CHARACTERISTICS

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Brand relevance	Female	636	3.3049	.70593	.02799
	Male	131	3.4705	.71746	.06268
	Total	767	3.3332	.71018	.02564
Explore	Female	618	3.3619	.76755	.03088
	Male	131	3.2952	.75746	.06618
	Total	749	3.3502	.76571	.02798
Colour & quality	Female	636	3.0625	.85822	.03403
	Male	131	2.8931	.90140	.07876
	Total	767	3.0336	.86749	.03132
Price	Female	636	3.4670	.95766	.03797
	Male	131	3.4046	.93187	.08142
	Total	767	3.4563	.95299	.03441
Sensory aspects	Female	636	4.1281	.64523	.02558
	Male	131	3.9122	.77082	.06735
	Total	767	4.0913	.67273	.02429
Exclusivity	Female	636	2.9172	.72702	.02883
	Male	131	3.0254	.77776	.06795
	Total	767	2.9357	.73654	.02659

ANOVAs as indicated in Table 5.7 show that significant differences exist for “brand relevance” ($p = 0.015$); “colour and quality” ($p = 0.42$), as well as for the “sensory aspects” (0.001) related to preserved bottled food products with regards to gender.

- In terms of “brand relevance” ($p = 0.015$), which is an extrinsic characteristic, males ($M = 3.47$) are significantly more concerned than females ($M = 3.30$), and the regard for product brands is fairly pertinent implying that entrepreneurs would have to ensure that their brand is carefully construed.
- In terms of “colour and quality”, females ($M = 3.06$) are significantly more concerned ($p = 0.042$) than men ($M = 2.89$), although the concern of both males and females is still moderate.
- In terms of “sensory aspects” females ($M = 4.12$) are significantly more concerned ($p = 0.001$), than men ($M = 3.91$), although the concern of both males and females is only moderate.

TABLE 5.8: IDENTIFICATION OF SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES IN MALES' AND FEMALES' REGARD OF PRODUCT CHARACTERISTICS

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Brand relevance	Between Groups	2.978	1	2.978	5.942	.015
	Within Groups	383.358	765	.501		
	Total	386.336	766			
Explore	Between Groups	.482	1	.482	.821	.365
	Within Groups	438.082	747	.586		
	Total	438.564	748			
Colour	Between Groups	3.116	1	3.116	4.158	.042
	Within Groups	573.332	765	.749		
	Total	576.448	766			
Cost	Between Groups	.423	1	.423	.465	.495
	Within Groups	695.253	765	.909		
	Total	695.676	766			
Sensory aspects	Between Groups	5.065	1	5.065	11.342	.001
	Within Groups	341.602	765	.447		
	Total	346.667	766			
Uniqueness	Between Groups	1.273	1	1.273	2.351	.126
	Within Groups	414.276	765	.542		
	Total	415.549	766			

In conclusion, it was interesting to find that males are significantly more concerned about an extrinsic indicator, while females are significantly more concerned about intrinsic product characteristics which are less tangible. These characteristics also influence the quality of preserved bottled food products.

5.4.2 Population differences

Population differences in terms of the relevance of the six factors when evaluating preserved bottled food products are presented in Table 5.8.

TABLE 5.9: DIFFERENCES IN DIFFERENT POPULATION GROUPS' REGARD FOR PRODUCT CHARACTERISTICS

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Brand relevance	White	510	3.23	0.66
	African	139	3.65	0.73
	Other	81	3.53	0.75
	Total	730	3.34	0.70
Explore	White	503	3.36	0.72
	African	136	3.25	0.90
	Other	77	3.40	0.81
	Total	716	3.34	0.77
Colour & quality	White	510	3.02	0.85
	African	139	3.04	0.95
	Other	81	3.17	0.82
	Total	730	3.04	0.87
Price	White	510	3.38	0.93
	African	139	3.75	0.97
	Other	81	3.70	0.86
	Total	730	3.48	0.95
Sensory aspects	White	510	4.08	0.62
	African	139	4.08	0.80
	Other	81	4.22	0.73
	Total	730	4.09	0.67
Exclusivity	White	510	2.81	0.68
	African	139	3.32	0.78
	Other	81	3.08	0.73
	Total	730	2.94	0.73

ANOVAs as indicated in Table 5.9 show that significant differences exist for “brand relevance” ($p = 0.015$); “Colour and quality” ($p = 0.42$), as well as for the “sensory aspects” (0.001) related to preserved bottled food products.

TABLE 5.10: ANOVA TO IDENTIFY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES IN DIFFERENT POPULATION GROUPS' REGARD FOR PRODUCT CHARACTERISTICS

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Brand relevance	Between Groups	22.507	2	11.254	24.248	.000
	Within Groups	337.402	727	.464		
	Total	359.909	729			
Explore	Between Groups	1.652	2	.826	1.406	.246
	Within Groups	419.036	713	.588		
	Total	420.688	715			
Colour	Between Groups	1.622	2	.811	1.072	.343
	Within Groups	549.976	727	.757		
	Total	551.598	729			
Price	Between Groups	19.262	2	9.631	11.075	.000
	Within Groups	632.207	727	.870		
	Total	651.469	729			
Sensory	Between Groups	1.444	2	.722	1.614	.200
	Within Groups	325.204	727	.447		
	Total	326.648	729			
Exclusivity	Between Groups	30.186	2	15.093	30.293	.000
	Within Groups	362.214	727	.498		
	Total	392.399	729			

Post hoc Scheffe tests were subsequently performed (see Table 5.10) to specify the significant differences.

TABLE 5.11: POST HOC SCHEFFE TESTS TO SPECIFY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES AMONG POPULATION GROUPS

Dependent Variable			Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Brand relevance	White	African	-.41912*	.06518	.000
		Other	-.30448*	.08148	.001
	African	White	.41912*	.06518	.000
		Other	.11464	.09523	.485
	Other	White	.30448*	.08148	.001
		African	-.11464	.09523	.485
Price	White	African	-.36868*	.08923	.000
		Other	-.32658*	.11154	.014
	African	White	.36868*	.08923	.000
		Other	.04210	.13035	.949
	Other	White	.32658*	.11154	.014
		African	-.04210	.13035	.949
Exclusivity	White	African	-.50947*	.06754	.000
		Other	-.26871*	.08443	.007
	African	White	.50947*	.06754	.000
		Other	.24076	.09867	.052
	Other	White	.26871*	.08443	.007
		African	-.24076	.09867	.052

*All relevant tables

Findings indicate that:

- In terms of “brand relevance”, an extrinsic factor, African (M = 3.65) and other population groups which include Coloured and Asian (M = 3.53) are significantly more concerned than White (M = 3.23; $p < 0.05$) about the brands of these type of products, which is highly relevant in terms of the symbolic- and status meaning of brands offered by entrepreneurs. They therefore have to be highly cognisant of the meaning of brand names and how that might be perceived by consumers across different population groups (Cho, Rha & Burt, 2015). All three population groups are relevant.
- In terms of “price”, which is an extrinsic factor, African (M = 3.75) and other population groups (M = 3.70) are significantly more concerned than White (M = 3.38; $p < 0.05$), although it is not clear whether prices should be higher to indicate status, or lower to be more affordable. This is an unfortunate shortcoming that could be explored in a follow up study.
- In terms of “exclusivity”, which is an intangible characteristic although more extrinsic in nature in terms of its definition, African (M = 3.32) and other population groups (M = 3.08) are significantly more concerned than White (M = 2.81; $p < 0.05$). All population groups’ regard for

exclusivity was nevertheless particularly high. Findings nevertheless indicate that for all, the exclusivity of products is not of major concern and therefore entrepreneurs have the opportunity to enter the market with their novel products. The fact that black consumer groups regard this as relevant, poses an opportunity to attract these consumers with entrepreneurs exclusive products.

5.4.3 Income group differences

Income group differences in terms of the relevance of the six factors when evaluating preserved bottled food products are presented in Table 5.11.

TABLE 5.12: DIFFERENCES AMONG DIFFERENT INCOME GROUPS WITH REGARD TO PRODUCT CHARACTERISTICS

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Brand relevance	Less than R5000	24	3.4242	.79509
	R5000-R 9999	66	3.4036	.80243
	R10000 to R14999	101	3.3591	.78471
	R15000-24999	157	3.2658	.65179
	R 25000+	303	3.2988	.66972
	Total	651	3.3155	.70292
Explore	Less than R5000	24	3.1944	.82776
	R5000-R 9999	66	3.2677	.73779
	R10000 to R14999	101	3.4191	.87261
	R15000-24999	157	3.4140	.66923
	R 25000+	303	3.3784	.76471
	Total	651	3.3753	.76030
Colour	Less than R5000	24	2.9375	.71570
	R5000-R 9999	66	3.0985	.93117
	R10000 to R14999	101	3.1856	.86794
	R15000-24999	157	3.1354	.73570
	R 25000+	303	2.9175	.87942
	Total	651	3.0307	.85035
Price	Less than R5000	24	3.5139	.93240
	R5000-R 9999	66	3.7576	.95281
	R10000 to R14999	101	3.7030	.82179
	R15000-24999	157	3.6157	.83561
	R 25000+	303	3.1826	.98835
	Total	651	3.4383	.95205
Sensory	Less than R5000	24	3.9792	.70293
	R5000-R 9999	66	3.8826	.78228
	R10000 to R14999	101	4.1411	.76682
	R15000-24999	157	4.2309	.55074
	R 25000+	303	4.0833	.62992
	Total	651	4.1037	.66042
Exclusivity	Less than R5000	24	3.1528	.88590
	R5000-R 9999	66	2.9949	.76122
	R10000 to R14999	101	2.9785	.84151
	R15000-24999	157	2.8418	.65230
	R 25000+	303	2.9103	.66149
	Total	651	2.9219	.71043

ANOVA was performed to identify possible significant differences among the different income groups. Findings presented in Table 5.12 indicate significant differences for “colour and quality”, “price” and “sensory aspects” ($p < 0.05$).

TABLE 5.13: ANOVA TO IDENTIFY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES IN DIFFERENT INCOME GROUPS' REGARD OF PRODUCT CHARACTERISTICS

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Brand relevance	Between Groups	1.460	4	.365	.738	.566
	Within Groups	319.698	646	.495		
	Total	321.158	650			
Explore	Between Groups	1.982	4	.495	.856	.490
	Within Groups	373.759	646	.579		
	Total	375.741	650			
Colour and quality	Between Groups	8.539	4	2.135	2.988	.518
	Within Groups	461.471	646	.714		
	Total	470.011	650			
Price	Between Groups	38.690	4	9.672	11.351	.000
	Within Groups	550.471	646	.852		
	Total	589.161	650			
Sensory aspects	Between Groups	6.406	4	1.602	3.734	.005
	Within Groups	277.095	646	.429		
	Total	283.501	650			
Exclusivity	Between Groups	3.003	4	.751	1.492	.203
	Within Groups	325.056	646	.503		
	Total	328.058	650			

Post hoc Scheffe tests as indicated in Table 5.14 specify the differences for the factors identified in Table 5.13.

Findings indicate that

- Consumers in the high income groups (\geq R25 000 per month) are significantly less concerned ($M = 3.18$) about price, which is an extrinsic product characteristic (assuming that they are less concerned when products are more expensive than national brands) than lower income groups ($p < 0.05$).
- Consumers in the lower middle income group (earning R5000-R 9999 monthly) are significantly less concerned about the sensory characteristics of preserved bottled food products (i.e. an intrinsic characteristic) than upper middle income consumers who earn up to R24 999 per month. Despite these significant differences, all consumers, irrespective of their income group consider the sensory characteristics of preserved bottled food products as highly relevant.

TABLE 5.14: POST HOC SCHEFFE TESTS TO SPECIFY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES AMONG INCOME GROUPS

Dependent Variable		Mean Difference (I-J)		Std. Error	Sig.
Price	Less than R5000	R5000-R 9999	-.24369	.22004	.874
		R10000 to R14999	-.18908	.20962	.937
		R15000-24999	-.10182	.20232	.993
		R 25000+	.33127	.19575	.581
	R5000-R 9999	Less than R5000	.24369	.22004	.874
		R10000 to R14999	.05461	.14611	.998
		R15000-24999	.14186	.13542	.895
		R 25000+	.57496*	.12539	.000
	R10000 to R14999	Less than R5000	.18908	.20962	.937
		R5000-R 9999	-.05461	.14611	.998
		R15000-24999	.08726	.11775	.968
		R 25000+	.52035*	.10606	.000
	R15000-24999	Less than R5000	.10182	.20232	.993
		R5000-R 9999	-.14186	.13542	.895
		R10000 to R14999	-.08726	.11775	.968
		R 25000+	.43309*	.09077	.000
	R 25000+	Less than R5000	-.33127	.19575	.581
		R5000-R 9999	-.57496*	.12539	.000
		R10000 to R14999	-.52035*	.10606	.000
		R15000-24999	-.43309*	.09077	.000
Sensory	Less than R5000	R5000-R 9999	.09659	.15611	.984
		R10000 to R14999	-.16192	.14873	.880
		R15000-24999	-.25173	.14354	.546
		R 25000+	-.10417	.13888	.967
	R5000-R 9999	Less than R5000	-.09659	.15611	.984
		R10000 to R14999	-.25851	.10366	.185
		R15000-24999	-.34832*	.09608	.011
		R 25000+	-.20076	.08896	.279
	R10000 to R14999	Less than R5000	.16192	.14873	.880
		R5000-R 9999	.25851	.10366	.185
		R15000-24999	-.08980	.08354	.885
		R 25000+	.05776	.07525	.964
	R15000-24999	Less than R5000	.25173	.14354	.546
		R5000-R 9999	.34832*	.09608	.011
		R10000 to R14999	.08980	.08354	.885
		R 25000+	.14756	.06440	.264
	R 25000+	Less than R5000	.10417	.13888	.967
		R5000-R 9999	.20076	.08896	.279
		R10000 to R14999	-.05776	.07525	.964
		R15000-24999	-.14756	.06440	.264

5.4.4 Level of education differences

Differences among consumers with different levels of education with respect to the relevance of the six factors when evaluating preserved bottled food products are presented in Table 5.15.

TABLE 5.15: DIFFERENCES AMONG DIFFERENT LEVEL OF EDUCATION GROUPS WITH REGARD TO THEIR REGARD FOR THE DIFFERENT PRODUCT CHARACTERISTICS

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Brand relevance	Some secondary schooling / Grade 12 / Undergraduate	268	3.3873	.75015
	Degree / Diploma	295	3.3014	.70315
	Postgraduate	191	3.3103	.62660
	Total	754	3.3342	.70229
Explore	Some secondary schooling / Grade 12 / Undergraduate	264	3.3586	.78980
	Degree / Diploma	286	3.3584	.71632
	Postgraduate	187	3.3431	.77370
	Total	737	3.3546	.75691
Colour	Some secondary schooling / Grade 12 / Undergraduate	268	3.0700	.88342
	Degree / Diploma	295	2.9873	.79943
	Postgraduate	191	3.0314	.91100
	Total	754	3.0279	.85845
Price	Some secondary schooling / Grade 12 / Undergraduate	268	3.5746	.89760
	Degree / Diploma	295	3.4825	.94169
	Postgraduate	191	3.3019	1.01575
	Total	754	3.4695	.95046
Sensory	Some secondary schooling / Grade 12 / Undergraduate	268	4.1091	.70875
	Degree / Diploma	295	4.0766	.64473
	Postgraduate	191	4.0873	.68502
	Total	754	4.0908	.67751
Exclusivity	Some secondary schooling / Grade 12 / Undergraduate	268	2.9024	.74640
	Degree / Diploma	295	2.9610	.71090
	Postgraduate	191	2.9424	.71053
	Total	754	2.9355	.72312

Anova was subsequently performed to identify possible significant differences ($p < 0.05$) among the different education level groups. Findings presented in Table 5.15 suggest significant differences

among the level of education groups for only one of the factors, namely price, which is an extrinsic characteristic. Differences among the groups for the other five factors were not significant.

TABLE 5.16: ANOVA TO IDENTIFY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES AMONG THE DIFFERENT LEVEL OF EDUCATION GROUPS' REGARD FOR PRODUCT CHARACTERISTICS

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Brand relevance	Between Groups	1.183	2	.591	1.200	.302
	Within Groups	370.210	751	.493		
	Total	371.393	753			
Explore	Between Groups	.033	2	.016	.029	.972
	Within Groups	421.634	734	.574		
	Total	421.667	736			
Colour	Between Groups	.963	2	.482	.653	.521
	Within Groups	553.952	751	.738		
	Total	554.915	753			
Price	Between Groups	8.375	2	4.188	4.681	.010
	Within Groups	671.867	751	.895		
	Total	680.243	753			
Sensory	Between Groups	.152	2	.076	.166	.847
	Within Groups	345.486	751	.460		
	Total	345.638	753			
Uniqueness	Between Groups	.495	2	.248	.473	.623
	Within Groups	393.252	751	.524		
	Total	393.748	753			

Post hoc Scheffe tests were subsequently done to specify the differences. Findings presented in Table 5.17 indicate higher concern for price amongst lower educated consumers, and specifically that consumers in the highest level of education group (post graduate qualification) is significantly less concerned ($p < 0.05$) about the price of preserved bottled food products ($M = 3.30$) than the lowest level of education group ($M = 3.57$), who probably earn less money and therefore have to attend to affordability.

TABLE 5.17: POST HOC SCHEFFE TESTS TO SPECIFY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES AMONG LEVEL OF EDUCATION GROUPS

Dependent Variable			Mean Diff(I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Price	Some secondary schooling / Grade 12 / Undergraduate	Degree / Diploma	.09214	.07982	.514
		Postgraduate	.27271*	.08957	.010
	Degree / Diploma	Some secondary schooling / Grade 12 / Undergraduate	-.09214	.07982	.514
		Postgraduate	.18057	.08784	.122
	Postgraduate	Some secondary schooling / Grade 12 / Undergraduate	-.27271*	.08957	.010
		Degree / Diploma	-.18057	.08784	.122

5.4.5 Summary

Of the six factors that were identified through factor analysis, three factors seem to instigate significant differences in terms of their relevance during the evaluation of preserved bottled food products, namely brand relevance, price and sensory properties. Price (an extrinsic characteristic) seems significantly more relevant to lower income consumers and lower educated consumers compared to their counterparts, while brands (also an extrinsic characteristic) seem significantly more relevant to males than females. Females however, are significantly more concerned about the sensory qualities of this product category, which means that females should have the opportunity to sample novel products.

5.5 COMPENSATORY AND NON-COMPENSATORY PRODUCT DECISIONS

Respondents were asked to study a list of food product characteristics and to then select the five characteristics they regarded as the most important when evaluating preserved bottled food products. Respondents were asked to rank these five characteristics in order of importance, where 1 indicated the *most important* and 5 indicated the *least important* of the five characteristics. Respondents had to repeat the exercise as an indication of how willing they were to compensate.

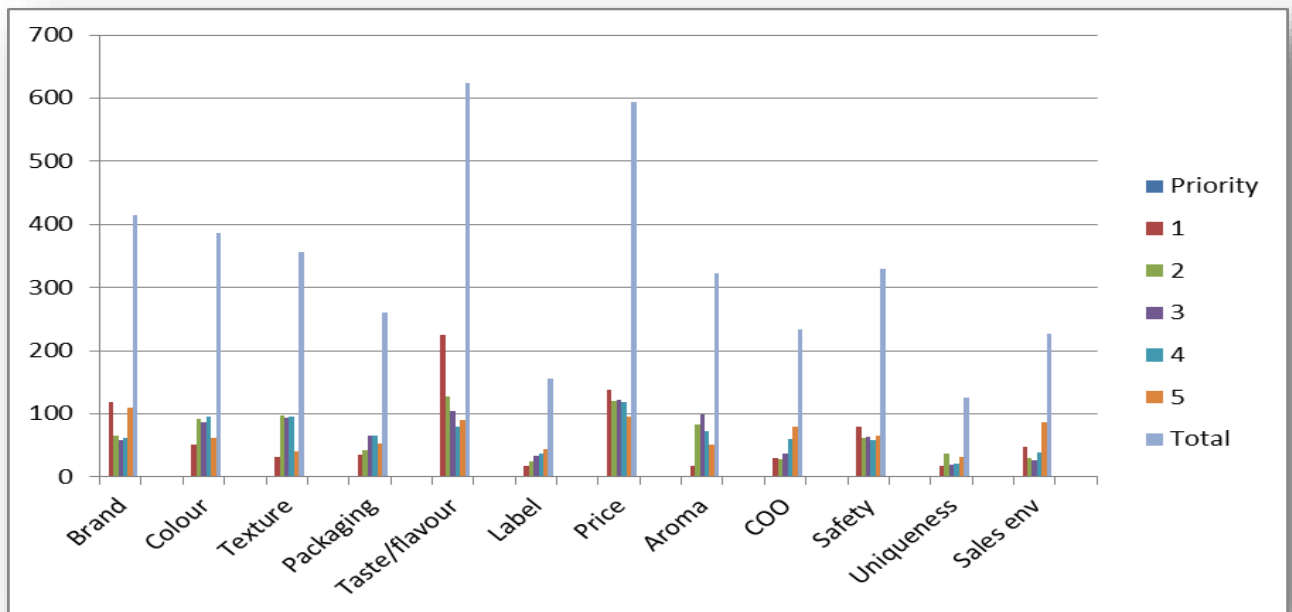


FIGURE 5.2: RANKING OF FOOD PRODUCT CHARACTERISTICS

In descending order, *taste/flavour*, *price*, *brand of product*, *colour* and *texture* were regarded the five most important characteristics when respondents considered purchasing a bottled preserved food product (Figure 5.2). *Taste/flavour* was ranked the most important characteristic, which concurs with the finding that sensory characteristics are crucial when choosing preserved bottled food products (Table 5.3, Figure 5.2). The findings also confirm the relevance of price and brand preference as concluded through the previous section when the factors regarded relevant during consumers' evaluation of bottled preserved food products were investigated.

The factors/ attributes that seem less important, namely *packaging*, *labelling*, *aroma*, *country of origin (COO)*, *safety of the food product*, *uniqueness* and the *sales environment* in which the products are sold disclose lucrative opportunity for entrepreneurs who wish to introduce novel products to the market because this means that consumers will not reject products outright if:

- the packaging is different to what they are used to;
- the labels differ from the products they usually purchase;
- the products are locally produced by small businesses rather than major food industries;
- the safety of products are not protected by legal requirement, and entrepreneurs are trusted;
- products are not unique or entirely different to what is produced by major industries;

- Products are sold at venues other than supermarkets, for example at farmers' markets or home industries.

Respondents were then asked to reconsider their ranking of product characteristics and to indicate whether they would like to make any change as an indication of willingness to compensate during decision-making. The results are visually presented in Figure 5.3.

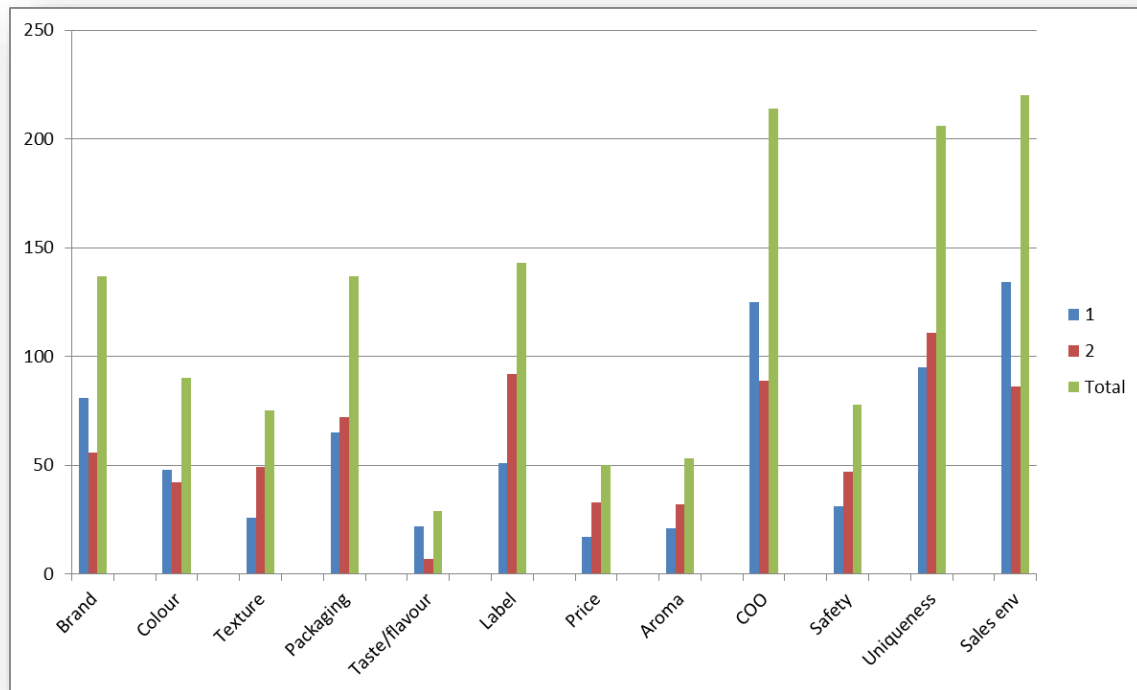


FIGURE 5.3: RECONSIDERATION OF PRODUCTS CHARACTERISTICS

The two characteristics respondents were most willing to compensate on when thinking about the most important characteristics when evaluating bottled preserved food products, were *country of origin (COO)*, the *sales environment* in which products were sold, as well as *product uniqueness*. Findings as presented in Figure 5.3 therefore confirm the former finding, namely that consumers are willing to:

- be informed in terms of where bottled preserved food products are produced, in other words not necessarily demanding products produced by major food industries;
- purchase products at sales venues other than supermarkets;
- purchase fairly ordinary products, for example apricot jam with alternative labels at venues other than supermarkets.

Summary

The study's findings were therefore confirmed and indicate that entrepreneurs who wish to enter the market with preserved bottled food products have a chance to succeed provided the most important requirements, namely flavourful products are introduced at a relative affordable price and that opportunity for success would increase if products could be tasted, because that would reduce risk perception due to novel brand names, unfamiliar packaging and labelling.

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Chapter 6

Conclusion

In this chapter conclusions are made from the results and the discussions that were presented in the previous chapter followed by recommendations for future research.

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a recollection of the entire process this study has undergone to reach this point of conclusion. The overall aim that inspired the research investigation was to provide empirical evidence that entrepreneurs could use when introducing artisan bottled preserved food products to consumers in a competitive market, yet simultaneously creating a sustainable business venture. In particular, useful information would concern the demographic characteristics of consumers who would be likely to purchase artisan bottled preserved food products; what combinations of product characteristics consumers sought in these types of products; and lastly, what social and environmental factors tended to influence consumers' product choices and purchase behaviour. A review of the research procedures employed and the challenges encountered along the way are documented.

6.2 THE FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Several findings emerged from the results of this research investigation.

6.2.1 The importance of extrinsic characteristics

The main theme of Objective 1.1. concerned the importance of extrinsic characteristics in terms of consumers' prioritisation of product characteristics when purchasing preserved bottled food products. This was supposed to serve as an indication of the relevance of extrinsic characteristics when an entrepreneur wishes to introduce artisan products in a competitive market place. Product characteristics that were relevant here, are: store image/ place of sales, price, brand and brand image, packaging, labelling and product origin.

The researcher included an array of extrinsic and intrinsic product characteristics which were shuffled in one section in the questionnaire in Section A. The extrinsic product characteristic that was highly relevant in consumers' product decisions, was price (see Figure 5.1). Price was however not the most crucial characteristic ($M = 3.5$) and consumers' regard for price ($M_{\max} = 5$), suggests that consumers would be somewhat lenient in terms of higher prices. Status-conscious consumers might for example be willing to pay a premium price for artisan bottled preserved food products (Hoyer *et al.*, 2013:20), and literature also suggests that price is often positively associated with quality (Anselmasson *et al.*, 2014)). Therefore more expensive artisan preserved bottled food products may be perceived as of exceptional quality the price of products, although slightly more expensive than national brands, should not deter product sales unless the prices are exorbitant.

The other extrinsic characteristic that needs to be noted is *brand*. This study shows that brands are relevant, but not crucial. Consumers would therefore attend to brand names, but would not be discouraged entirely when they are unfamiliar with the brand names ($M = 3.38$). Entrepreneurs could however attend to the theory related to brand names and brand image (Kapferer, 2012:146; Wheeler, 2012:93) to select brand names for their products that would impress and create positive associations, as that would encourage interest and add to other positive persuasive characteristics.

The other extrinsic characteristic that was expected to be influential, was packaging. During factor analysis, packaging-related items however cohered with other items in a factor that was labelled "exclusivity" and which seems relevant but not crucial ($M = 3.28$). Packaging per se therefore does not seem to be highly influential, but extraordinary packaging could increase the exclusivity as a surprise element that would boost interest in particular products. Entrepreneurs should therefore guard against inferior packaging that does not uphold the image of their products.

In summary, entrepreneur who wishes to enter the market with their own bottled preserved food products, would have to carefully contemplate and position their products in terms of price, but should also be very creative in their choice of brand name and be exceptionally cautious in choosing the product packaging.

6.2.2 The importance of intrinsic characteristics

The list of intrinsic product characteristics that respondents had to consider included aroma, texture, taste, visual appearance as well as product safety (Objective 1.2). As was explained when discussing the extrinsic product characteristics in the previous section (6.2.1), factor analysis

resulted in an extraction of coherent factors that merged certain intrinsic factors rather than to present several, more specific intrinsic properties as were planned in the initial questionnaire.

The outcome of the exploratory factor analysis presented a single factor, labelled “sensory aspects” of bottled preserved food products, which integrated attributes relating to aroma, texture, taste and visual appearance. This was identified as the characteristic that is most relevant, and more specifically, highly relevant ($M > 4$) in consumers’ product evaluations in this product category. Hence intrinsic product characteristics are more important to consumers than price, which was the most relevant extrinsic characteristic. It is crucial that entrepreneurs of artisan bottled preserved food products are aware of this finding, because it would be highly advantageous to provide opportunity for consumers to taste samples of their artisan crafted products. Clearly, this is the deciding factor for a sale of artisan bottled preserved food products. Entrepreneurs would also have to understand that sensory appeal is a personal matter. Eventually the entrepreneurs’ creativity and willingness to explore with unfamiliar combinations, might also be risky as there is a fine line between what consumers would accept/ like and what they would reject/ dislike. Entrepreneurs should ultimately customise their products in accordance with their target market’s needs.

Colour and quality (factor 3), seem relevant in terms of consumers’ evaluation of preserved bottled food products ($M = 3.05$), although not crucial. The colour of products that are produced by industry, for example jams and sauces, is often enhanced with colourants. Consumers would therefore expect colour differences, which explains why colour is not necessary crucial in consumers’ evaluation of these kinds of products. From experience, the colour of home cooked jams is also often slightly darker, which may be considered a positive characteristic as consumers have become more suspicious of food additives in recent years (Lusk, Roosen & Bieberstein, 2014) and would therefore appreciate produce that do not contain all the chemicals. This finding can be used to the advantage of food entrepreneurs who are faced with multiple obstacles. The colour of preserved products tends to vary when raw ingredients are not purchased in bulk. There might also be colour variances in fruit of different cultivars. Pectin concentration in fruit also plays a role as the more pectin in the fruit the easier the preserved product will gel/ set. If the pectin content is low and the moisture content high, longer cooking would be necessary for the sugar to caramelize and the colour to darken. Pectin and moisture levels of fruit may differ from season to season, depending on how good the harvest was (Liu *et al.*, 2013; Schmitz *et al.*, 2012).

In conclusion, findings revealed that the sensory characteristics of bottled preserved food products are crucial in terms of the success of products. While the colour of products is not highly relevant, consumers' acceptance of colour variations in products is encouraging as entrepreneurs are not always able to restrict their fresh produce in terms of cultivars and production times. Entrepreneurs therefore have to ensure that their produce is tasty and flavourful.

6.2.3 Integrated product characteristics

The importance of integrated product characteristics in terms of how consumers prioritise product characteristics in terms of the importance namely the price - quality relationship, brand equity and product uniqueness (Objective 1.3).

During factor analysis the integrated product characteristics that were incorporated in the questionnaire, namely, price-quality and brand-quality were not extracted as individual factors, therefore conclusions pertaining to them could not be made. However, colour, an intrinsic factor, and quality merged as an integrated factor, implying that consumers associate the colour of artisan bottled preserved food products with their quality. The mean ($M = 3.05$) however, indicates that consumers are not highly critical about this property as discussed in 6.2.2.

An integrated characteristic that came to the fore, but which was not designed as such in the initial questionnaire, was sensory aspects ($M = 4.11$) that merged the intrinsic characteristics taste, aroma and texture. These emerged as a crucial characteristic that would persuade consumers to purchase novel artisan bottled preserved food products.

6.2.4 Consumers' prioritisation of product characteristics

Findings in terms of consumers' prioritisation of product characteristics in relation to extrinsic, intrinsic and integrated product characteristics (objective 1.4) showed that the intrinsic characteristics of preserved bottled food products, specifically the sensory properties (aroma, texture, taste, visual appearance as well as product safety) are the most relevant and crucial of all the product characteristics. Consumers would therefore be hesitant to compromise on these characteristics when considering artisan bottled preserved food products that they are unfamiliar with. Providing samples for consumers to taste, would be a good way to encourage sales and to build trusting that would boost continual support.

From the ANOVA analysis and subsequent post hoc Scheffe tests that were performed (see Table 5.10) to specify the significant differences, African, Coloured and Asian were more concerned about extrinsic factors such as brand relevance, price and exclusivity of artisan bottled preserved food products than White population groups. In terms of education groups, lower educated consumers have a higher concern for price and consumers in the highest level of education group (post graduate qualification) is significantly less concerned about the price of preserved bottled food products than the lowest level of education group who probably earn less money and therefore have to attend to affordability.

6.2.5 Exploratory buying behaviour

The objective was to explore the extent to which consumers are explorative in their approach towards purchasing artisan bottled preserved products, and to discuss findings in accordance with selected demographic characteristics (Objective 2).

A mean of 3.34 (Maximum score: 5) indicates that consumers are open to exploring new artisan food products that are mostly sold at food markets and home industries, i.e. not in supermarkets with national brands. Consumers therefore seem willing to try new artisan food products. This finding is particularly encouraging for young and upcoming entrepreneurs.

6.2.6 Consumers' choice and their gender

Consumers' choice of artisan bottled preserved food products in terms of their gender (Objective 3.2).

More than 60% of respondents who took part in this research investigation were females. This could suggest that women are still the major purchasers of food in their respective households. Despite this being a women's traditional task, the pattern does not seem to have changed, although some research does indicate that men are starting to take over the roles of household food purchasing from women since gender roles are starting to change as more and more women enter the labour market. However, they still have to juggle multiple roles within society.

ANOVA procedures were performed to determine possible differences in terms of the relevance of the six factors when evaluating preserved bottled food products that were investigated. Males are more concerned about brand relevance than females whereas colour, quality and sensory characteristics of products are most important to females. These findings are integral to entrepreneurs especially when determining who their target market is and which characteristics of artisan bottled preserved food products, males view extrinsic characteristics to be most important and females place great importance on the intrinsic characteristics.

6.2.7 Consumers` choice and their financial status

Consumers' choice of artisan bottled preserved food products in terms of their financial status (Objective 3.1).

Of the respondents who indicated their income, more than half earned R25 000 and more per month. This supports literature that states that consumer who purchase novel artisan food products, do so for its status-enhancing value, and do not mind paying a premium price for a high quality product. This is to the advantage of entrepreneurs in business who should aim to market their artisan preserved food products to the working middle class citizen who has the financial ability to try new food products, who follow a lifestyle that exposes a range of premium-priced products and who is willing to purchase them.

ANOVAS procedures were used to identify possible differences between income groups in terms of the relevance of the six factors when evaluating preserved bottled food products that were investigated. Results indicated that consumers in high income groups are less concerned about the price of artisan bottled preserved food products than consumers in low income groups which supports the fact that high income earning consumers are willing to pay a price premium for these artisan products.

6.3 THE RESEARCH IN RETROSPECT

The research process was completed without major obstacles or unexpected problems. The sample size was particularly encouraging and provided opportunity for useful findings, although not generalizable due to the convenient sampling method. The sampling procedure was effortless, due

to the support of Consulta Research. The sampling procedure was effortless due to the support of Consulta Research that was enabled by NRF funding.

The exploratory factor analysis procedure did not extract the factors (product characteristics) in the detail that was expected but the factors nevertheless made sense in terms of literature. The internal consistency of the factors was encouraging, and indicated potential to deduce reliable findings.

The questionnaire was quite extensive (many items) but there were no complaints about the questionnaire and an unexpected fast response from the respondents was particularly encouraging.

6.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

As mentioned when discussing the reasoning behind this study, the utmost care was taken to ensure that the best possible data was obtained, and its reliability was a concern in all phases of this study. Although the intention was to conduct this study in an ethically and correct way, certain limitations did, however, pose restrictions to the data collection and analysis endeavours, in particular the availability of time and financial resources. This study had to be completed within a limited time frame with limited financial support from the National Research Foundation and therefore the study is not representative of the population of South Africa. Consulta Research was paid to do the data collection, and due to the electronic nature of the questionnaire, the number of items per characteristic was cut from 5 per characteristic to 3 items after discussions with the research company. However, even if an alternative data collection procedure was followed, the initial questionnaire might have been too long and might have infringed the quality of the data.

South Africa's population is not presented in this research proportionally and therefore the study is not generalizable, although the sample size is encouraging. The pertinent limitations of convenience sampling exist in the sense that it could lead to an over representation as well as an under representation of important consumer groups. However with a sample of 939 respondents this is highly unlikely.

6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Within the Social Science context, most of the published scholarly work focuses more on the instructive side of food preservation rather than on the evaluative side of it (Click & Ridberg, 2010). A huge gap therefore exists in the literature for more research to be done on the topic of food preservation and consumer behaviour. More detailed research on the shopping behaviours of consumers in South Africa would be a great contribution to understanding consumer patterns in South Africa in general. In fact, research procedures adopted in this study could also be repeated in other countries to gain more insight about artisan bottled preserved food products worldwide.

Probability sampling methods can be used in future studies to obtain greater representation of respondents to enable generalising the results in terms of the entire South African population. Using this type of sampling method will also make drawing comparisons between different population groups possible, which will especially be valuable in a culture diverse setting such as South Africa and lead to better customising of product offerings.

This study can also be done in a qualitative manner where focus group discussions can supplement the gaps left by numerical data in a quantitative study and strengthen this research investigation by documenting the actual verbalised thoughts of consumers on the topic of artisan bottled preserved food products. Furthermore, this study can also provide a guideline for use in similar situations to determine what consumers regard to be the most important intrinsic and extrinsic characteristics for a different product of which fresh produce research would be a good example.

6.6 IMPLICATIONS OF THIS STUDY

Entrepreneurs in South Africa are able, to some extent, to apply the findings of this research study to their own artisan products when aiming to achieve more success in the South African food scene. Young entrepreneurs struggle to make a successful and sustainable entrance into the local food market, and do not always have the financial resources or time to perform a study of this size and nature. Therefore it would be beneficial for them to keep the findings of this study in mind when targeting consumers in South Africa, when selling artisan bottled preserved food products. Entrepreneurs are the lifeblood of the South African economy and greater effort should be put into providing support for these individuals in order to spark greater growth in the local economy and to address the unemployment tendency in South Africa as their endeavours trigger growth.

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ADDENDUM A

Questionnaire



DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER SCIENCE

MASTERS STUDY: PRODUCT ATTRIBUTES THAT INFLUENCE CONSUMERS' TRIAL OF SELECTED NICHE PRODUCTS IN A COMPETITIVE FOOD MARKET

Please follow the instructions for each question very carefully. There are no correct or incorrect answers and you will remain anonymous. Your identity can therefore not be retrieved and disclosed in any way. *Thank you for your participation!*

This study is all about consumers' evaluation of preserved bottled food products such as those depicted in the following picture:



Section A							
When thinking about PRESERVED BOTTLED NICHE FOOD PRODUCTS....							
How important are the following considerations and actions in terms of your purchase decisions?							
Please respond to every item and indicate your answer with an X in the adjacent column.							
1. EXTRINSIC & INTRINSIC FOOD PRODUCT ATTRIBUTES How do the following statements reflect your general thoughts and beliefs regarding the product attributes of <i>preserved bottled niche food products</i> ? <i>Please respond to every item. Mark the most appropriate option with an X</i>	Not important at all	Slightly important	Neither important nor unimportant	Important	Highly important	Office use	
	I am willing to make effort to find cheaper products	1	2	3	4	5	V1.1
The brand image of products is important to me	1	2	3	4	5	V1.2	
A product's packaging ' draws my attention when doing shopping	1	2	3	4	5	V1.3	
The aroma of the product determines whether I will purchase the same product again	1	2	3	4	5	V1.4	
The texture of a product determines whether I will purchase the same product again	1	2	3	4	5	V1.5	
I prefer certain products mainly for their taste	1	2	3	4	5	V1.6	
I will only buy a new product if the colour is to my liking	1	2	3	4	5	V1.7	
You always have to pay a bit more for the best product	1	2	3	4	5	V1.8	
A unique brand name is an indication of the exclusivity of the product	1	2	3	4	5	V1.9	
I use unique products to show other people who I am	1	2	3	4	5	V1.10	
I am passionate about my favourite brands	1	2	3	4	5	V1.11	
The type of packaging used influences my purchase decisions	1	2	3	4	5	V1.12	
I often look for exclusive products	1	2	3	4	5	V1.13	
The taste of a product will determine my decision to purchase a product again	1	2	3	4	5	V1.14	
The colour of a product is an indication of its quality	1	2	3	4	5	V1.15	
Generally, more expensive products are of a better quality	1	2	3	4	5	V1.16	
I often try to find a more interesting version of ordinary products	1	2	3	4	5	V1.17	
A brand name is a useful sign of the quality of a product	1	2	3	4	5	V1.18	
I will shop at more than one store to take advantage of special price promotions	1	2	3	4	5	V1.19	
I find branded products interesting	1	2	3	4	5	V1.20	
I will buy a food product, although it is not always possible to test the aroma beforehand	1	2	3	4	5	V1.21	
I will buy a new product, although it is not always possible to evaluate the texture beforehand	1	2	3	4	5	V1.22	
The price of the product is an indication of its quality	1	2	3	4	5	V1.23	
I will buy a new product, although it is not always possible to taste it beforehand	1	2	3	4	5	V1.24	
I prefer brands that I am familiar with	1	2	3	4	5	V1.25	
The brand image of a product will determine whether or not I will buy it	1	2	3	4	5	V1.26	
I read the information on product labels before purchasing it	1	2	3	4	5	V1.27	
I choose brands because of the quality they represent	1	2	3	4	5	V1.28	
The money saved by finding lower priced products is usually worth the effort	1	2	3	4	5	V1.29	
I trust product more if it has a good brand image	1	2	3	4	5	V1.30	
The texture of a product is an indication of the quality of the product	1	2	3	4	5	V1.31	
A product's colour greatly influences whether I will buy that product or not	1	2	3	4	5	V1.32	

Section B			
This section investigates the way in which you evaluate preserved, bottled niche food products. Please respond to every item and indicate your answer with an order number in the adjacent column.			
2. DECISION RULES		Office use	
2.1 Please study the following list of product attributes. Select the FIVE Most important attributes in terms of what you regard crucial when evaluating preserved bottled products. Number them in order of importance , where 1 indicates the most important attribute, and five indicates the least important of the five attributes listed.			
1. The brand		V2.1	
2. The colour of the product contents (visual appearance)		V2.2	
3. The texture or consistency of the products		V2.3	
4. The product packaging		V2.4	
5. The Taste/Flavour of the product		V2.5	
6. The label of the product		V2.6	
7. The product price		V2.7	
8. Aroma/smell of the product contents		V2.8	
9. Country of manufacture (product origin)		V2.9	
10. Product safety aspects		V2.10	
11. Product uniqueness		V2.11	
2.2 Please look at the order of importance indicated for the five factors that you have identified in the previous question. Please indicate an alternative order IF YOU ARE PREPARED TO MAKE SOME COMPROMISES . You may therefore shuffle the order of the same five attributes slightly. Alternatively you may replace one of the attributes on your list with another that you have not included in your first answer.		Office use	
1.		V2.15	
2.		V2.16	
3.		V2.17	
4.		V2.18	
5.		V2.19	

Section C

This section investigates the shopping style you exhibit during your evaluation of preserved, bottled niche food products and the degree to which you are willing to explore these type of products
 Please respond to every item and indicate your answer with an X in the adjacent column.

3. SHOPPING STYLES How do the following statements reflect your general thoughts and beliefs regarding your style of shopping? <i>Please respond to every item listed. Mark the most appropriate option with an X</i>	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Office use	
Purchasing good quality products is important to me	1	2	3	4	V3.1	
I usually have unique products in my food cupboard	1	2	3	4	V3.2	
Shopping around is interesting	1	2	3	4	V3.3	
I am not impulsive when purchasing	1	2	3	4	V3.4	
The more products available, the harder it gets to make a purchase decision	1	2	3	4	V3.5	
I prefer well-known, established brands	1	2	3	4	V3.6	
In general, I try to buy the best quality products	1	2	3	4	V3.7	
I only consider certain branded products	1	2	3	4	V3.8	
I shop for the fun of it	1	2	3	4	V3.9	
I do not switch brands	1	2	3	4	V3.10	
The standards I use to purchase products are high	1	2	3	4	V3.11	
The most advertised brands are usually good choices	1	2	3	4	V3.12	
I keep my food cupboard up to date according to the latest food trends	1	2	3	4	V3.13	
I generally have the same brands in my food cupboard	1	2	3	4	V3.14	
I am aware of the price of products in my food cupboard	1	2	3	4	V3.15	
I purchase products that are on a price promotion	1	2	3	4	V3.16	
I do not plan shopping trips	1	2	3	4	V3.17	
I purchase the lowest price products	1	2	3	4	V3.18	
I purchase according to a shopping list	1	2	3	4	V3.19	
I get confused when there are too many brands to choose from	1	2	3	4	V3.20	
I have favourite brands that I do not deviate from	1	2	3	4	V3.21	
A wide choice of products excite me*	1	2	3	4	V3.22	
I usually purchase more expensive brands	1	2	3	4	V3.23	
It is fun to buy food products that are new	1	2	3	4	V3.24	
I compare the price of products	1	2	3	4	V3.25	
I often make careless purchases I later wish I had not	1	2	3	4	V3.26	

4: EXPLORATORY BUYING BEHAVIOUR & CONSUMER INNOVATIVENESS 10.1 How do the following statements reflect your general thoughts and beliefs regarding the way in which you purchase food products in general? Please respond to every item listed. Mark the most appropriate option with an X	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Office use	
I change brands I buy regularly*	1	2	3	4	V4.1	
I take advantage of the first available opportunity to find out about new and different products	1	2	3	4	V4.2	
Once I find a product or brand I like, I stick with it	1	2	3	4	V4.3	
I frequently look for new food products	1	2	3	4	V4.4	
I am very cautious in trying new or different products	1	2	3	4	V4.5	
When I go shopping, I find myself spending very little time checking out new products and brands	1	2	3	4	V4.6	
I have favourite brands I buy over and over	1	2	3	4	V4.7	
I often seek out information about new food products and brands	1	2	3	4	V4.8	

Section D PLEASE TELL US MORE ABOUT YOURSELF. Answer every question and mark every relevant answer with an X							Respondent number:		Office use				
1. What is your gender?						Male	1	Female	2	V5			
2. What is your age?									Year s	V6			
3. What is your highest level of education?		Lower than Grade 10	1	Grade 10 or 11	2	Grade 12	3	Grade 12 + Degree/diploma	4	Post graduate	5	V7	
4. What is your approximate total monthly HOUSEHOLD INCOME?		Less than R5000	1	R5000 to R9999	2	R10000 to R14999	3	R15000 to R24999	4	R25000 or more	5	V8	
5. Which population group do you belong to according to the SA Population Equity Act?													
White	1	Black	2	Indian	3	Coloured	4	Other:	5	V9			
6. In which province do you currently reside in? <i>Please specify:</i>												V10	
												V11	

Thank you for your participation!