

**Differences in interpersonal and impersonal influences on clothing brand status
consumption across different population groups**

by

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April 2017

University of Pretoria

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Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree
Master's in Consumer Science (Clothing Retail Management)

In the

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Department of Consumer Science
University of Pretoria

Supervisor: Mrs Bertha Jacobs (University of Pretoria)
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April 2017

**Verskille in interpersoonlike en onpersoonlike invloede op statusverbruik van kleding-
handelsmerke oor verskillende populasie groepe**

deur

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April 2017

DEDICATION

For
Mom & Dad

DECLARATION

I, Stavroula Kolatsis, declare that the contents of this dissertation represent my own work, and this dissertation has not previously been submitted for academic examination towards any qualification of publication. I confirm that:

1. This dissertation was done exclusively for M Consumer Science: Clothing Retail Management research degree at the University of Pretoria.
2. Where I have referred or quoted the published work of others, it was always clearly accredited.
3. The work of this dissertation is my own, while acknowledging the contribution of causative supervisors.

Stavroula Kolatsis

April 2017

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My family, who constantly provide unconditional love and support. My parents, who have always encouraged education, drive and determination.

Thank you!

“It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it.”

Aristotle

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”

Nelson Mandela

SUMMARY

Differences in interpersonal and impersonal influences on clothing brand status consumption across different population groups

by

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Supervisor: Mrs BM Jacobs

Co-supervisor: Prof AC Erasmus

Department: Consumer Science

Degree: Masters in Consumer Science: Clothing Retail Management

This empirical study investigated how interpersonal influences (normative receptiveness and informative influences) and impersonal influences differ across different population groups in terms of status consumption of clothing brands. The theory of consumer socialisation directed the study and was used to describe consumers' susceptibility to interpersonal and impersonal influences by encompassing its two major components: the learning processes and socialisation agents. The interpersonal influences, normative receptiveness and informative influences together with the impersonal influences were included in the conceptual framework and hypotheses. The theory of consumer socialisation was selected as it provides a suitable framework to explain how consumers are socialised over time through interpersonal and impersonal agents so that they come to prefer or purchase certain products such as status clothing brands.

A survey research design was followed. Data were collected with a structured self-administered questionnaire, developed from existing scales. Non-probability sampling techniques, convenience and quota sampling were used to include an appropriate sample size. Trained field workers distributed the questionnaire to the target population in suburbs in Tshwane. A total of 1014 (N=1014) usable questionnaires were completed. The sample consisted of males and females living in Tshwane, 19 years and older from all population groups. The data were captured and coded and then analysed with the help of a statistician who made use of

descriptive and inferential statistics. The EFA retained three factors: normative receptiveness, impersonal influences and informative influences. The results from the CFA confirmed that the measurement model fit was good. Subsequently, GLMs were performed to assess if differences exist in interpersonal and impersonal influences across the different population groups' status consumption of clothing brands.

The findings showed that normative receptiveness, informative and impersonal influences had a statistically significant effect on the status consumption of clothing brands. From the three independent factors, normative receptiveness had the greatest effect on status consumption and showed significant difference across population groups when factoring in gender, education, age and income into the GLM models. Impersonal influences showed minor significant differences across population groups' status consumption when gender was considered in the GLM model. Even though informative influences affected status consumption, no significant differences could be found across the different population groups when factoring in demographic factors. Findings can be useful for retailers and marketers to direct their market segmentation strategies and target consumers who would engage in status consumption. Normative receptiveness elements such as word of mouth from reference groups and social comparison in advertisements can add value to clothing brands' campaigns.

KEY WORDS: *status consumption, interpersonal influences, impersonal influences, consumer socialisation theory, clothing brands, population groups*

OPSOMMING

Verskille in interpersoonlike en onpersoonlike invloede op statusverbruik van kleding-handelsmerke oor verskillende populasie groepe

deur

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Graad: Meesters in Verbruikerswetenskap: Kleding Kleinhandelsbestuur

Hierdie empiriese studie ondersoek of invloed interpersoonlike invloede (normatiewe ontvanklikheid en informasie invloede) en onpersoonlike invloede verskil oor verskillende bevolkingsgroepe in heem in terme van statusverbruik van klere-handelsmerke. Verbruikerssosialiserings teorie het die studie gerig en is gebruik om verbruikers se ontvanklikheid vir interpersoonlike en onpersoonlike invloede te beskryf, deur die twee hoofkomponente die leerprosesse en sosialisering agente te inkorporeer. Die interpersoonlike invloede, normatiewe en informatiewe invloede, saam met die onpersoonlike invloede is in die konseptuele raamwerk en hipoteses ingesluit. Die teorie verbruikerssosialisering is gekies aangesien dit 'n geskikte raamwerk verskaf om te verduidelik hoe verbruikers deur interpersoonlike en onpersoonlike agente gesosialiseer word met verloop van tyd om bepaalde produkte te verkies of te koop soos status klere-handelsmerke.

'n Opname navorsingsontwerp is gevolg. Data is met behulp van 'n gestruktureerde self-gedadministreerde vraelys ingesamel. Die vraelys is ontwikkel uit bestaande skale. Nie-waarskynlikheid steekproeftegnieke, gerief en kwota, is gebruik om 'n geskikte grootte steekproef in te sluit. Opgeleide veldwerkers het die vraelys aan die teikenpopulasie in voorstede van Tshwane versprei. 'n Totaal van 1014 (N = 1014) bruikbare vraelyste is voltooi. Die steekproef het uit mans en vroue, 19 jaar en ouer van alle bevolkingsgroepe, woonagtig in Tshwane, bestaan. Data is vasgelê en gekodeer waarna analises/ontledings met behulp van 'n

statistikus gedoen is. Die statistikus het van beskrywende en inferensiële statistiek gebruik gemaak. Die EFA het drie faktore: behou naamlik, normatiewe ontvanklikheid, onpersoonlike invloede en informatiewe invloede. Die resultate van die CFA bevestig dat die meting model se passing goed was. Daarna is GLMs uitgevoer om te bepaal of daar verskille in interpersoonlike en onpersoonlike invloede oor die verskillende bevolkingsgroepe se statusverbruik van klere-handelsmerke bestaan.

Die bevindinge het getoon dat normatiewe ontvanklikheid, informatiewe en onpersoonlike invloede 'n statisties beduidende effek op die statusverbruik van klere-handelsmerke gehad het. Van die drie onafhanklike faktore, het normatiewe ontvanklikheid die grootste invloed op statusverbruik gehad en toon ook beduidende verskil oor bevolkingsgroepe wanneer geslag, onderwys, ouderdom en inkomste in die GLM modelle ingebring is. Onpersoonlike invloede toon geringe beduidende verskille oor bevolkingsgroepe se statusverbruik wanneer geslag in die GLM model ingebring is. Selfs al het informatiewe invloede 'n invloed op verskillende bevolkingsgroepe se statusverbruik was daar geen betekenisvolle verskille gevind wanneer demografiese faktore ingesluit is nie. Bevindinge kan nuttig wees vir kleinhandelaars en bemarkers om hul marksegmentasie strategieë te rig en om spesifieke teikenverbruikers wat statusverbruikers is te bereik. Normatiewe ontvanklikheid elemente soos mondelingse oordrag van inligting deur verwysingsgroepe en sosiale vergelyking in advertensies kan waarde tot klere handelsmerke veldtogte voeg.

SLEUTELWOORDE: *statusverbruik, interpersoonlike invloede, onpersoonlike invloede, verbruikerssosialisering teorie, kleding-handelsmerke, populasie groepe*

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CHAPTER 1

The study in perspective

This chapter presents the background of the study by providing insight on brands, socio-economic status and status consumption of different population groups who are the subject of this research topic. The justification of the study as well as the research problem is outlined, followed by a short description of the theoretical framework and research methodology used. The chapter concludes with definitions of relevant concepts used in the study and an outline of the succeeding chapters.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In recent times the increased wealthy and upper middle class consumers in emerging markets have driven purchases of luxury and premium goods (Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited, 2015; Fin24, 2015). This is evidently due to the desire for people to flaunt their rising income (Kaus, 2013). Upward social mobility is aimed to improve a consumer's position in society and is understood as an aspirational drive to translate economic goods into socially accepted symbols that exhibit a higher esteem or status (Patsiaouras & Fitchett, 2012). The perceived utility that individuals get from consuming status/luxury products or services recognised within their own social groups affects consumers' inclination to purchase these items (Li, Li & Kambele, 2012). Furthermore, the ever-expanding presence of luxury goods in developing markets (Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited, 2015; Fin24, 2015) has increased opportunities for diverse population groups, even lower stratified economic groups globally, to purchases such products (Pricewaterhouse Coopers (PWC), 2012). The luxury industry is hence highly influential and lucrative, frequently leading the way for the rest of the marketing world (Ko & Megehee, 2012). Since 2014, globally there has been a fast-growing appetite for luxury brands (Taylor, 2016). Growth in this area is evident in traditionally well-developed markets as well as developing markets like those belonging to BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) countries (Taylor, 2016).

In South Africa, the existence of international luxury brands associated with designer apparel, handbags and accessories, cosmetics and fragrances as well as fine jewellery and watches, has increased vastly in the last decade and the demand for these goods is predicted to increase considerably over the next decade (Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited, 2015; Fin24, 2015). Luxury products can be associated with status goods (Charles, Hurst & Roussanov, 2009; O'Cass & McEwen, 2004) and already have a niche customer-base in the African market that implies a long-term growth opportunity for retailers (Fin24, 2015). South Africa is responsible for a vast amount of the total luxury goods revenue in Africa (The Media Online, 2014). Luxury products are described

as services or products that are not essential but provide a sense of pleasure by providing convenience or extravagance beyond what is considered essential (Dubois & Czellar, 2002). The term luxury is used in academic literature to explain highly prestigious brands - from which consumers gain status through purchases and ownership (Li *et al.*, 2012; O’Cass & McEwen, 2004). Luxury items are linked to superiority, power and wealth; and provide benefits which may be psychological (e.g. pleasure/joy of owning luxury products), symbolic (e.g. way of standing out from rest) and functional (e.g. exceptional product quality) to consumers (Hudders & Pandelaere, 2012). Literature often explains luxury as a symbolic dimension or notion rather than a product category. This concept holds values associated with socioeconomics and culture, as luxury goods can be used to denote a person's social rank and personal identity (Li *et al.*, 2012). Nowadays consumers do not perceive luxury products as only being limited to the upper classes anymore as more consumers have access to luxury products and services due to the aggregate increase of discretionary income (Kim & Jang, 2014). In South Africa for example, much has been published on previously disadvantaged groups’ access and purchases of luxury products (Cronje, Jacobs & Retief 2016; Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited, 2015; Burger, Louw, Pegado, van der Berg *et al.*, 2014; PWC, 2012).

Retailer and consumer product companies offering luxury goods are looking to increase their presence throughout South Africa and Africa at large (Anton, Haskell, Stroud, Ensor, Moodley & Maritz, 2016; PWC, 2012). This drive stems from the opportunities presented by the rising Black middle class in South Africa (Burger *et al.*, 2014; Weber, 2014:2). They account for a modest but fast-growing disposable income that is producing a significant consumer demand for luxury products (PWC, 2012) and that is also extremely aspirational and brand conscious (Bevan-Dye, Garnett & de Klerk, 2012). In the new South Africa there has been a change in the distribution of wealth as well as expenditure amongst the country's diverse population groups (Burger *et al.*, 2014; Weber, 2014:2; Bevan-Dye *et al.*, 2012). Estimations in 2012, were that there are about 71 000 dollar millionaires in the country already (PWC, 2012). A large portion of the consumption of status products should realistically be consumed by the estimated three million strong Black emerging middle class, who are noted to be the largest spending group in South Africa (Thomas White, 2011). A PWC report (2012), showed that by 2016 around 11 million households would be likely to attain an annual income of approximately R89 500 (approximately \$6880 per year), allowing for a range of spending on consumer goods using a larger amount of discretionary income. Moreover, readily available consumer credit from retail chains and retail banks has allowed for increased spending (Anton *et al.*, 2016; PWC, 2012).

Even though, South Africa’s retail market is already a powerful force with retail sales exceeding a trillion Rand in 2011 (PWC, 2012) luxury brands have to confront certain market challenges such as: weak infrastructure; widespread poverty; political instability due to corruption allegations; a lack of brand awareness (Anton *et al.*, 2016) and the flood of counterfeit luxury goods permeating the

country (The Media Online, 2014). Retail trade sales nonetheless showed a steady increase of 1.9% and the largest positive annual growth rates (10,5%) in 2016. Retailers in textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods are a main contributor to this increase (Statistics South Africa, 2016). Furthermore, South Africa has the most sophisticated economy in Africa as well as the largest retail market in sub-Saharan Africa and the 20th biggest retail market in the world (Fenech & Perkins, 2014; Anton *et al.*, 2016). This is evident from the vast number of retail developments and shopping malls available, as well as the continuing expansion of such property across the nation (PWC, 2012; Fenech & Perkins, 2014). These cater to a local consumer culture that has high regard for premium consumer goods like fashion (clothing) labels (Bevan-Dye *et al.*, 2012; PWC, 2012). Sandton City, an upmarket shopping destination in South Africa, has taken advantage of the demand for luxury goods by opening the Diamond Walk (Kew, 2015; Skade, 2015), which is essentially a section of the shopping centre that hosts multiple international super-luxury brands such as Gucci, Burberry and Prada (Kew, 2015; Skade, 2015). This establishment, as well as the multiple retail destinations nation-wide, emphasises the ease with which the market has access to luxury brands.

To improve their positioning, retailers and brands utilise specific marketing strategies to create value for customers, to have better customer retention, to strengthen brand appearance and awareness, as well as to capitalize on profit potential (Pricewaterhouse Coopers (PWC) & TNS Retail Forward, 2015; PWC, 2012). Emerging consumer markets, like South Africa, are targeted in particular as a means of expanding and attaining growth in size and monetary measures as the markets of origin in the Western world have become largely saturated (Cravens & Piercy, 2013:20-22; Johnson *et al.*, 2010). Fashion retail in South Africa is dominated currently by local brands like Truworths, Mr Price and Woolworths. The arrival of international brands like Zara and Gap has, however, challenged local retailers' profits (Anton *et al.*, 2016; Bevan-Dye *et al.*, 2012; PWC, 2012) as they are more popular among certain market segments (Bevan-Dye *et al.*, 2012). It is therefore wise for those retailers to market their products in a way that will appeal to the major spenders in the country, for example through status consciousness. Over time, brand managers have found it necessary to adapt their marketing strategies to meet increased competition in domestic markets due to globalisation that has increased the availability of international brands in the domestic marketplace (Cravens & Piercy, 2013:20-22; Johnson, Elliot & Grier, 2010). Hence retailers and brands need to thoroughly investigate the market to target the most profitable consumer segments. This includes the need to investigate the consumer spending patterns of South Africa's population groups individually – to determine where and with whom the demand for specific products lies.

Although the terms prestigious and luxury goods are at times used interchangeably, a slight difference exists (Dubois & Czellar, 2002). Prestige is considered an estimation of someone's worth largely based on perception (Kaiser, 1997:414). Prestige entails a perceiver's assessment of another person's rank in a status hierarchy. Prestige is attained through the meaning that is

assigned to a specific symbol/product (Kaiser, 1997:414-415). Luxury products are products that are not actually a necessity but tend to make life more comfortable for the owners (Solomon & Rabolt, 2004:242). Generally these goods are subject to personal taste and preferences and are usually bought by affluent consumers to showcase their monetary success (Solomon & Rabolt, 2004:398).

1.1.1 Social stratification: class and socio-economic status

Stratification reflects the categorisation of people in terms of specific characteristics (Creswell, 2014:158; Kaiser, 1997:411-413). In marketing, social stratification is a means of classifying individuals into coherent groups. Consequently, social stratification is a way to categorise individuals into social classes that are arranged in hierarchical order based on generally observed or applicable characteristics of society, such as income (Sebona, 2007:23).

Today's society is stratified into what reflects an upper class, upper middle class, middle class, working class and lower class (Kamakura & Mazzon, 2013). Social class, a person's standing in society, is a complex concept determined by multidimensional factors including income, level of education, and occupation (Solomon & Rabolt, 2004). Individuals' social standing relates to their societal location where various factors such as gender, age, race/ethnicity, family background, and time and place interconnect (Kaiser 2012:30). While in some countries the idea of classism is discomfoting, in others, clear rigid class structures exist (Shukla, 2010; Üstüner & Holt, 2010). Social class distinction has been a long-standing notion which dates back to the beginning of aristocracy (Kaiser, 1997:434-435). Wearing luxury materials and patent leather shoes that always shone, was one way the nobility made it clear that they had the good fortune of not having to work and belonging to a different class (Kaiser, 1997:434-435). By the twentieth century, these old structures had faded somewhat. During the 1960s-1970s social class, ethnicity and gender were less important cultural categories due to the effects of the civil rights and feminist movements in Western civilisation (Kaiser, 1997:434-435). Yet, it appears that with the turn of the century, elitism and class structures have re-emerged in a modern manner driven by aspects like globalisation and a growing middle class (Burger *et al.*, 2014). Status and/or luxury brands have now become the symbols used by consumers to communicate their social or economic class to others (Sebona, 2007:22-23).

Status is one of the elements that underscores this stratification by indicating an individual's position in a social hierarchy. Status refers to an individual's position in a social hierarchy (Kaiser, 1997:414) and can be viewed as the symbolic aspect of one's societal position or class structure (Eastman & Eastman, 2011; Kaiser, 2012). Other elements of social stratification are: prestige; other people's perception of someone's status; the advantages or deprivations relative to an individual's social standing, and power (a person's ability to enforce his/her will on other people)

(Kaiser, 1997:414-415). Status per se is considered to shape consumers' consumption behaviours extensively (Kim & Jang, 2014).

Social stratification in emerging countries like South Africa for instance is a means to identify socio-economic status and consumption patterns, and allow marketers to apply differentiated marketing strategies to a readily segmented market (Kamakura & Mazzon, 2013). By stratifying a market according to consumers' socio-economic status (SES), retailers and marketers can link social class with specific segments purchasing and preference of specific products (Kamakura & Mazzon, 2013). However, social class extends beyond financial status and what consumers buy or can afford. It also entails how they wear and use products as well as what they express or want to communicate about themselves by consuming particular products (Kaiser, 2012:102). A consumer's social standing in society can be elevated through status consumption. Status consumption is a motivational process whereby people try to increase their social position by consuming products that symbolise status to them and their significant others (Eastman & Eastman, 2011; Shukla, 2010; O'Cass & McEwen, 2004). Thus, people consume products that symbolise status and that would afford them a higher rank in their social hierarchy (Eastman & Eastman, 2011; Shukla, 2010; O'Cass & McEwen, 2004). Individuals use material goods to communicate their accomplishments, social status and wealth to others (O'Cass, Lee & Siahtiri 2013; Workman & Lee, 2011). The worth (value) gained from consuming specific items is derived from a product's ability to reflect status and to emit a desired self-image (Kamineni, 2005). Certain goods such as fashion or clothing brands can represent status symbols and may be regarded as highly desirable, status-laden objects by consumers who wish to project a desirable image to others (Goldsmith & Clark, 2012).

From an economic point of view, socio-economic status (SES) is determined by tangible denominators, namely income, level of education, and occupation. Sociology, however, describes SES in terms of status, position and societal rank (Taylor & Yu, 2009). In marketing and consumer behaviour research, SES is mostly determined by one's social standing based on income, level of education, and occupation (Nwachukwa, 2011) and denotes the position one holds in a community based on the amount of cultural possessions, material possessions, effective income, social participation and prestige relative to others (Vyas & Kumaranayake, 2006). Socio-economic status is distinguished in terms of three categories: high, middle, and low using a combination of income, level of education, and occupation to categorise people (Nwachukwa, 2011). Generally high SES is associated with good to better physical and mental health, higher levels of education, good occupations and higher income levels (Taylor & Yu, 2009); whereas people belonging to low SES are generally poverty-stricken with limited access to the basic material conditions that are necessary to survive, including food and water (Nwachukwa, 2011:45). Understandably, as an individual's SES lowers, income is predominantly put towards basic needs such as food, water and shelter so that little discretionary income is left for superfluous consumption.

Diverse SES levels align with differing levels of consumer sophistication (Liu, 2010). Sophisticated consumers differ from unsophisticated consumers in their level of satisfaction, competence and involvement which derives from their purchase experience (Wu, Titus, Newell & Petroschius, 2011). Consumer sophistication is also associated with self-esteem. A sophisticated consumer would thus more likely strive to make purchases conducive to self-fulfilment and personal growth (Liu, 2010). Sophisticated consumers have the ability to make efficient purchasing decisions as they show a higher level of involvement, are value conscious and display a hedonistic nature (Carrigan & Attala, 2001), which characterises consumption as being driven by pleasure and desire for a product – i.e. consuming goods for luxury purposes (Dhurup, 2014).

In South Africa society has changed with the social, political and economic changes in the country since the abolition of Apartheid (Sebona, 2007). This is evident in the growing middle class's accumulation of resources and hunger for consumption; and the reductions (however slight) in poverty that have driven GDP growth and boosted internal markets (Kamakura & Mazzon, 2013). The upward social mobility that has resulted from a provision of social services to poorer segments of society has helped reduce the country's income inequality gap substantially (Investec, 2014). Today, South Africa as an emerging economy displays multiple transformational changes which have altered the nation's social and marketing environment (Weber, 2014:2). Like other global emerging economies, South Africa is developing a growing number of middle class consumers (PWC, 2012). Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) is an economic growth system applicable to Black, Coloured, Indian and Asian population groups in an attempt to erase former economic disparities - essentially establishing considerable growth within the majority of previously disadvantaged population groups (Sebona, 2007:11). In post-apartheid South Africa unemployment and poverty is still rife; income inequality is among the highest in the world with the bottom 10% of earners getting 101 times less than the country's top 10% and with only 13 million out of 31 million labourers being employed (PWC, 2012). Even so, a rapid increase in Black affluence is evident (Burger *et al.*, 2014; Bevan-Dye *et al.*, 2012), with pertinent changes in the expenditure patterns amongst Black, Coloured and Indian households in South Africa, including 35-50% increased spending on status-laden products which is indicative of a need to express social status among these population groups (Burger *et al.*, 2014; Kaus, 2013). In 2010, Black South Africans spent roughly 50% more on visibly noticeable goods compared to White South Africans living in the same circumstances (Kaus, 2010). A prominent spending on visible goods reflects a need to erase an asset deficit (Burger *et al.*, 2014), which is confirmation that previously disadvantaged consumer groups has intentionally entered the market for status laden products.

Clothing expenditure figures provide evidence of spending differences between the various population groups in South Africa. For example, in 2011, White households spent a smaller percentage (2.1%) of their disposable income on clothing and footwear, compared to other

population groups (Black: 6.8%, Coloured: 5.1%; and Indians/Asian: 3.3%) (Statistics South Africa, 2011b).

1.1.2 Status consumption and clothing brands

Clothing, a highly visible product (Clark, Zboja & Goldsmith, 2007), is used by consumers to identify themselves and others (Kaiser, 1997:164). Moreover, clothing fashion tends to reflect a culture and society (Dhurup, 2014). Nowadays, purchasing fashion is the focal construct of everyday consumption decisions (O’Cass & McEwen, 2004; Dhurup, 2014). Fashion is even used by consumers to identify themselves and consumers relate fashion, specifically clothing, as an essential part of a person's wellbeing (Dhurup, 2014; Holmberg & Ohnfeldt, 2010). Literature indicates that clothing is a visible means of displaying one’s status (Kamineni, 2005; O’Cass & Frost, 2002b) and individuals who seek status constantly attempt to surround themselves with physical evidence of the superior social position they desire (Eastman & Eastman, 2011). For example, the strength of a brand name equates to economic strength and prestige – implying that purchasing specific brands can be intentional to reflect status consumption (Shukla, 2010; O’Cass & McEwen, 2004). Brands that are considered prestigious can therefore intentionally be paraded to offer a visual representation of a consumer’s position (Shukla, 2010; O’Cass & McEwen, 2004). Research indicates that consumers’ behaviour in the market place is sometimes driven by a desire to acquire social stature. This subsequently leads to the consumption of status symbols inter alia a preference for certain clothing brands (Erasmus *et al.*, 2013:371; Shukla, 2010; O’Cass & McEwen, 2004). Status is therefore, considered to shape consumption behaviours significantly (Kim & Jang, 2014).

Clothing is used intentionally by individuals as a tool to exhibit or improve their social position (Shukla, 2010; Sproles & Burns, 1994:138). Such a display of wealth and social stature through clothing has been prevalent throughout history. For example, the Ancient Egyptian Pharaohs exclusively wore *kalasiris* tunics and headdresses that symbolised their high position; and later the *Dandies* of Europe, although from middle class backgrounds, attempted to imitate aristocracy through their appearance (Laver, 2012:158-162). Today, a person’s societal rank can be assumed from the clothing brands that are worn (O’Cass & Siahtiri, 2013). The strength of a (clothing) brand displays the position and wealth possessed by the person using it (Shukla, 2010; O’Cass & McEwen, 2004). Consequently, status consumption manifests in the form of clothing brand purchases (O’Cass & Frost, 2002a). It is important to understand that status consumption is socially motivated as people do not solely shop to satisfy their needs but also to shape the image that is perceived by others (Cronje, Jacobs & Retief, 2016). Thus status consumption becomes a construct that includes an internal need for status and a desire to impress others in a social situation (Cronje, Jacobs & Retief, 2016; Weber, 2014).

Even though clothing is considered a basic need, it can essentially be seen as a material possession. Consumers who want their material possessions to express their social status tend to have more materialistic tendencies and are also more fashion and brand conscious (Kamineni, 2005). They obtain social stature from their material possessions. Fashion marketers strive to associate their brands' identities with a sense of accomplishment and prestige (Cravens & Piercy, 2013:266; Kamineni, 2005). The worth of such material possessions (like clothing) comes from their ability to reflect status and to show a desired self-image (Kamineni, 2005). Fashion/clothing allows consumers to express their identity and create a sense of self through the image they portray (Kamineni, 2005; Dhurup, 2014). Furthermore, individuals use material goods (clothing) to form relationships with others and to portray their personalities (Goldsmith & Clark, 2012) and communicate their identity, self-concept and social status (Kaiser, 1997). For example, buying expensive clothing communicates a message of affluence to the world about the individual wearing the attire (O'Cass & Frost, 2002; Kamineni, 2005). Material goods subsequently become symbolic representation of the individual's social status. It is, however, important to recognise that the type of social status displayed through clothing does not only symbolise or imply wealth; it can even represent a person's position regarding aspects like sustainability – where one may only wear 'eco-friendly' clothing to exhibit their stance on the matter (Elliott, 2013). However, this study is limited to status products in terms of status conscious consumers with regard to affluence and a taste for prestigious or luxury products. These status brands, for example designer clothing, are more expensive than everyday brands (Sebona, 2007:14-15).

Consumers tend to shape expectations about the quality of brands prior to consuming them (Hudders & Pandelaere, 2012), based on extrinsic features such as brand name (Solomon & Rabolt, 2004:242) or price, believing that high prices signal higher quality (Kim & Jang, 2014). Individuals have different perceptions of luxury products because the understanding of luxuries, as well as an individual's tastes and preferences, varies from person to person (Hudders & Pandelaere, 2012; Solomon & Rabolt, 2004:398). Brands are not inherently lavish but are perceived as comparatively luxurious by an individual, which is why a brand that is understood to be prestigious by one person may not necessarily be thought of in the same way by another (Hudders & Pandelaere, 2012).

1.2 THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

South Africa has characteristics common to other emerging consumer markets as it has a multicultural society, growing in diversity through urbanisation and immigration, as well as an escalating buying power (Burger *et al.*, 2014; Dhurup, 2014). The South African population consists of diverse cultural and ethnic groups divided into distinctive population groups (Johnson *et*

al., 2010). South Africa is commonly referred to as the "Rainbow Nation". According to Statistics South Africa (2015), the SA population hosts approximately 54 million people of whom 80.5% are African Blacks, 8.8% are Coloured, 8.3% are White and 2.5% are either Asian or Indian. Due to an intricate historical socio-political past, race and income cannot truly be viewed separately when determining socio-economic and expenditure patterns (Taylor & Yu, 2009). Literature shows that individuals through consumer socialisation within their respective social and population groups, learn the relevant groups' standards and norms that guide their choice and consumption of products (Dhurup, 2014; Kaiser, 1990:352-354). Therefore a consumer's background and socialisation is important in terms of the way they live and consume goods.

To date, many studies have focused on differences between the status consumption of consumers in developing and developed countries (Shukla, 2010; Singh *et al.*, 2003), or between industrialised and less industrialised/emerging countries (Üstüner & Holt, 2010). Moreover, differences in status consumption amongst generational cohorts (Kim & Jang, 2014) and the influence of peers on status consumption have been investigated (Wang, Yu & Wei, 2012). Various studies in Western countries have established the effect of interpersonal, social and psychological factors on status consumption (Clark *et al.*, 2007). In the South African context, numerous studies focused on demographic differences such as income and level of education in spending patterns particularly with reference to conspicuous consumption in the emergent Black middle class (Burger *et al.*, 2014; Bevan-Dye *et al.*, 2012) and status consumption (Weber, 2014). However, very few have touched on other influences such as interpersonal and impersonal influences on the status consumption of clothing brands across South African population groups. As the emerging Black middle class is becoming an established group, it is likely that a large convergence to a new South Africa middle class mean is likely to occur (Burger *et al.*, 2014). This reiterates the need for brands that provide status to address the need of these emerging consumers.

Marketing theories that are based on Western culture are not necessarily relevant in developing countries where the profile of customers is vastly different (Johnson *et al.*, 2010; Shukla, 2010) partly because of differences in consumer socialisation in a cross-national environment (Singh, Kwon, & Pereira, 2003). Predictors of status consumption in one country and/or culture, may not necessarily be relevant or significant for another (Shukla, 2010). Researchers therefore concur that existing theoretical models should be modified to be relevant in emerging markets (Shukla, 2010; Üstüner & Holt, 2010). Brands that are able to comprehend cross-national differences in consumer socialisation will enhance their competitive advantage globally (Yang, Kim, Laroche, & Lee, 2014). Therefore, a need for research that could contribute to positioning of brands more appropriately in complex and diverse markets like South Africa exists.

Research in a South African context, concerning the differences in the status consumption of various population groups, is long overdue considering the growth and availability of status brands

and disposable income in the country in recent years. By investigating different population groups' status consumption, the influences that are most relevant and prominent across different population groups could be distinguished and indicate which group will be most likely to consume status-laden products. This study also aims to investigate interpersonal and impersonal drivers of status purchases to understand which population groups are more prone to status consumption. Subsequently, brands will be able to develop marketing strategies that could specifically target the most prominent consumer groups. This would benefit the economy, and even possibly create jobs or brands that would do exceedingly well in the market. Therefore, the research aims to investigate empirically how status consumption differs across the different population groups in the emerging South African market and to examine the effect susceptibility to interpersonal and impersonal influences has on different population groups' status consumption of clothing brands.

1.3 JUSTIFICATION OF THE RESEARCH

Cross-cultural differences in the status consumption in both developed and developing countries exist (Shukla, 2010; Singh *et al.*, 2003). However, consumers' motives for obtaining status products to realize their goals, to define themselves (Goldsmith & Clark, 2012; Kamineni, 2005) and to enhance their status in society (O'Cass & Frost, 2002a) vary significantly. Producing a totally standardised marketing strategy for status products will not work due to differences in the status consumption among consumers with different demographic characteristics (Johnson *et al.*, 2010; Shukla, 2010). Marketing strategies are not universally relevant in different contexts. This study will provide insights regarding the relevance of interpersonal and impersonal influences in terms of consumers' status consumption of clothing brands in an emerging market and will benefit local, national and international retailers, brands and brand managers who market, produce or offer status goods. Findings would be useful to help build and position brands in an emerging market which would make these brands more attractive to specific consumer segments (Goldsmith & Clark, 2012; Shukla, 2010). Comprehension of the needs of the diverse population in South Africa could be used to segment the market into viable and lucrative sections so that brands could better understand how to attract and serve their needs.

Market segmentation is a fundamental marketing concept and refers to the process whereby the market at large is divided into distinct smaller groups with similar characteristics and needs that allow these segmented consumers to respond to marketing efforts in a similar manner (Cravens & Piercy, 2013:71-75; Martins, 2002). This phenomenon helps brands make an informed decision concerning which markets, or segments, to target – indicating which customers will be the most lucrative for the brand (Clark *et al.*, 2007; Mpinganjira, 2013:274-277). Moreover, market segmentation is strategically important as it helps brands to allocate their resources to key

customer groups (Cravens & Piercy, 2013:71-75; Mpinganjira, 2013:274-277) and enables brands to design an appropriate marketing mix that will best appeal to their targeted market (Cravens & Piercy, 2013:71-75; Mpinganjira, 2013:274-277; Holmberg & Ohnfeldt, 2010).

This study will also help to establish how consumers' susceptibility to interpersonal and impersonal influences is compelling predictors of status consumption across different population groups in South Africa. This information could guide marketers' efforts in terms of the appropriate spokespersons and relevant media platforms in their marketing campaigns that would successfully reach status-conscious consumers (O'Cass & McEwen, 2004). Ultimately, this research could benefit consumers who are interested in purchasing status clothing brands. As these consumers, who are interested in status symbols will be able to comprehend the effectiveness of the appearance/message they are trying to portray. Understanding how to position and promote status products in relation to a viable market can help retailers and brands to appropriately target their products to potential customers and gain higher revenue.

1.4 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The theory of consumer socialisation (Moschis & Churchill, 1978) was adopted for the present study to explain status consumption of clothing across different population groups in a South African context. Consumer socialisation is defined as the process where an individual learns the skills, knowledge and attitudes which develop certain consumer patterns of consumption behaviours, enabling the individual to function as a consumer (Sharma, 2011; Minahan & Huddleston, 2010; Valkenburg & Cantor, 2001; Dubey, 1993; Moschis & Churchill, 1978). Consumer socialisation encompasses two major components, namely the learning processes and socialisation agents (Lueg & Finney, 2007; Moschis & Churchill, 1978).

Learning processes commence in early childhood and rely on cognitive developmental theories as well as developmental theories of parent-child interaction specifically related to consumer behaviour (Valkenburg & Cantor, 2001). Exposure to numerous external influences over time shapes an individual's product preferences (Valkenburg & Cantor, 2001). Interaction with parents, the school and peers regarding consumer-related issues eventually influences an individual's purchasing decisions, for example, compliance with peers' clothing patterns to gain their acceptance (Lachance, Beaudoin, & Robitaille, 2003; Kaiser, 1990:164-165). This is an ongoing process that continues throughout adulthood and the more exposure an individual gets, the more is learnt, provided the person is interested and has the cognitive ability to appreciate stimuli.

Socialising agents (e.g. parents, peers and media) are the sources that developing consumers interact with (Lachance *et al.*, 2003) to learn consumption patterns from, to develop brand/product preferences (Wang *et al.*, 2012; Singh *et al.*, 2003) and to model their behaviour on. Reinforcement refers to reward or punishment tactics that are used by these agents to accept or reject a person's behaviour (Wang *et al.*, 2012; Moschis & Churchill, 1978). Consequently, a consumer's susceptibility to interpersonal influences (i.e. normative and informative) as well as impersonal influences (the media) impact on how he/she socialises and learns from the environment (Wang *et al.*, 2012; Singh *et al.*, 2003). Research shows that across varying racial consumer groups the significance associated with different sources of information, be it parents, peers or media, varied (John, 1999; Rose, 1999). Different population groups' diverse acts during consumer socialisation and differences in receptiveness to socialising agents will therefore translate into different consumption patterns/behaviour (Rose, 1999).

The consumer socialisation theory postulates that certain major socialising agents have a constant influence on the development of consumers (Lachance *et al.*, 2003). From infancy through to adolescence *parents* play a dominant role regarding the consumption behaviour of their children (Minahan & Huddleston, 2010; Dotson & Hyatt, 2005; Neeley, 2005). Initially children observe and imitate their parents' consumer behaviour (Neeley, 2005; Lachance *et al.*, 2003). The socio-economic conditions of one's parents as well as their education level and involvement will influence a child's consumer socialisation (John, 1999; Rose, 1999). In Western societies, for instance, the participation of children in family decisions plays an important role. Children are therefore now more expressive and emancipated than ever before (Valkenburg & Cantor, 2001). *Peer communication* becomes highly influential during teenage years as individuals become more committed to conform to the norms of their peers or reference groups (Valkenburg & Cantor, 2001). Peers or reference group influences extend beyond a person's adolescence and can be a consistent influence throughout a person's life (Kaiser, 1990:352-354). Lastly, the contribution of social media in terms of consumer socialisation has drawn considerable attention in recent years (Chu & Sung, 2015; Vinerean, Cetina, Dumitrescu & Tichindelean, 2013; Wang *et al.*, 2012). Social media facilitates peer to peer communication which interlinks media and peers as socialising agents (Chu & Sung, 2015; Wang *et al.*, 2012). The influence of other media such as television and the Internet is incontestable. This reality justifies a direct relationship between watching television and materialism as consumers were found to be more aspirational towards affluent lifestyles that are portrayed through the media (Bakewell & Mitchell, 2009).

1.5 RESEARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The overall research aim for this study is to explore and describe the effect of interpersonal and impersonal influences on different South African population groups' status consumption of clothing brands. The following objectives were formulated:

- To explore and describe differences in interpersonal influences (normative receptiveness: value expressiveness and utilitarian influences) across different population groups' status consumption of clothing brands
- To explore and describe differences in informative influences (family and others and peer communication) across different population groups' status consumption of clothing brands.
- To explore and describe differences in impersonal influences (advertising and social media) across different population groups' status consumption of clothing brands.

1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

To investigate differences regarding interpersonal and impersonal influences across different population groups' status consumption of clothing brands in South Africa, a survey research design was followed. A quantitative survey approach was used to design a self-administered questionnaire, whereby numerical values were allotted to different variables to reach conclusions on specific relationship or significant differences that exist across the population groups that constituted the sample (Creswell, 2014:13,155-156; Berndt & Petzer, 2011:47-49).

1.6.1 Sample and sampling techniques

The targeted population for this study was the different categories of the South African population in terms of race regarding the Population Equity Act of South Africa: Blacks, Whites, Coloureds, and Indians. During data collection questionnaires were distributed to individuals living in the Tshwane areas according to specific criteria, i.e. male or female, 19 years and older aiming to include a diverse representation of the different population groups. A non-probability sampling procedure was used, indicating that the sampling is not random and subjective (Berndt & Petzer, 2011:173) but more economical and faster considering that there was limited funding for the research project as well as time constrains (Creswell, 2014:158; Berndt & Petzer, 2011:174). To eliminate bias, a quota sampling procedure was followed to ensure the inclusion of a useful number of respondents from each of the population groups

1.6.2 Measuring instrument

A structured self-administered questionnaire consisting of two sections was developed from the following reliable scales: Eastman, Goldsmith & Flynn's (1999) status consumption scale; Bearden, Netemeyer and Teel's (1989) reference group influence scale; Wang, Yu and Wei's (2012) peer communication scale; and Jin and Lutz's (2013) attitude towards advertising (social role) scale. The questionnaire was pretested before distribution to eradicate errors (Creswell, 2014:170; Berndt & Petzer, 2011:186-188); and was subsequently distributed to the respondents.

1.6.3 Data collection and analysis

Data collection occurred in April-May 2016, involving trained fieldworkers who delivered the questionnaires by hand to men and women, aged 19 and over, living in the Tshwane areas to complete. The questionnaires were then collected one to two weeks after they had been delivered. Data analysis was done with the assistance of a statistician from the Department of Statistics at the University of Pretoria to enhance validity, accuracy and reliability of the research procedure (Berndt & Petzer, 2013:34). Data were analysed using SPSS version 24. Descriptive statistics, namely means, standard deviations and inferential statistics, univariate ANOVA's were used to analyse the data set.

1.7 DEFINITIONS OF TERMS AND CONCEPTS

- **Advertising** communicates with consumers on a mass scale (Elliott & Wattanasuwan, 1998) at a low cost per exposure via a variety of media (Cravens & Piercy, 2013:351). The message and appeal of advertisements can be changed according to the communication objectives of the brand (Cravens & Piercy, 2013:351).
- **Brands** can be described as culturally based symbols that promise certain advantages (Schaefer & Rotte, 2007). Furthermore, brands are described as an entity with personality and characteristics that have particular correlations. A brand is a name or symbol that has physical and hedonic qualities, visually distinguishing a product or service from their competitors' (Sebona, 2007:18).
- **Consumer socialisation** is the process by which a person learns the skills, knowledge, and attitudes which develop consumption behaviours - enabling the individual to function as a consumer (Moschis & Churchill, 1978).

- **Emerging market** is a country that has aspects like a multicultural society, growing in diversity through urbanisation and immigration, as well as an escalating buying power (Burger *et al.*, 2014; Dhurup, 2014).
- **Impersonal communication** links to external influences, such as social media and advertising that impact on a person's decisions. These communications can be objective or subjective (Vinerean *et al.*, 2013; Sproles & Burns, 1994).
- **Informative influences** are influences that compel individuals to learn about products or services by gaining information from peers. This information influences said individuals' product evaluations and consumer decision processes (Wang *et al.*, 2012; Sproles & Burns, 1994:149).
- **Interpersonal influence** is defined as the procedure by which a person's attitudes, beliefs and behaviours are affected by others (Wang *et al.*, 2012).
- **Normative receptiveness** is essentially consumption decisions based on what the consumer believes will impress others. It has two dimensions: value expressiveness (a consumer's need to enhance their self-image by being associated with certain reference groups) and utilitarian influences (a person's way of conforming to the expectations of others in order to evade punishment and rather gain rewards from significant others) (Weber, 2014:9; Ang, Cheng, Lim & Tambyah 2001; Bearden *et al.*, 1989).
- **Peer communication** is an important socialisation agent with regard to consumer socialisation defined as peer interactions related to goods and services (Chu & Sung, 2015).
- **Retailers** are considered enterprises that receive more than 50% of their turnover from product sales to the public for household usage (Statistics South Africa, 2016).
- **Social media** is a virtual space where individuals can communicate via the Internet (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) (Vinerean, Cetina, Dumitrescu & Tichindelean, 2013).
- **Status consumption** is an incentivised process whereby someone tries to better his or her social status by consuming products that represent both status for the person and significant others, in an obvious manner (Eastman & Eastman, 2011; O'Cass & Frost, 2002a).

1.8 PRESENTATION AND OUTLINE OF THE DISSERTATION

The dissertation is organised as follows:

Chapter 1: The study in perspective

This chapter set the context of the study by introducing the research topic as well as the background of the study. This chapter's components included the introduction, the research problem, the justification of the research, the theoretical background, the overall research aim and

objectives, the research design and methodology and the definitions of concepts and terms relevant to the research study.

Chapter 2: Theoretical perspective

Chapter 2 explains and justifies the theoretical framework, namely the consumer socialisation theory, which was used to structure the literature review, formulate hypotheses and analysis within this study.

Chapter 3: Literature review, conceptual framework and research hypotheses

Chapter 3 presents an overview of significant published literature obtained from various sources that are relevant to the study. The literature review integrates and conceptualises the important constructs relevant to this study. Definitions for various important concepts are discussed and explained in the context of the present study. The literature review aims to provide new ideas, perspectives and approaches that are used to deduce the hypotheses of the study. This chapter concludes with the conceptual framework that guides this study.

Chapter 4: Research design and methodology

Chapter 4 presents the research design and research methodology including the sample and sampling techniques and procedures. Instrument development as well as the pretesting of the measuring instrument is also discussed. Aspects pertaining to data collection and the data analysis are explained. The operationalisation of the objectives is provided as well as the measures that were taken to ensure the validity and reliability of the study. The chapter concludes with the ethical considerations for the study.

Chapter 5: Results and discussion

Chapter 5 presents the results of the study accompanied by short discussions thereof. The data is presented in the form of tables and graphs in relation to the hypotheses set in Chapter 3.

Chapter 6: Conclusions of the study

Chapter 6 concludes the study with a discussion and interpretation of the results presented in Chapter 4. Relevant literature is applied to substantiate the discussion. In addition, this chapter outlines the limitations of the study as well as the recommendations for future studies.

1.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter provided a broad introduction to the research study. It presented background information to provide insight into the research problem and a justification for the research. This

chapter also introduced the concepts and theories associated with the conceptual framework and the research hypotheses. A discussion follows in the next chapters, as stated in the presentation and outline of the study.

For referencing the Harvard Reference style (as instructed by the Department of Consumer Science, University of Pretoria) was used and the choice of language for editing purposes was English (South Africa).



CHAPTER 2

Theoretical perspective

This chapter introduces, explains and justifies the theoretical perspective that was used to structure the study and frame the discussions within this study. The theoretical perspective namely the Consumer Socialisation Theory was used to organise the study and concepts in the conceptual framework. The theoretical perspective is presented first prior to the literature review as the Consumer Socialisation theory provides the structure and concepts for the literature review.

2.1 CONSUMER SOCIALISATION THEORY

The theory of Consumer Socialisation (Moschis & Churchill, 1978) was adopted as a suitable framework for the present study to explain status consumption of clothing across different population groups in a South African context. Consumer socialisation is defined as the process where an individual learns the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that develop certain consumer patterns of consumption behaviours – enabling the individual to function as a consumer (Sharma, 2011; Minahan & Huddleston, 2010; Valkenburg & Cantor, 2001; Dubey, 1993; Moschis & Churchill, 1978; Ward, 1974). Thus, individuals essentially learn ‘how’ to become a consumer in a particular context, because what they learn is basically influenced by the socialising agents in their midst.

2.1.1 Socialisation

Socialisation is described as a process whereby people adjust socially to the ideals and principles of the society in which they find themselves (Kaiser, 1997:154; Sproles & Burns, 1994:144). Primary socialisation occurs during childhood and adolescence; it is the procedure through which an individual begins to form a concept of self – i.e. seeing oneself as something distinct from the surrounding environment (Kaiser, 1997:154). During this period, a child can become a socialised consumer either directly or indirectly (Mpinganjira, 2013:220). Direct socialisation involves, for example, parents teaching children about product evaluation, as well as unaccepted and accepted consumption behaviour (Mpinganjira, 2013:221). Indirect socialisation occurs when a person observes and imitates another’s (parent, peer, role model etc.) consumption-related activities (Mpinganjira, 2013:221).

Secondary internalisation entails socialisation processes whereby an individual improves and sustains his/her self-concept. The socialisation process is thus continuous (Kaiser, 1997:155).

As an individual moves through his/her life-stages, clothing is one of the products that allows the individual to demonstrate this process and adapt to social changes through different appearances, styles and fashions, which all symbolise a change in self identity (Sproles & Burns, 1994). Furthermore, people's constantly developing self-concepts are influenced by social interactions (Kaiser, 1997:155).

2.1.2 Consumer socialisation

According to Sproles and Burns (1994:146) consumer socialisation related to clothing begins when the child learns how to dress and undress him/herself. Consumer socialisation early in life commences even with respect to consumption patterns and behaviour that most people perceive to be daily routine, which underlines how consumer socialisation infiltrates even the most basic act to do with clothing.

Ward (1974) established the following basic assumptions regarding consumer socialisation:

- Families are the main socialising agent in an individual's early life stages, thus consumer socialisation predictably begins within a child's family. At this stage, consumer socialisation is rather indirect with behaviours learnt through imitation and observation (Sproles & Burns, 1994:145; Ward, 1974).
- Early in children's development, they learn about the social meaning of products and how certain products can realize certain social objectives (Sproles & Burns, 1994:145; Ward, 1974), for example the dresses that are worn by girls to indicate their gender and femininity to society.
- As an individual becomes an adolescent, peers then become the main agents of consumer socialisation (Sproles & Burns, 1994:145; Ward, 1974), because this is the stage where individuals try to fit in with their respective peer group.
- Preferences for aspects like brands or stores are established in early childhood learning and carry over into adulthood. Nonetheless, as people encounter new social situations as they progress through life, new learning and not only past experiences is relied upon (Sproles & Burns, 1994:146; Ward, 1974). With more extensive exposure individuals learn more and acquire knowledge about a larger range of products, services and experiences.

2.1.3 Consumer socialisation and groups

The consumer socialisation framework is responsible for the way in which people develop consumption-related attitudes, behaviours, social roles and cognitions (Chu & Sung, 2015). The theoretical foundations of consumer socialisation takes the socialisation concept (discussed above) into account, presuming that consumers develop their attitudinal and behavioural patterns partially due to exchanges with and learning from socialisation agents, for example parents and peer groups (Luczak & Younkin, 2012; De la Ville & Tartas, 2010: 28-30). This study attempts to

investigate how such consumption behaviours develop in diverse South African population groups, thus depicting members of these population groups as social agents. It is therefore necessary to define a group and its associations with the consumer socialisation perspective to make inferences in line with the hypotheses.

A group is defined as two or more people in hidden or open relationships with one another, creating interdependent behaviours (Dos Santos, 2013:168). When observing consumer socialisation in a group, it is apparent that group members guide and exhibit what they consider to be relevant purchases and acceptable consumption behaviours (Dos Santos, 2013:173; Kaiser, 1997:353-355; Shibutani, 1974:38-40). It is therefore imperative for marketers, brands and retailers to understand group consumer behaviour, as it largely dictates what individuals buy (Dos Santos, 2013:173). In adulthood, social learning for dress derives from group and mass society influences because an individual dresses in accordance with what others wear (e.g. fashion trends) and with what is available in retail (Sproles & Burns, 1994:147). Comprehending groups is important in this study because, as discussed in Chapter 1, the diverse South African population groups' status consumption behaviour is being investigated. Thus, an understanding of consumer socialisation will help to reveal how consumers from different population groups, with diverse cultures, interpret status consumption considering exposure to interpersonal or impersonal influences.

2.1.4 Consumer socialisation and population groups

Schibutani (1974) agreed that ethnic identity could be a factor in the basis of group formation and association. Dubey's (1993) research was based on the consumer socialisation perspective and explores the influence of people's ethnic background on their clothing shopping skills. The sample included Hispanics, non-Hispanics and Whites residing in the United States of America. Interestingly, it was found that most of the Hispanic sample were born and raised in the USA, giving them characteristics similar to the other two ethnic groups in terms of their socialisation (Dubey, 1993). Thus, the researcher explained that through an external acculturation process they fitted into the American environment and were socialised similar to Whites and non-Hispanics. It was assessed that the Hispanics' consumer skills and consumption patterns regarding apparel were not truly affected by their ethnic backgrounds while other socialising factors like income, gender, age and peer group were more influential (Dubey, 1993).

In contrast to the former study's findings culture is said to influence socialisation (Workman & Lee, 2011; Yang *et al.*, 2014). Moreover, consumer socialisation is said to vary across different cultures and between developed and developing markets (Basu & Sondhi, 2014). For example, in Western cultures people strive to achieve a sense of individuality and independence (Adams *et al.*, 2012; Üstüner & Holt, 2010). Whereas Eastern cultures' socialisation tactics tend to reduce individualistic characteristics and try develop ideologies that are collectivistic and interdependent in nature

(Escalas & Bettman, 2015; Workman & Lee, 2011; Yang *et al.*, 2014). Therefore, consumer goods and advertising are dictated by culture i.e. influencing how products are portrayed or presented (Laroche, Yang, Kim & Richard, 2007). This is due to culture's impact on socialisation processes and outcomes (Yang *et al.*, 2014).

2.1.5 Components of consumer socialisation

There are two major components of consumer socialisation: the learning processes and socialisation agents (Luczak & Younkin, 2012; Lueg & Finney, 2007; Moschis & Churchill, 1978).

In Moschis and Churchill's (1978) conceptual model of Consumer Socialisation (see **Figure 2.1**), the major elements are classified as antecedent variables, socialisation processes and outcomes. Antecedent variables include social structural variables and age/life cycle position. Although this study recognised age/life cycle position as an antecedent variable, it will not use it in seeking to verify the hypotheses. Socialisation processes encompass the type of learning and contribution of socialisation agents. Consumers learn attitudes, values and behaviours by examining various agents. This process of observation and learning can take place in three forms: modelling, reinforcement or social interaction (Wang *et al.*, 2012). Ultimately, outcomes are the consumer skills acquired or learning properties that influence consumer behaviour.

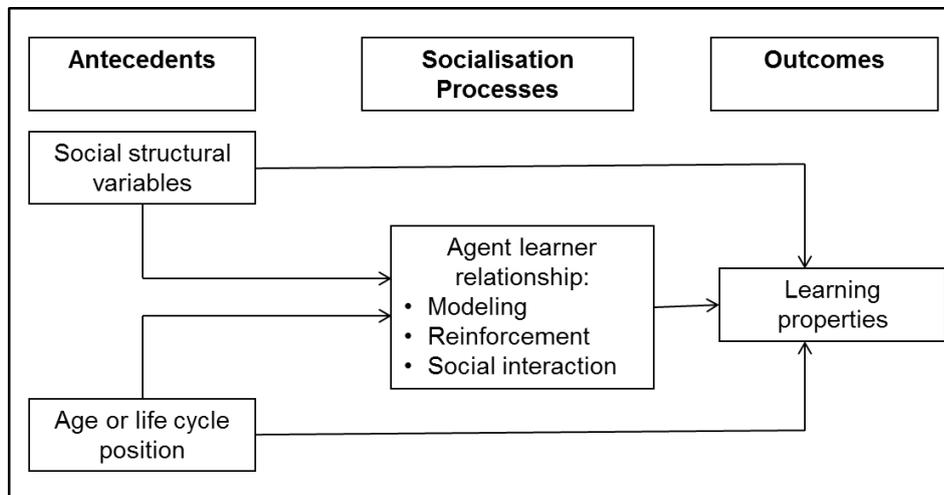


FIGURE 2.1: CONSUMER SOCIALISATION FRAMEWORK (MOSCHIS & CHURCHILL, 1978:600)

Social learning, cognitive development models as well as interpersonal susceptibility theory are relevant in consumer socialisation research (Singh *et al.*, 2003). It is understood that people develop standards, values, attitudes and behaviours through learning processes (Chu & Sung, 2015; De la Ville & Tartas, 2010:29-30).

The social learning theory is often used as a theoretical perspective to describe the consumer socialisation process when discussing and clarifying how people learn to be consumers (Chu & Sung, 2015; McDonald, 2005:67; Moschis & Churchill 1978). This perspective highlights external sources of socialisation, such as peers and parents (Chu & Sung, 2015; De la Ville & Tartas, 2010:29-30; Singh *et al.*, 2003). The cognitive development model, on the other hand, emphasises the developmental process of a person through the various life stages (Luczak & Younkin, 2012, McDonald, 2005:67; Singh *et al.*, 2003). This model suggests that learning occurs between infancy and adulthood via the regular interaction of the cognitive-psychological processes of a person 's surroundings (Singh *et al.*, 2003).

In addition to the prior two theories, interpersonal susceptibility theory posits that normative and informative interpersonal influences affect the way in which a person learns and socializes from his or her surroundings (Singh *et al.*, 2003; Bearden *et al.*, 1989). Normative influences portray an individual's need to abide with a group's expectations, while informative influences illustrate how a person learns through observations and acquiring information from others, which indicates that interpersonal influences are obtained from socialising agents (Singh *et al.*, 2003; Bearden *et al.*, 1989). Interpersonal susceptibility is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3. A more in-depth explanation of the two major components of consumer socialisation – the learning processes and socialisation agents – will follow in the next section. Each life stage of a consumer will be examined in the learning processes section and parents, peers and media will be discussed as sources or agents of socialisation.

2.1.6 Learning processes

The learning processes of becoming a consumer start in early childhood and rely on cognitive developmental theories as well as developmental theories of parent-child interaction (Valkenburg & Cantor, 2001). The cognitive developmental theory states that learning occurs during the various life stages (between infancy and adulthood) through a continuous interaction of cognitive-psychological processes with the environment (De la Ville & Tartas, 2010:29-31; Minahan & Huddleston, 2010; Neeley, 2005; Singh *et al.*, 2003).

As children progress to different ages they develop preferences for products (Kaiser, 1997: 156-162). The first two age phases develop a child's ability to identify their needs. Infants and toddlers (age 0-2) enter the first phase of learning when they start to become aware of their wants and preferences expressed by what they prefer to wear, eat, play with and watch (Valkenburg & Cantor, 2001). During this phase children become highly involved in and give direction to family purchases, for example breakfast cereal (Dotson & Hyatt, 2005). Preschoolers (age 2-5) enter the second phase of learning when they learn negotiation skills and adopt the 'nagging' behaviour. These characteristics develop a child's preferences for products and entertainment. During this

phase the impact of advertising and marketing efforts is at its highest, as children of this age have a limited ability to differentiate fantasy from reality (Valkenburg & Cantor, 2001). Children in primary school (age 5-8) start increasing their attention span and are able to understand a more significant amount of information (Valkenburg & Cantor, 2001). During this stage, children are able to understand basic product knowledge. Later in primary school (age 8-12) children lean towards conformity and become 'fussy' in their choices. Their eye for detail and quality develops and they are able to compare and assess products and information (Valkenburg & Cantor, 2001) – which allows them to evaluate alternatives. The former theory exemplifies parents, peers and the media's influence on children as consumers up to their teenage years (De la Ville & Tartas, 2010:30-35). Social forces (social rules or socially shared meanings and cultures among members of a group) from society at large add to the various ways a person can be taught as they become an adult (Sproles & Burns, 1994:147). For instance, birthday celebrations are illustrative of children's socialisation where social rules of parents and those which children compile themselves, must be followed correctly (De la Ville & Tartas, 2010:30-35).

From their teenage years children are exposed to numerous external influences which mould their product preferences (Valkenburg & Cantor, 2001) especially in terms of clothing (Kaiser, 1997:164-176). Teenagers interact more with their peers regarding consumer issues that present themselves in purchasing decisions. Compliance to clothing patterns takes place within their social interactions and is important to gain acceptance from peers (Kaiser, 1997:164-165; Lachance, Beaudoin, & Robitaille, 2003). Moreover, symbolic peers and role-models who are prominent in the media, are influential in terms of the purchasing behaviour of late adolescents and young adults (Lachance *et al.*, 2003; Mau, Schramm-Klein, Reisch, 2014).

Individuals are exposed to various reference groups (colleagues, friends etc.) throughout life (Dos Santos, 2013:169-174; Shibutani, 1974). The combined influences of such groups and the shared behaviour of mass society affect the social learning of dress norms during this stage (Sproles & Burns, 1994:147). Prior learning and experience may help an adult initially. However, adults become moulded by new groups and social experiences as they progress through life. Such novel norms become interrelated and create a system of understandings on matters like what is ugly or pretty (Shibutani, 1974:55). This involves learning new forms of social behaviour and corresponding styles of dress (Sproles & Burns, 1994:147). As previously mentioned, symbolic peers and role-models prominent in the media are also influential in terms of the purchasing behaviour of late adolescents and young adults (Mau *et al.*, 2014; Lachance *et al.*, 2003; Dix, Phau & Pougnet, 2010). This appears to be an ongoing process that extends throughout adulthood. It is evident that throughout consumers' lives they are exposed to and influenced by numerous factors such as significant others, reference groups and the media, which are referred to as socialising agents.

On the other hand, as consumers grow older they tend to use more informative sources to influence their decision-making and learn consumption skills by observing rather than conforming (Singh *et al.*, 2003). In an exploratory cross-cultural study it was found that as Hispanic, African Americans and Asian consumers moved from adolescence into young adulthood, they became less disposed to normative influences and increasingly relied on media, informative peers and the internet for market information (Singh *et al.*, 2003), all of which are particularly relevant in this study.

2.1.7 Socialising agents

Socialising agents are the sources with which consumers interact. They are described as institutes or people who are directly involved in individuals' socialisation and influence consumer learning (Luczak & Younkin, 2012; Singh *et al.*, 2003; Wang *et al.*, 2012). Modelling occurs when an individual copies a socialising agent's behaviour. In this instance, the person can guess the outcome of a decision based on what he or she has seen. Reinforcement occurs through reward or punishment tactics which are used by these agents to accept or reject a person's behaviour. Social interaction is a combination of both these concepts (Moschis & Churchill, 1978; Wang *et al.*, 2012), and all of the former are associated with interpersonal susceptibility.

The interpersonal susceptibility theory consists of normative and informative interpersonal influences that impact on how an individual socializes and learns from the environment (Singh *et al.*, 2003; Wang *et al.*, 2012). Normative influences depict an individual's need to conform to a group's expectations; and informative influences provide information required to learn via observations and obtaining information from others (Kaiser, 1997:357-358). Interpersonal influences are gained from socialising agents (Singh *et al.*, 2003; Wang *et al.*, 2012). The concept of socialising agents is particularly relevant in this study which investigates status consumption of clothing brands by different population groups.

In a study conducted in America concerning cross-cultural consumer socialisation and the socialisation influences for three different ethnic minorities, it was revealed that across varying ethnic consumer groups the significance associated with different sources of information, be it parents, peers or media, varied (Singh *et al.*, 2003). It was attributed to difference in the different population groups' consumer socialisation and receptiveness to socialising agents (Singh *et al.*, 2003). Three major socialising agents that are relevant in this study are: parents, peers and media, which influence developing consumers and serve as a source of interaction (Lachance *et al.*, 2003).

2.1.7.1 Parents

A parent is defined as an individual who lawfully has guardianship, custody and access rights regarding a child and who is obligated to support said child financially. Commonly, a parent is understood to be simply a mother and father (Jackson, 2006). From infancy through to adolescence parents play a dominant role, both directly and indirectly regarding the consumption behaviour of their children (Dotson & Hyatt, 2005; Minahan & Huddleston, 2010; Neeley, 2005). Parents are depicted as major and primary socialising agents for young consumers (Dhurup, 2014; McDonald, 2005:70; Neeley, 2005) and continue to influence their children's consumption decisions as they move into adulthood (Lachance & Choquette-Bernier, 2004). Moreover, parents decide on their children's degree of exposure to information sources such as peers and television – reiterating their role in the consumer socialisation process (Solomon & Rabolt, 2004:378). Additionally, children observe and imitate their parents' consumer behaviour (Lachance *et al.*, 2003; Neeley, 2005). Clothing companies even offer mother-daughter outfits to profit on this aspect of socialisation (Solomon & Rabolt, 2004:378). This participation in consumer socialisation increases with a child's knowledge of product label information and economic motivations for consumption. In Western societies the participation of children in family decisions plays an important role and children are now more expressive and emancipated than ever before (Valkenburg & Cantor, 2001). This participation begins when infants accompany parents on shopping excursions and become exposed to marketing stimuli from which they subsequently make requests, selections, assisted purchases and independent purchases as they grow up and turn into fully fledged consumers (Solomon & Rabolt, 2004:378).

Children are socialised as consumers through shopping with their mothers (Sharma, 2011). Minahan and Huddleston (2010) found that what an individual learns in childhood may be an extension of their parents' behaviour. It was established that young daughters are provided with the opportunity to observe how to be a consumer when shopping with their mothers and gain independence through making their own purchases by exercising what they have observed and learnt in childhood (Minahan & Huddleston, 2010). It was also established that young women trusted their mothers to help them achieve (clothing) shopping skills, as these daughters trusted that their mother would be aware of their needs and wants and provide honest opinions about their potential clothing purchases (Minahan & Huddleston, 2010). Important, however, is that influences of mothers could differ in individualistic versus collectivistic societies (Rose, 1999)

2.1.7.2 Peers

People who belong to the same social group, vocation or age group are considered peers (Wang *et al.*, 2012). Such individuals would commonly have a shared perspective and/or participate in shared activities – characterising them as a reference group (Shibutani, 1974:32;250). In terms of clothing, individuals tend to rely on feedback received from their various reference groups during their life to manage their appearance (Workman & Lee, 2011; O'Cass & McEwen, 2004; Kaiser,

1997:165). This means, a person's impression of himself/herself is heavily based on the phenomenon of *reflective appraisal* – where individuals see themselves in the way they believe others see them (Kaiser, 1997:165; Moschis, 1976). More importantly, social feedback is about receiving positive or negative feedback about one's appearance. Such social feedback can be direct (verbal) or indirect (nonverbal cues) throughout the socialisation process (Kaiser, 1997:166). Moreover, social feedback is assessed relative to the individual supplying the feedback; for example an individual would pay careful attention to and assimilate feedback from peers he or she want to impress and socialise with (Kaiser, 1997:167). This brings the theory of social comparison and comparative appraisal into effect. People compare themselves to others as a means of self-evaluation (Solomon & Rabolt, 2004:404; Kaiser, 1997:171). It is further presumed that people compare one another relative to their economic achievements. Such interpersonal comparisons are representative of basic human behaviour, as they establish a person's recognition by others (Kaus, 2013). Social comparisons are largely conducted through appearance (Kaiser, 1997:171; Moschis, 1976), which underlines clothing as a source of comparative appraisal as clothes are highly visible and aligned with appearance.

Previous studies concerning consumer socialisation confirms the importance of peers as an influence on consumers' purchasing behaviour (Singh *et al.*, 2003). Peers have been identified as the most significant socialising agent in developing brand sensitivity, especially with regard to clothing (Lachance *et al.*, 2003). Brands can be considered public luxuries and their visible nature makes them likely to be affected by peers (Lachance *et al.*, 2003). Clothes appear to play a vital role in the relationship amongst peers and between friends; through them individuals gain positive self-esteem and social approval (Shukla, 2010; O'Cass & McEwen, 2004; Lachance *et al.*, 2003). An important socialisation agent is peer communication; which is defined as clear peer interactions related to goods and services (Chu & Sung, 2015; Chu & Kim, 2011).

Members of a peer group are considered socially equal (Sproles & Burns, 1994:141). Peers become highly influential during teenage years as individuals become more committed to conform to the norms of their peer/reference groups (Yang & Laroche, 2011; Valkenburg & Cantor, 2001). During this time individuals become exceedingly conscious of the opinions of others as well as of their thoughts and judgements (Yang *et al.*, 2014). Peer or reference group influences extend beyond a person's adolescence and can be a consistent influence throughout a person's life (Kaiser, 1997:352-354). This study is interested in the notion that consumers seek to be accepted amongst their peers and strive to become socially significant through the clothing brands they purchase. Furthermore, peer influence and significance may differ across cultures (Singh *et al.*, 2003) and might differ significantly between population groups.

2.1.7.3 Media

Media is understood as the main means of mass communication that constitutes publishing, the Internet and broadcasting (Maree, 2013:194). A consumer's awareness and discernment of global brands are largely formed by mass media and discussions via the Internet (Holt *et al.*, 2004). Media, such as clever advertising, can create brand preferences and a desire for certain products (Lachance *et al.*, 2003). Visual images and fashion goods (clothing) are distributed and communicated across cultural boundaries due to the international character of clothing production, retailing and electronic media (Kaiser, 1997:515). Media display rapid social change through the impersonal communication of symbols and lifestyles via different media formats (Kaiser, 1997:461).

As discussed in Chapter 1, today individuals use media to zone in on aspects they are most interested in and are most relevant to their lives (Mihailidis, 2014), for example, following a preferred retailer on Instagram to see what their latest offerings are. Moreover, due to the diversity in the availability of information, media can continue the socialisation process of people who may not be in contact with others on a daily basis (Kaiser, 1997:461). Lifestyles have changed in modern times, with many people spending most of the day at work. Thus, most of their day-to-day activities like shopping for groceries can be done online and from home, indicating that many people may not come into physical contacts with others as frequently. Through media, they are however, still well-informed. Consumer socialisation through the use of social media has increased in recent years as technology has advanced (Chu & Sung, 2015; Vinerean, Cetina, Dumitrescu & Tichindelean, 2013; Wang *et al.*, 2012). Social media plays a role in consumer socialisation processes as individuals compare themselves with the values created by peers and online communities (Luczak & Younkin, 2012).

The Consumer Socialisation theory postulates that family and the media are primary sources of socialisation in young children (De la Ville & Tartas, 2010:29-30). When a child is exposed to television, he or she tends to believe that what is depicted is reality (Solomon & Rabolt, 2004:378). Moreover, these children are exposed to an idealised image of adults as portrayed in advertisements that are actually targeted to adults (Solomon & Rabolt, 2004:379). For example, a young girl watching an advert about a women's lipstick learns to link the lipstick product to beauty (Solomon & Rabolt, 2004:379). In this way, the media propagates stereotypes about different groups of people (Kaiser, 1997:234), convincing such group members to purchase products aligned with them in order to remain associated with the group. Thus media promote ideal cultural images and socially accepted consumption, products or behaviour; and individuals imitate or aspire to these images (Kaiser, 1997:560-562)

Individuals born in Generation Y are consistently influenced by television, social media and the internet (Luczak & Younkin, 2012). This reality justifies the direct relationship between watching television and materialism as they (Generation Y) were found to aspire more to the affluent lifestyles portrayed through the media (Bakewell & Mitchell, 2009). Moreover, social media facilitates peer-to-peer communication (Dhar & Chang, 2009) which entwines media and peers as socialising agents (Chu & Sung, 2015; Wang *et al.*, 2012). Wang, Yu and Wei (2012) found that Chinese consumers (who are frequent users of social media websites) were directly influenced through conformity and indirectly influenced through product involvement. Thus social media becomes a socialising agent as consumer attitudes and behaviour are modelled through the use of this medium (Luczak & Younkin, 2012; Wang *et al.*, 2012).



CHAPTER 3

Literature review

This chapter presents an overview of existing literature including relevant definitions and conceptualisations for this study. Literature pertaining to status consumption, interpersonal and impersonal influences and how it relates to clothing brand consumption is presented as directive for the hypotheses of the study. This chapter concludes with the conceptual framework.

3.1 STATUS CONSUMPTION

Status consumption is defined as an incentivised procedure by which a person attempts to improve his or her social status through intentional consumption of products that symbolise status for both the person and significant others, in an obvious manner (Eastman & Eastman, 2011; Shukla, 2010; O’Cass & McEwen, 2004).

3.1.1 Status consumption vs conspicuous consumption

Status and conspicuous consumption are sometimes used interchangeably and are acknowledged in various literature as the same concept (O’Cass & McEwen, 2004). However, O’Cass and McEwen (2004) argued that although they are related, the two constructs have different antecedents. Therefore, status and conspicuous consumption should be viewed as separate concepts that are related to elements of consumers' motivation to consume products. Conspicuous consumption inflates a person’s ego and is used to demonstrate wealth and to convey affluence to others publicly (Burger *et al.*, 2014; O’Cass & McEwen, 2004). Conversely, status consumption refers to a more mindful display and consumption of possessions. Status consumption reflects an individual’s desires to gain esteem and improve the individual’s standing in society through the acquisition of prestigious brands or items (Shukla, 2010; O’Cass & McEwen, 2004). Status consumption is socially motivated and driven by the validation of others the individual interacts with, whereas conspicuous consumption is driven by showing-off material possession to exhibit/display one’s wealth or success to others - e.g. to flaunt a Louis Vuitton bag conspicuously.

According to O’Cass and McEwen (2004), the difference appears to lie in the understanding that conspicuous consumption puts position and affluence in evidence, whereby possessions are publicly and blatantly displayed. Status consumption on the other hand highlights the personal nature of owning status products that are not necessarily openly demonstrated.

3.1.2 Status consumption and group expectations

Individuals make buying decisions that will satisfy their needs as well as satisfy the image that their significant others may have of them (Weber, 2014:7). People are shaped by their reference group's expectations (Burger *et al.*, 2014; Goldsmith & Clark, 2012; O'Cass & McEwen, 2004), culture (Yang *et al.*, 2014; Workman & Lee, 2011) and societal norms (Mazali & Rodrigues-Neto, 2013). Consumers therefore shop for specific products (brands) that show their social status to their social or cultural group (Mazali & Rodrigues-Neto, 2013). Brand names are attached to status in a way that they establish how society identifies a person who owns these branded product, i.e. perceived status (O'Cass & Frost, 2002). Social norms rank brands in line with their level of status or prestige (Weber, 2014:45; Mazali & Rodrigues-Neto, 2013). Consequently, society judges the status of a person based on the highest status level of the brand that a person owns (Mazali & Rodrigues-Neto, 2013; Du Plessis & Rousseau, 2003:372). Because status is predominantly defined through interpersonal relationships, the need to purchase status goods is mostly influenced by a consumer's social networks (O'Cass & McEwen, 2004). The *band wagon effect* is a phenomenon introduced to describe consumers' desire to identify with a reference group and can lead to the purchase of status laden luxury products that a group associates with (Kim & Jang, 2014). A reference group is a person or group that serves as a point of comparison for an individual and guides their behaviour via specific values or attitudes (Kaiser, 1990:359). Many consumers act as representatives of their social group (Dos Santos, 2013:167-169; Shukla, 2010; O'Cass & McEwen, 2004) and adjust their purchasing behaviour to complement their desired status and to support the image that their reference group portrays (Burger *et al.*, 2014; Goldsmith & Clark, 2012; O'Cass & McEwen, 2004).

As status consumption is socially motivated, it is executed not only for oneself but also to impress one's reference group (Eastman & Eastman, 2011). Differences in spending on visible products is determined by the social interactions with a person's reference group (Kaus, 2013). Consumption of items that are easily noticeable in social interactions is considered visible consumption (Kaus, 2013; Charles *et al.*, 2009). To fit in as a member of a particular reference group, the consumer undertakes self-monitoring, whereby the individual tries to maintain or alter his/her self-presentation in the situation and to surrounding people (Goldsmith & Clark, 2012; O'Cass & McEwen, 2004). Status goods are therefore used as props to communicate a self-image suitable for certain conditions (Burger *et al.*, 2014). Individuals who partake in such behaviour can be considered high self-monitors – as they concentrate on maintaining their appearance and general image. Consequently, they are susceptible to interpersonal influences (O'Cass & McEwen, 2004). Thus, inevitably, visual cues, in the form of status products, is necessary to obtain acceptance from reference group members and to allow members to provide approval accordingly (Shukla, 2010; O'Cass & McEwen, 2004). Status consumption is hence influenced by consumers' susceptibility to interpersonal influences (O'Cass & McEwen, 2004) and impersonal influences (Kaiser, 1997:459).

3.1.3 Status consumption across different population groups

The varying population groups of South Africa have different income distributions and cultural backgrounds as well as different manners in which they communicate their position within society (Kaus, 2013). Inferences have been drawn about the four predominant population groups in South Africa (Blacks, Whites, Coloureds and Indians) and about their differing ethnicities and cultures due to historical (Apartheid) and developmental encounters (Adams *et al.*, 2012). It appears that inconsistencies in political, social and economic factors between Whites and the other population groups still influence each group's identity (Adams *et al.*, 2012). In a study by Murali, Laroche and Pons (2005) it was found that variations in socio-economic status between French and English Canadian consumers accounted for consumption differences; and diversity in culture was another key determinant of their consumption differences (Murali *et al.*, 2005).

In South Africa, local retailers have begun to position their brands in terms of certain income bands – typically defined by the South African Living Standards Measurement (LSM) market segmentation model (PWC, 2012). Consumers on the upper end of the scale have more spending power and a taste for status products (PWC, 2012) and collectively earn about 67.5% of the population's total earnings. They have substantial purchasing power, especially with regard to apparel and footwear. Members of LSM 7-10 create the top third of South African society as they earn the highest income, have better standards of living and consume more media in comparison with other LSM groups (Chronis, 2012). Over the last decade there has been growth of about 60% in this LSM group and a shift in the racial profile was seen with an increase of 149% Blacks (now approximately 5 789 000), whereas Whites (3 923 000) have declined by 45%, Indians (812 000) by 20% and Coloureds (681 000) by 3% (Chronis, 2012).

3.2 CONSUMER SUSCEPTIBILITY TO INTERPERSONAL INFLUENCES

Interpersonal influences are extended through so-called socialising agents. Interpersonal influences refer to the process in which an individual's attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours are affected by other people (Wang *et al.*, 2012; Singh *et al.*, 2003). O'Cass and Frost (2002a) found that a person's susceptibility to interpersonal influences impacts on their status consumption tendencies. This indicates that specific status goods might be used to portray an image that will allow entry into certain groups (O'Cass & Frost, 2002a; Kaiser, 1997:354-355). Additionally, the idea that individuals may use certain brands in order to be socially accepted, indicates how group affiliation is encouraged by members and how an individual can be identified based on the use of particular products (Mazali & Rodrigues-Neto, 2013; O'Cass & Frost, 2002a). Consumer susceptibility to interpersonal influence consists of two separate dimensions: susceptibility to

normative influence and susceptibility to *informative influence* (Bearden *et al.*, 1989). Informational and normative social influences manifest in conformity and consequently fashion approval and clothing behaviour (Sproles & Burns, 1994:149). Reference groups hence exert normative and informational social influences with regard to clothing encompassing fashion approval (Sproles & Burns, 1994:149; Kaiser, 1997:359-360).

In South Africa collectivism is described in terms of *Ubuntu*, dictating that humanity derives from conforming or belonging to a tribe (group). Ubuntu is a philosophy engaging multiple ideas, discourses and cultures and is often dealt with in terms of ethnicity (Muller, 2015). It is understood in terms of spiritual, personal and community values (Muller, 2015). The Black population in South Africa is seen as more collectivistic in nature (Lamont & Molnar, 2001) as their immediate and extended families as well as their wider community are considered of great importance; they also place prominence on traditional values (Adams *et al.*, 2012). The Coloured population see themselves as culturally diverse from the other South African ethnic groups, even though they share a similar sense of collectivism as they also see the importance of maintaining a close core and extended family unit (Adams *et al.*, 2012). The Indian population generally displays collectivism (Shukla, 2010) by maintaining traditions, practices and languages that belong to their Indian heritage. Yet, a significant portion of this population group is Christian - exemplifying a western way of life and individualistic demeanour (Adams *et al.*, 2012). Lastly, the White population are inclined to demonstrate conventional Western and Christian individualistic values (Workman & Lee, 2011; Shukla, 2010) contrasted with the other South African population groups. It is said that these individuals place more emphasis on the 'self' and immediate family than on their extended family and community at large (Adams *et al.*, 2012).

By understanding the presence of individualistic values as well as collectivism across the diverse population groups in South Africa, one should acknowledge the reality of normative receptiveness in consumers' affinity towards status consumption. This is because normative receptiveness explains the inclination to conforming to a (reference) group's behaviours, actions, values and even attire that is visually recognisable (Sproles & Burns, 1994:139; Kaiser, 1997:353-354). This notion is further explained in the following section.

3.2.1 Normative receptiveness

Normative receptiveness is essentially consumption decisions that are based on what the consumer believes will impress others (Ang, Cheng, Lim & Tambyah 2001). Normative receptiveness has two dimensions: value expressiveness and utilitarian influences (Bearden *et al.*, 1989). Normative group influences include cultural factors, like styles of appearance that are in harmony with the way a group interacts – creating an appropriate image for the group (Kaiser, 1997:358). To be socially correct in group settings, people compare themselves to others, ensuring

they will fit in and prevent possible social sanctions (Sproles & Burns, 1994:139). Consequently, those within a group assimilate common acceptable behaviours, including the approval of socially accepted fashion norms (Kaiser, 1997:353-354). It becomes evident that such consumption is significantly influenced by consumers' reference groups. Status conscious consumers monitor their social environment and adjust their purchasing behaviour to complement their desired status - fitting their image to what their reference group portrays and would expect of them (Burger *et al.*, 2014; Goldsmith & Clark, 2012; O'Cass & McEwen, 2004). An individual's choices regarding fashion can thus be influenced by reference groups as fashion is visible and socially noticeable (Solomon & Rabolt, 2004:423).

Based on the literature discussed the following was hypothesised: *H1: There will be significant differences in normative receptiveness across different population groups' status consumption of clothing brands.*

3.2.1.1 Value expressiveness

Value expressiveness occurs via identification, which is the process whereby consumers assume specific behaviours or the opinions of others that are relevant to satisfying a self-defining relationship and to match their self-image with their social world (Bearden *et al.*, 1989). Value expressiveness depicts consumers' need to enhance their self-image by being associated with certain reference groups (Weber, 2014:29; Bearden *et al.*, 1989). Consumers accomplish this by wearing clothing and brands that are similar to their chosen reference group (Dix *et al.*, 2010; O'Cass & Frost, 2002a).

However, a person can associate with more than one reference group at a time and various types of reference groups exist. Such groups include: aspirational (Dos Santos, 2013:174; Du Plessis & Rousseau, 2003:371; Sproles & Burns, 1994:141), and dissociative or associative groups (Dos Santos, 2013:174). Aspirational groups are divided into a symbolic aspirational reference group and anticipatory aspirational reference group (Dos Santos, 2013:173; Du Plessis & Rousseau, 2003:371). A symbolic aspirational reference group is one that the consumer will probably never belong to and thus he/she makes vicarious links to it through purchasing items the group is known to purchase (Dos Santos, 2013:173; Du Plessis & Rousseau, 2003:371; Sproles & Burns, 1994:141). For example, an individual may admire a celebrity sportsman and will try to emulate this person and aspire to his or her talent by purchasing and utilising the brands this celebrity endorses, even though the consumer may not be as skilled (Dix *et al.*, 2010).

An anticipatory reference group, is one that the consumer has a clear and feasible intention to belong to (Dos Santos, 2013:173; Du Plessis & Rousseau, 2003:371). For example, a student studying to become a Chartered Accountant may yearn to own a Tag Heuer watch one day – the reference groups would be owners of elite or prestigious watches and the student intends to join

the group in the future (Dos Santos, 2013:173). A dissociative reference group, also known as a negative reference group, is one the consumer does not want to be associated with and will avoid consuming products linked to such groups (Dos Santos, 2013:174). Lastly, an associative or membership reference group is the group the consumer already belongs to (Du Plessis & Rousseau, 2003:201) which can be informal (e.g. a family or peer group) or formal (e.g. a work group or retail loyalty club) (Dos Santos, 2013:174). In all instances the reference group's values and norms will influence a consumer's behaviour (Escalas & Bettman, 2015; Du Plessis & Rousseau, 2003:372; Kaiser, 1997:360).

Norms can relate to dress and appearance and can be a straightforward indication of group membership (Kaiser, 1997:226) and their status/position within a particular group (Du Plessis & Rousseau, 2003:372). Such impressions are created in a stranger's mind based on an individual's appearance within a social environment (Kimle & Damhorst, 1997). For instance, a group of colleagues belonging to the same law firm may wear similar business attire to indicate their affiliation with each other, their company and their profession. It is suggested that the clothing an individual wears to work is a direct reflection of his or her role in the workplace (Peluchette, Karl & Rust, 2006). Professional women use their work wear to influence the perceptions of others (Peluchette *et al.*, 2006), emphasising their desire to align their appearance with their professional group to society. Such professional women may want their career wear to exhibit status or professionalism and have established that certain brands portray these aspects and are signifiers of the work and colleagues they associate with. Thus, these brands will be consumed for their inherent status – this is clearly status consumption.

Considering the effects that a reference group has on consumer decision-making when it comes to aspects like status consumption in clothing, symbols associated with status (Du Plessis & Rousseau, 2003:372) and how members of different reference (population) groups emit varying self-images and behaviours in order to associate with their selected reference group, it was hypothesised that, *H1a: There will be significant differences in value expressiveness across different population groups' status consumption of clothing brands.*

3.2.1.2 Utilitarian influences

Utilitarian influence is seen as a process of compliance and such influences are most likely to occur when an individual's behaviour is visible to the influential sources (Mourali *et al.*, 2005). Significant others would improve an individual's self-esteem through positive responses and acceptance, thus reinforcing the individual's behaviour (Weber, 2014:29; Kaiser, 1997:354-355; Bearden *et al.*, 1989). Rewards may refer to compliments or flattering an individual thus inflating a person's ego (Cervellon & Coudriet, 2013). An individual who chooses to be associated with a social group must conform to the group norms and adjust his or her behaviour (e.g. way of dress) and attitudes in accordance with the group's expectations to be accepted (Wang *et al.*, 2012).

Solomon and Rabolt (2004:2) explained that a consumer's purchasing decisions are profoundly influenced by the behaviours and opinions of friends. There is a bond amongst members (friends) of a (friendship) group that is reinforced by commonality in products and brands used (Solomon & Rabolt, 2004:2). There is pressure on members to buy products that will be approved by their group and if the members do not meet the expectations of the group, they will be punished by being rejected or embarrassed for insubordination (McDonald, 2005:39; Solomon & Rabolt, 2004:2). To determine what is appropriate, individuals observe others in the group to avoid any psychological or physical harm (Weber, 2014:30). By purchasing so-called 'acceptable' products consumers are able to avoid experiencing feelings of not belonging and even rejection (Weber, 2014:30). This notion is especially evident when members do not adhere to conceptions of what clothing is in fashion, as acceptance of fashion is a type of social compliance (Solomon & Rabolt, 2004:423). Adolescents indicated a high awareness of fashion expectations amongst their peers and they were virtually all in agreement when identifying who of their peers were best dressed and who were not appropriately dressed (Solomon & Rabolt, 2004:395; Sproles & Burns, 1994:150). People, particularly adolescents, fear defiance if there is a possibility that the group to which they belong, or want to associate with, will punish their choices and behaviour (Solomon & Rabolt, 2004:343). Buppies (Black urban professionals) apparently also buy specific branded clothing that are held in high esteem by their associative reference group to meet the group's expectations (Weber, 2014:30). Thus, such consumers will sculpt their purchasing and dress behaviours to be in line with their group expectations (Solomon & Rabolt, 2004:395).

Also, most South African population groups have a rather collectivistic nature – emphasising the importance of conforming to their particular ethnic group (cultural group). Furthermore, utilitarian influence affects a consumer's decision to purchase a certain brand because of preferences held by family members, work associates or people with whom the consumer has social interactions (Solomon & Rabolt, 2004:393). With this understanding it was hypothesised that, *H1b: There will be significant differences regarding utilitarian influences across different population groups' status consumption of clothing brands.*

3.2.2 Informative influences

Informational influences require the seeking of information from professional and/or personal sources before a purchasing decision is made to reduce the risk of making a poor decision (Goldsmith & Clark, 2012). Informational influences compel individuals to learn about products or services by gaining information from peers (or others), which in turn influences product evaluations and consumer decision processes (Wang *et al.*, 2012; Sproles & Burns, 1994:149). It is based on the need to obtain socially correct information about social reality and to endorse others' opinions. Minahan and Huddleston (2010) for example found that daughters wanted their mothers' opinions and reassurance when it came to their purchases. Individuals tend to follow the advice of other

consumers about products. Credible sources could be brand ambassadors (Dix *et al.*, 2010) or even social media (Wang *et al.*, 2012). Social media provides a newer channel from which to obtain product information that comes from multiple peers or even third parties such as colleagues, members of one's reference group (Wang *et al.*, 2012). Individuals may also consult others for correct information about fashion norms as fashion norms are also socially delineated through group communication (Sproles & Burns, 1994:149; Kaiser, 1997:358). For instance, if a person does not know what would be appropriate attire for a social occasion, he or she may confer with fashion magazines or ask friends what they will be wearing (Sproles & Burns, 1994:150).

An individual's reference group can also wield informative influence when the individual requests information from the particular group and the group supplies the relevant facts and details (Kaiser, 1997:357). Informational group influence is information supplied based on their (the group's) prior experiences and knowledge obtained from other groups they belonged to (Kaiser, 1997:357).

As consumers grow older they tend to use more informative sources when making a decision and learn consumption skills by observing rather than conforming to others (Singh *et al.*, 2003; Dubey, 1993). It was found that as different cultural groups moved from adolescence into young adulthood they became less disposed to normative influences and rather rely on media, informative peers and the internet for market information (Singh *et al.*, 2003). Taking into consideration that others and one's own reference groups (family/friends/peers/colleagues) influence one's consumption decisions the following hypotheses were formulated:

H2: There will be significant differences in informative influences (family and peer communication) across different population groups' status consumption of clothing brands.

H2a: There will be significant differences in family and others influences across different population groups' status consumption of clothing brands.

H2b: There will be significant differences in peer communication across different population groups' status consumption of clothing brands

3.3 IMPERSONAL SOURCE OF COMMUNICATION

The advertising and promotion of clothing are mostly accomplished through mass media (Sproles & Burns, 1994:246). Mass media communication channels and messages are marketer controlled and almost entirely determined by the marketing system of the brand or retailer (Potter, 2011). Mass media or impersonal sources of communication relate to traditional advertising media (print and broadcast), alternative media (out-of-home media and digital displays) and social media (Maree, 2013:308-312). Impersonal communication in clothing usually occurs through one-way transmission where the source formally addresses the consumer (Kaiser, 1997:459). These

communications can be objective or subjective presentations and are powerful in influencing consumers' clothing decisions (Sproles & Burns, 1994:250; 252). For this study, impersonal sources of communication relate to advertisements, either traditional or alternative media, and new media focusing on social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc. This study hypothesises that *H3: There will be significant differences in impersonal influences (advertising and social media) across different population groups' status consumption of clothing brands*

3.3.1 Advertising

Advertising has influenced consumer consumption for a long time (Liu, 2010). It is used to communicate with consumers on a mass scale (Elliott & Wattanasuwan, 1998) at a low cost per exposure (Cravens & Piercy, 2013:351). Advertisements can be experienced through a variety of media and the message and appeal of an advertisement can be altered accordingly to the communication objectives of the brand (Cravens & Piercy, 2013:351). The main disadvantages of advertising are that it cannot interact with consumers and an advertisement may struggle to hold a consumer's attention due to the 'noise' associated with media, i.e. information overload (Cravens & Piercy, 2013:351; Maree, 2013:308). Marketing has the primary task of influencing consumer behaviour, thus it is pertinent to understand how, where, when and why the targeted consumers want to communicate with the world and how they want marketers to converse with them (De Kock, 2015). Marketers therefore need to break through the 'noise' to reach their targeted consumer – ensuring their messages are predominant (Cravens & Piercy, 2013:351; Maree, 2013:308; Wright Khanfar, Harrington, & Kizer, 2010).

3.3.1.1 Types of advertising media

Traditional media includes print and broadcast. Print media refers to newspapers, which are considered low cost and current yet have a mediocre quality and selective reader exposure (Du Plessis & Rousseau, 2003:355); and magazines, which target an already segmented market and are of a better quality but have long lead times and high advertising costs (Maree, 2013:309; Du Plessis & Rousseau, 2003:355). However, a drastic decline in consumers' use of these print media is evident (De Kock, 2015).

Broadcast media involves cinema, television and radio (Maree, 2013:309) and has penetrated into most South African households (Du Plessis & Rousseau, 2003:353). Television, as an advertising medium, has advantages regarding its high coverage and ability to integrate visuals and sound into advertising, undoubtedly engaging audiences more (Maree, 2013:309; Du Plessis & Rousseau, 2003:353-354). Yet, apart from the disadvantage of high cost, television has faced challenges due to the damaging impacts of commercial free programming (Wright *et al.*, 2010) and PVR systems on advertising value (De Kock, 2015). Of the upper class in South Africa, 78% have satellite television, 60% of these subscribers have PVRs, 83% of whom use them to evade advertisements

(De Kock, 2015). The middle class are marginally more exposed to 'invasive marketing' (De Kock, 2015). Thus, it appears that the higher a person is positioned on the Living Standard Measurement scale, the greater their access to finer filtration systems and therefore the more inclined the individual is to shun noise and clutter and instead find goods and services that provide exactly what they want (De Kock, 2015). Radio (drive time) is still an attractive medium to reach consumers as it is low in cost, flexible and different stations do provide advertisers and marketers with a potentially segmented audience (Maree, 2013:309; Du Plessis & Rousseau, 2003:353-354). Radio broadcast is a form of communication to modern society, spreading popular culture not only nationally but globally (Holt *et al.*, 2004). However, radio has shortcomings in terms of clutter and short advertising time spans (Maree, 2013:309; Du Plessis & Rousseau, 2003:353-354).

With such sophisticated means whereby people can avoid advertising, branding and marketing, firms need to utilise media that is arresting, attractive and relevant to their potential consumers. For instance, alternative media (e.g. taxi advertising or digital billboards) have high accessibility to the public and have the ability to grab consumers' attention due to their innovation and uniqueness (Maree, 2013:310; Du Plessis & Rousseau, 2003:355). Additionally, new media (e.g. social media) is a concept very accessible through the Internet; and unlike traditional media, it is interactive and proactive, featuring vast consumer engagement (Maree, 2013:310).

3.3.1.2 Advertising and appearance imagery

Advertisements have the ability to provide appearance imagery through media and to mould consumers' ideas of a desirable, fashionable or appropriate appearance (Lamont & Molnar, 2001; Kaiser, 1997:234). Moreover, advertisements have the ability to influence one's interpretation of appearance in everyday communications, thus helping consumers develop a shared understanding of the concept of appearance (Kaiser, 1997:234). A status brand (like Tag Heuer or Ted Baker) that uses an advertisement to create a desirable image relevant to a specific social class, affects individuals who belong to that social class, or those who aspire to belong, to purchase the brand regardless of price to assume this perceived status (Wilk, 2002; Kaiser, 1997:497). This confirms the power of persuasive advertising and the impact it may have on consumer decision-making and status consumption. Thus, exposure to advertisements like these can trigger the social comparison process, whereby an individual assesses him or herself by making comparisons with the image that is portrayed in the ad (Solomon & Rabolt, 2004:144). The perceived impact that an advertisement will have on the targeted buyers enables brands to determine the specific objectives for advertising (Cravens & Piercy, 2013:359). Identifying which consumers to target is imperative as this allows brands to design a message, choose an appropriate advertising medium and programming schedule that will efficiently reach their target market and effectively meet the brands advertising objectives (Cravens & Piercy, 2013:359; Du Plessis & Rousseau, 2003:360-362).

3.3.1.3 Advertising objectives

Advertising objectives are increasingly associated with the buyer's purchasing decisions (Cravens & Piercy, 2013:359). For example, brands want to investigate if their advertising has increased sales, thus indicating if their advertising affected their targeted consumers' purchasing behaviour. When effective, an advertisement will influence consumers' behaviour which would result in increased sales and profits for the brand. It must be noted that advertising objectives may not necessarily only be to increase profits, but also to increase brand awareness (Cravens & Piercy, 2013:360). The brand thus becomes embedded in consumers' minds and can be recalled when consumers are in need of the specific product (Cravens & Piercy, 2013:360). Television advertisers often stress the influence that their messages have in maintaining brand loyalty and brand awareness (Bush, Smith & Martin, 1999; Sproles & Burns, 1994:252).

3.3.2 Social media

Social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) is a virtual space where individuals can communicate via the internet (Vinerean, Cetina, Dumitrescu & Tichindelean, 2013). Social media can supply individuals with the timely and relevant information they seek (Lee & Ma, 2012) and allow consumers to choose what information will reach them, by personalising their preferences. This creates a segmented consumer market, enabling marketers to target their preferred consumers (Wright *et al.*, 2010).

It has been suggested that people use digital age products (e.g. social media) to connect with like-minded individuals (Mihailidis, 2014). Social media transforms ordinary passive consumers into active content producers (Lee & Ma, 2012). This notion is seen as a rather attractive characteristic of social media, as consumers freely display their brand preferences and personal tastes, assisting in the creation of market segmentation (Chu & Kim, 2011). Today, social networking sites are considered as socialising agents as they have an influence on consumer decision-making as well as marketing strategies (Vinerean *et al.*, 2013). Social media has provided new communication channels (Cravens & Piercy, 2013:392), entailing active communication amongst users. Marketers using social media networks can therefore not be inactive and must involve consumers in conversation to identify their wants and needs proactively (Wright *et al.*, 2010). One-way mass marketing is no longer a viable way to approach consumers (Du Toit, 2013:90).

3.3.2.1 Social media usage

Social media is considered a consumer-activated form of media (Schultz, Block & Raman, 2011) and social media marketing is relationship based (Du Toit, 2013:89). Social media hosts millions of users and provides the opportunity for brands and retailers to make a vast impression on and build relationships with consumers via such a dominating force (Wright *et al.*, 2010). Of the higher LSM groups in South Africa, 88% utilise smartphones, 50% have tablets and they, in effect, all

have access to the Internet (De Kock, 2015). Thus evidently, digital information plays a major role in the lives of these consumers – where 26% enjoy Instagram, 36% use Twitter and 80% have Facebook (De Kock, 2015).

Moreover, for marketers to use social media effectively to reach consumers, they must understand the basic demographic differences that could interlink with their consumers' social media usage. According to a survey done in the USA, social media usage and preferences vary by race and ethnicity (Krogstad, 2015). It was found that Latino, Black and White population groups use social media networks in equal measure, although each population group was more partial to specific social media sites (Krogstad, 2015). For instance, Pinterest was found to be more popular amongst Whites, whereas Instagram was preferred by the Hispanic and Black populations. However, Twitter showed a more equal distribution with approximately a quarter of each group using this platform (Krogstad, 2015). Furthermore, it was discovered that regardless of ethnicity, about 80% of adults who were online utilized at least one of the following five social media sites: Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, LinkedIn and Twitter (Krogstad, 2015).

Social media becomes more familiar to a user through experience, thus individuals are inclined to use it in their daily routine, making usage habitual (Lee & Ma, 2012). Findings of the South African Social Media Landscape study of 2016 indicated that approximately 25% of all South African population groups use Facebook (Goldstuck, 2016). This equates to around 13 million users, of whom 10 million access the site via mobile devices (Goldstuck, 2016). With regards to South Africans' affinity for Instagram, there has been a growth of 133% (Goldstuck, 2016). The increase in social media usage can be attributed to the notion of status attainment as it was found that social status is a key motivator of Internet usage (Lee & Ma, 2012). With regard to social media, status is associated with the feeling of being admired by and significant among peers (Lee & Ma, 2012). Thus by the trading of ideas and sharing of content in online communities, social media users believe that they improve their reputation and gain popularity among their online peer group (Lee & Ma, 2012).

3.3.2.2 Social media usage by brands

The wide reach of social media websites like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn or Instagram offer the possibility to engage in direct consumer contact at comparatively lower costs than traditional media (Cravens & Piercy, 2013:392). Moreover, the rise in social media advertising has created a trend in which marketers have more intimate relationships with their consumers (Wright *et al.*, 2010). Social networking sites have enabled consumers to share information, thoughts and opinions regarding brands and products with marketers and fellow consumers – making social media a valuable avenue for consumer brand-related word-of-mouth (Chu & Kim, 2011). Thus, social media has inevitably brought forward new marketing opportunities for brands. For example, on the Mystarbucksidea.com platform, consumers help generate ideas for new products at no charge

(Bruhn, Schoenmueller & Schäfer, 2012). Moreover, fans of various fashion houses declare their love for clothing and designers on Facebook or Instagram by liking or following the allocated accounts. Brands such as Mr Price have been effectively using social media as marketing and positioning platforms (Goldstuck, 2016). Furthermore, the expansion of social media networks has offered marketers numerous platforms where consumers can offer insightful feedback (Cravens & Piercy, 2013:142). A keen example of this is seen at Moxie.com, an online fashion boutique that utilises its *buyers chat* events to gain knowledge about what products their consumers would like them to sell (Cravens & Piercy, 2013:142). Such events entail the buyer interrupting sales meetings to put photographs of potential products on Twitter to gain immediate feedback from customers – thus their consumers influence the firm’s buying process (Cravens & Piercy, 2013:142). This depicts not only how useful social media is for companies and brands, but also how innovative it allows marketers to be.

Taking into consideration the effects of advertising and advertising’s ability to initiate social comparisons and to provide appearance imagery as well as social media usage and its influence on consumer decision-making, the following was hypothesised:

H3a: There will be significant differences regarding advertising across different population groups’ status consumption of clothing brands.

H3b: There will be significant differences regarding impersonal influences social media across different population groups’ status consumption of clothing brands.

3.4 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework (**Figure 3.1**) was developed to guide the research and to indicate the relational influences as hypothesized in the study.

Consumer socialisation theory posits that consumers are socialised by socialising agents (parents, peers and media) throughout their lives (Moschis & Churchill, 1978). Interpersonal influences (two-way communication) (O’Cass & McEwen, 2004) are typically associated with parents and peers whereas impersonal influences (one-way communication) (Sproles & Burns, 1994:250) are associated with the media. Interpersonal susceptibility impacts on how an individual socializes and learns from the environment (Wang *et al.*, 2012; Singh *et al.*, 2003).

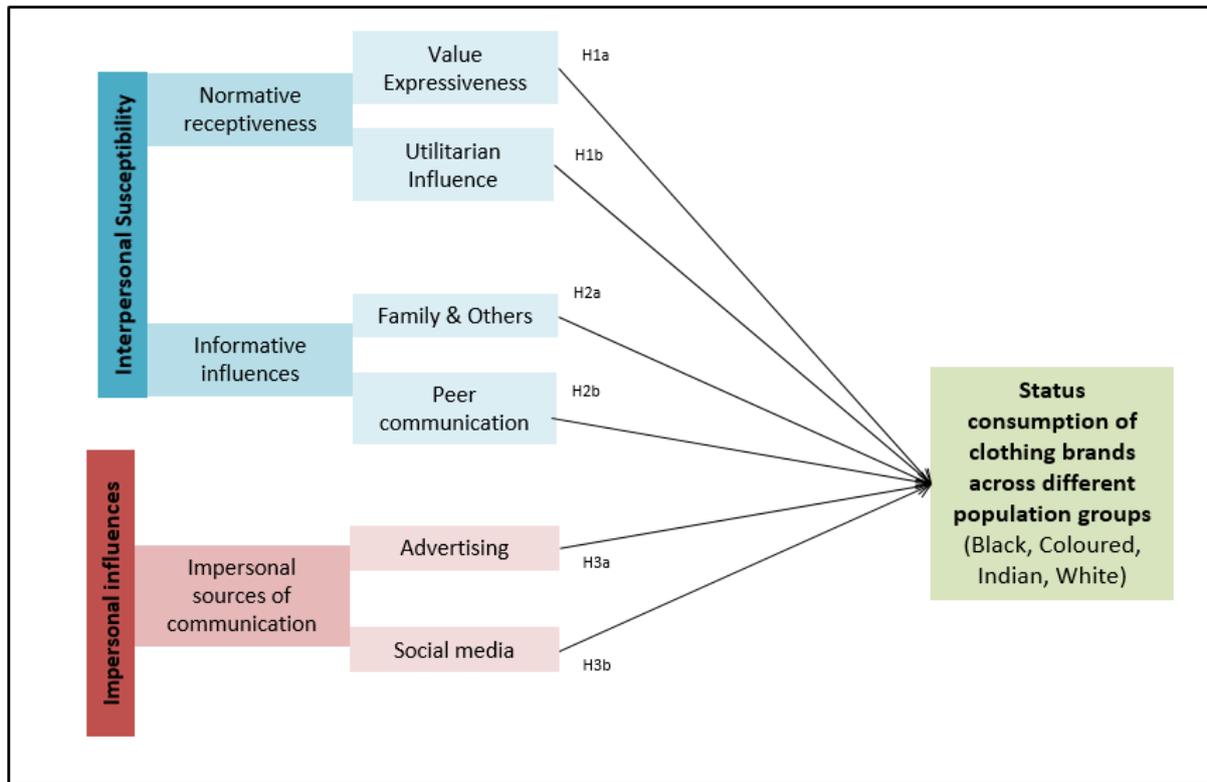


FIGURE 3.1: SCHEMATIC CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The dimensions of interpersonal influences are normative receptiveness and informative influences (Bearden *et al.*, 1989). Normative receptiveness depicts an individual's need to conform to a group's expectations and is divided into two aspects: value expressiveness and utilitarian influences (Singh *et al.*, 2003; Bearden *et al.*, 1989). Informative influences relate to how individuals obtain socially correct information about products from others to reduce the risk of making the wrong choice (Wang *et al.*, 2012). Impersonal influence links to external influences, from the likes of social media (Vinerean *et al.*, 2013) and advertising (Sproles & Burns, 1994:250). The advertising and promotion of clothing are mostly done through mass media. Such impersonal communications are a powerful influence on consumers' clothing decisions (Sproles & Burns, 1994:246; Kaiser, 1997:459). For this study, impersonal sources of communication relate to advertisements and new media focusing on social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc.

The following chapter will provide details of the research methodology used to collect the data for this study.



CHAPTER 4

Research design and methodology

This chapter presents the research design and methodology including an operationalisation table to indicate the important constructs as well as the statistical analysis in terms of the objectives of the study. This chapter concludes with the measures taken to ensure the validity and reliability of the research procedures and the procedures used to ensure the study adheres to research ethics.

4.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

The overall aim of this study was to investigate empirically possible significant differences in interpersonal and impersonal influences across different population groups' clothing brand status consumption in the South African market. A survey research design was followed to investigate the topic. The study was descriptive and exploratory in nature as the study had the intention of exploring interpersonal and impersonal influences associated with clothing brand status consumption and describing it in relation to the chosen target population (Berndt & Petzer, 2011:87). The explorative purpose of the study allowed for the formulation of new hypotheses and investigation into relatively unknown area of research (Babbie, 2010:92-93); and the descriptive purpose, the main variables pertaining to the population under study could be described.

Primary data was collected as part of a cross-sectional study. The study was cross-sectional in nature as it was conducted at a certain point in time, rather than over an extended period of time (Babbie, 2010:106). A quantitative approach was used to design a questionnaire, and numerical values were assigned to diverse variables in order to draw conclusions on relationships or differences that might exist in the sample (Creswell, 2014:13,155-156; Berndt & Petzer, 2011:47-49). The researcher could obtain numerical data regarding the target population's opinions via the administered questionnaires (Creswell, 2014:13,155). Furthermore, this study was empirical as primary data was used to answer the research problem (Berndt & Petzer, 2011:42).

4.1.1 Sample and sampling procedure

4.1.1.1 Sample

South Africa has a diverse population with changing consumer behaviour (PWC, 2012) both of which served as the unit of analysis. Cultural values which explain population group diversity, are seen as a determining factor for the South African market's consumer behaviour and decision

making (McDonald, 2005:41). This inspired the researcher to investigate status consumption and its drivers in terms of the country's various population groups.

South Africa has approximately 54 million people of whom 80.5% are Black, 8.8% are Coloured, 8.3% are White and 2.5% are either Asian or Indian (Statistics South Africa, 2015). The targeted population of this study was the four prominent categories of the South African population. Only the four prominent categories were selected (Black, White, Coloured and Indian) for inclusion in the sample because the Asian population group only amounted to 1.2% of the sample, thus adequate, accurate and substantial inferences may not have been able to be drawn from such a small percentage in the sample. Moreover, the decision to remove the Asian population group was further motivated by the fact that Blacks, Whites, Coloureds and Indians are considered the dominant population groups of South Africa (Adams *et al.*, 2012).

The targeted population was selected from the larger Tshwane metropolitan area. Due to limitations regarding time and finances, Tshwane was a practical geographical scope for this research study, as the researcher was based at the University of Pretoria. Tshwane is considered the largest municipality in Gauteng terms of land mass. Tshwane has an area of 6 368km² that extends approximately 121 km from east to west and 108 km from north to south (Statistics South Africa, 2011a). It is also the second largest metropolitan municipality in Gauteng, and has approximately 2.9 million residents (Statistics South Africa, 2011a). Moreover, Tshwane hosts a population that is diverse in demographic characteristics such as income, age, education level and population (Thorpe & Ganief, 2013). The use of Tshwane as the geographical scope for this study provided the possibility of finding consumers/respondents for the study with disposable income to spend on status products and clothing brands. Statistics indicated that households in Gauteng spent 3.5% on footwear and clothing (Statistics South Africa, 2011b). The residents of Tshwane are responsible for 9.4% of the national economy's GDP. It can be further assumed that a portion of these residents' income is spent on clothing. There is also an abundance of shopping centres in Tshwane that facilitate clothing purchases. Furthermore, it can be assumed that the malls found in the city of Tshwane such as Brooklyn Mall and Menlyn Park host a number of stores that sell branded clothing (Menlyn Park, 2017; Brooklyn Mall, 2014). Potential participants for this study had to be living in the city of Tshwane, where they have access to a range of malls and retail centres. This requirement was part of the selection criteria and limited the respondents to a geographical location, to avoid minority respondents who do not adhere to the specified criteria.

Participants were also required to be over the age of 18, irrespective of gender and population group.

4.1.1.2 Sampling

A non-probability sampling procedure, *convenient sampling*, was followed which indicates that the sampling is not random and subjective – everyone did not have the same chance of being included in the study (Babbie, 2010:192; Berndt & Petzer, 2011:173). Through quota sampling, specific demographic groups were targeted to ensure that the results are more accurate (Creswell, 2014:158; Berndt & Petzer, 2011:174). Convenience sampling was used as it was faster and easier within the financial limitations of the study. This type of sampling is also more economical and quicker (Creswell, 2014:158; Berndt & Petzer, 2011:174). To overcome bias, a larger sample size was recruited. The questionnaires were distributed by trained fieldworkers in suburbs across the city as per a pre-determined sampling plan (quota) to include respondents from different population groups across the city to ensure an equal representation of population groups. Moreover, a drop-off-collect-later procedure was used to recruit willing respondents. The quota sampling technique entails a combination of judgement and convenience sampling by which the researcher, or trained assistants, gathered data from the sample group, ensuring that the sample group represents certain characteristics of the population under investigation (Babbie, 2010:194; Berndt & Petzer, 2013:174).

4.2 MEASURING INSTRUMENT

This study formed part of a larger study about consumers' decision behaviour. Only the status consumption section of the larger study's questionnaire is relevant. A structured self-administered questionnaire (included in **Addendum C**) was developed from reliable scales and distributed to respondents. The status consumption part of the questionnaire consisted of two sections: the status consumption section and the demographical information section.

The first section investigated the respondents' propensity toward status consumption, and susceptibility to interpersonal influences and impersonal sources of communication. Constructs were measured with a series of structured questions (29 items) on a 7-point Likert-type Agreement scale, ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree (see **Table 4.1**). The items were adapted from previous studies and modified to fit the purpose of this research and the South African context. Status consumption was measured using Eastman, Goldsmith and Flynn's (1999) status consumption scale (5 items). Bearden, Netemeyer and Teel's (1989) reference group influence scale was adjusted and used to measure normative (8 items) and informative influences (4 items). Wang, Yu and Wei's (2012) peer communication scale was adjusted and used to measure peer communications pertaining to informative influences (4 items). The Jin and Lutz (2013) attitude towards advertising (social role) scale was modified and utilised to measure impersonal communication sources pertaining to advertising and social media (8 items).

The demographical information section comprised direct response questions to determine the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The questions in this section were carefully prepared to attend to and identify the pertinent demographic variable (population group) for this study, to guarantee that the demographic profiles of the respondents were sufficiently described. Other demographic items obtained through the questionnaire were gender, age, level of education, geographical location and household income. The questionnaire was pretested before being distributed to the respondents so as to eliminate errors (Creswell, 2014:170; Berndt & Petzer, 2011:186-188; Babbie, 2010:267). A pilot study was done on a sample of participants to verify the validity and ease of use of the questionnaire. This pretesting enabled the researcher to ensure the questions were clear and comprehensible and helped to maintain measurement and content validity all through the research study (Creswell, 2014:161; Berndt & Petzer, 2011:146-147; Brace, 2008:174-175). Once the pilot study was done successfully, data collection of an appropriate size sample was undertaken.

4.3 CONCEPTUALISATION AND OPERATIONALISATION

Table 4.1 summarises the main constructs that were measured with the instrument. The hypotheses formulated are presented with dimensions, indicators and items pertaining to each construct. The adapted measuring instruments used to measure the concepts are indicated in the table with the appropriate references. It must be noted that the underlined and crossed-out wording in the operationalisation table below shows how the original scales were adapted to this study.

TABLE 4.1: CONCEPTUALISATION AND OPERATIONALISATION: INTERPERSONAL AND IMPERSONAL INFLUENCES ON STATUS CONSUMPTION: SCALES (Items = 29)

Hypotheses	Construct	Dimensions	Indicators	Original items & scales	Adapted items
				Eastman, Goldsmith & Flynn's (1999), Status consumption scale, 7-point agree-disagree Likert-type scale (1= Strongly disagree); (7 = Strongly agree). (*Altered from 5-point Likert-type scale).	
	Status consumption	Social position	Enhance social position, Purchasing products with prominence/status, Social acceptance.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I would pay more for a <u>product</u> if it had status. 2. I would buy a <u>product</u> just because it had status. 3. I am interested in new <u>products</u> with status. 4. The status of a <u>product</u> is irrelevant to me. (R) 5. A <u>product</u> is more valuable to me if it has some snob appeal. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I would pay more for a clothing brand if it had status. (V14) 2. I would buy a clothing brand just because it had status. (V23) 3. I am interested in new clothing brands with status. (V17) 4. The status of a clothing brand is irrelevant to me. (R) (V11) 5. A clothing brand is more valuable to me if it has some snob appeal. (V3)
				Bearden, Netemeyer & Teel's (1989), Reference group influence scale, 7-point agree-disagree Likert-type scale (1= Strongly disagree); (7 = Strongly agree). (*Altered from 5-point Likert-type scale)	
H1: There will be significant differences in normative receptiveness across different population groups' status consumption of clothing brands.	Normative receptiveness	Value expressiveness	Identification, Enhance self-image, Reference groups' values & attitudes.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I like to know <u>what brands and products</u> make good impressions on others. 2. I achieve a sense of belonging by purchasing the same <u>products and brands</u> that others purchase. 3. I often identify with other people by purchasing the same <u>products and brands</u> they purchase. 4. If I want to be like someone, I often try to buy the same <u>brands</u> they buy. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I like to know which clothing brands will impress others. (V7) 2. I achieve a sense of belonging by purchasing the same clothing brands that others purchase. (V27) 3. I often identify with other people by purchasing the same clothing brands them. (V9) 4. If I want to be like someone, I often try to buy the same clothing brands they buy. (V10)
		Utilitarian influences	Conforming to expectations, Approval, Reinforcement: acceptance of behaviours and attitudes, Avoiding punishment.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is important that others like the <u>products and brands</u> I buy. 2. I rarely purchase the latest fashion styles until I am sure my friends approve of them. 3. When buying <u>products</u>, I generally purchase those <u>brands</u> that I think others will approve of. 4. If other people can see me <u>using a product</u> I often purchase the brand they expect me to buy. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is important that others like the clothing brands I buy. (V4) 2. I rarely purchase the latest fashion styles unless I am sure my friends/colleagues approve of them. (V19) 3. I generally purchase clothing brands that I think others will approve of. (V13) 4. If other people can see which clothing brands I use, I tend to purchase the brands they would expect me to buy. (V12)
H2: There will be significant differences in informative influences (family	Informative influences Seek information from professional and personal	Family or others	Interaction, Observation, Dependence, Communication (Family/ others).	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To make sure I buy the right <u>product or brand</u>, I often observe what others are buying or using. 2. If I have little experience with a <u>product</u>, I often ask my <u>friends</u> about the <u>product</u>. 3. I often consult other people to help choose the 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To ensure I buy the right clothing brand, I often observe what others are buying or using. (V22) 2. If I have little experience with a clothing brand, I often ask my family about the brand. (V25) 3. I often consult others to help choose the best

Hypotheses	Construct	Dimensions	Indicators	Original items & scales	Adapted items
and peers) across different population groups' status consumption of clothing brands.	sources, Socially correct, Reduce risk.			best alternative available from a <u>product class</u> . 4. I frequently gather information from friends or family about a <u>product</u> before I buy.	option available from a range of brands. (V15) 4. I frequently consult family members about a clothing brand before I buy it. (V21)
					Wang, Yu & Wei(2012), Peer communication scale, 7-point agree-disagree Likert-type scale (1= Strongly disagree); (7 = Strongly agree). (*Altered from 5-point Likert-type scale).
		Peer communication	Peer interaction, Conformity, Communication (Friends/ colleagues).	1. I talked with my <u>peers</u> about the <u>product</u> on social media. 2. I talked with my peers about buying the product on the Internet. 3. I asked my <u>peers</u> for advice about the <u>product</u> . 4. I <u>obtained the product</u> information from my <u>peers</u> . 5. My <u>peers</u> encouraged me to buy the <u>product</u> .	1. I chat about clothing brands with my friends/colleagues on social media. (V1) 2. I ask my friends/colleagues for advice about which clothing brands to buy. (V6) 3. I get information about clothing brands that have status from my friends/colleagues. (V28) 4. My friends/colleagues encouraged me to buy clothing brands that would impress others. (V24)
				Jin and Lutz (2013), Attitude towards advertising (Social role) scale, 7-point agree-disagree Likert-type scale (1= Strongly disagree); (7 = Strongly agree). (*Altered from 5-point Likert-type scale).	
H3: There will be significant differences in impersonal sources of communication (advertising and social media) across different population groups' status consumption of clothing brands.	Impersonal sources	Advertising	One-way communication, Marketer-controlled: Magazines & TV, Messages, Objective presentations .	1. <u>Advertising</u> tells me what to buy to impress others. 2. <u>Advertising</u> tells me what people with lifestyles similar to mine are using. 3. <u>Advertising</u> helps me know which <u>products</u> will or will not reflect the sort of person I am. 4. <u>Advertising</u> helps me keep up with current <u>social</u> trends.	1. Advertisements give me an idea of which clothing brands to buy to impress others. (V5) 2. Advertisements give me an idea which clothing brands people with lifestyles similar to mine are using. (V2) 3. Advertisements are helpful to know which clothing brands will, or will not reflect the sort of person I am. (V8) 4. <u>Advertisements</u> are useful to keep up with current fashion trends. (V29)
		Social Media	Users on an internet based platform, Access to information, Opinion, Consumer socialisation, Marketplace.	1. <u>Advertising</u> tells me what to buy to impress others. 2. <u>Advertising</u> tells me what people with lifestyles similar to mine are using. 3. <u>Advertising</u> helps me know which <u>products</u> will or will not reflect the sort of person I am. 4. <u>Advertising</u> helps me keep up with current <u>social</u> trends.	1. Social media (e.g. Facebook/ Twitter/Instagram) indicates to me what clothing brands to buy to impress others. (V16) 2. Social media (e.g. Facebook/ Twitter/Instagram) tells me what clothing brands people with lifestyles similar to mine are using. (V26) 3. Social media (e.g. Facebook/ Twitter/Instagram) indicates to me which clothing brands will or will not reflect the sort of person I am. (V18) 4. Social media (e.g. Facebook/ Twitter/Instagram) helps me keep up with current fashion trends. (V20)

4.4 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

Primary data were collected through a structured self-administered questionnaire from respondents who were willing and complied with the criteria set for the sample. It was indicated that approximately fifteen minutes would be required to complete the questionnaire. Trained fieldworkers (who were all fourth year graduate students) assisted in data collection. The self-administered questionnaires were distributed to men and women, aged 19 and over, living in the suburbs of Tshwane areas to complete. The questionnaires were delivered by hand by trained fieldworkers to ensure improved response rates because personal interaction occurred – allowing respondents to divulge any uncertainties they may have had (Brace, 2008:22-23). However, there were drawbacks linked to delivering questionnaires by hand. These included the additional cost of printing and distribution and additional time allocated to physical distribution (Meyer, 2013:43). The questionnaires were subsequently collected one to two weeks after they have been delivered. Every fieldworker had to recruit willing respondents from predetermined suburbs to ensure data collection across Tshwane in suburbs that differed in terms of socio-economic status. A total of one thousand and fourteen (N=1014) questionnaires were completed between April and May 2016.

Each questionnaire had an attached cover letter which informed the respondents of the purpose of the research study and guaranteed confidentiality (Creswell, 2014:96-99). Participation was voluntary and respondents could withdraw at any time. Furthermore, the mobile phone number of the researcher was included in the cover letter if respondents required any assistance or had any queries pertaining to the research study.

4.5 DATA ANALYSIS

The questionnaires were coded under supervision by the fieldworkers. Data capturing and checking was done by *Datanet*, a resource company. Statistical software SPSS version 24 was used to perform the data analysis. To enhance the quality of the raw data, the data were cleaned beforehand by omitting questionnaires with missing or incorrect values. Eliminating errors and accurate data analysis is a means to ensure construct validity (Creswell, 2014:242), measurement validity, face validity, content validity (Creswell, 2014:159-160) as well as internal and external validity (Creswell, 2014:176; Berndt & Petzer, 2011:109-111). Moreover, this accuracy assists in attaining precise retest-ability and consistency of a test – i.e. reliability (Creswell, 2014:247; Hancké, 2009:90). Validity and reliability will be further discussed in the following section.

Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations were calculated in the initial data analyses. Demographic data characteristics of respondents were portrayed with descriptive statistics (i.e. frequencies and percentages). A qualified statistician ensured accuracy of the data analysis.

The various variables (normative receptiveness, interpersonal and impersonal constructs) under study and their interrelatedness with status consumption of clothing brands were analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistical data analysis. The hypotheses of this study guided the discussion and interpretation of the results. To ensure internal consistency of the constructs, Cronbach's alpha (α) coefficient for all constructs was calculated. The Cronbach's alpha values indicated that the reliability for most constructs was high, ranging between $\alpha_{\text{Normative receptiveness}} = 0.93$ - $\alpha_{\text{Informative influences}} = 0.80$. The means of the constructs were $M_{\text{Normative receptiveness}} = 2.72$, $M_{\text{Impersonal influences}} = 3.29$, $M_{\text{Informative influences}} = 3.04$ and $M_{\text{Status consumption}} = 2.76$. The standard deviation ranged between 1.34 and 1.53 ($SD_{\text{Normative receptiveness}} = 1.34$; $SD_{\text{Impersonal influences}} = 1.53$, $SD_{\text{Informative influences}} = 1.49$, $SD_{\text{Status consumption}} = 1.45$) indicating little variability in the responses. Tables and charts were used to summarise and illustrate the results.

To determine differences in status consumption across different population groups, one-way univariate analysis of variance was performed. One-way univariate ANCOVA, also called the general linear model (GLM), is equivalent to a linear model where the dependent variable is subjected to the independent variables or the interaction of two independent factors (Mazzocchi, 2008:160). GLM is an ANCOVA procedure in which calculations are done utilising the least square regression approach to portray the statistical relationship between one or more predictions in a continuous response variable. In this study the predictors are called factors. One-way univariate ANCOVAs have a single dependent variable (i.e. status consumption) but more than one factor and permits the influence of each individual factor (i.e. normative receptiveness, interpersonal influences, impersonal influences) as well as the interaction between different factors (e.g. population group*income; normative receptiveness*population group) on the dependent variable (Mazzocchi, 2008:161). The F -statistics of the regression output also correspond to the one-way ANCOVA hypothesis that all the means are equal or that there will be no difference in the means of the dependent variables across the various groups formed by the categories of independent variables (Mazzocchi, 2008:161). Finally a classification tree was done to identify groups with similar demographics or characteristics for future segmentations (IBM Corporation, 2012).

4.6 QUALITY OF DATA: VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY ISSUES

Validity and reliability are indicators of data quality (Hancké, 2009:92). Information is of quality and accurate if it is both reliable and valid (Berndt & Petzer, 2011:5). Therefore, to eliminate error, quality was incorporated into this study in all its phases where validity and reliability could be affected.

Research is usually undertaken to determine the impact an independent variable has on the relevant dependent variable (Berndt & Petzer, 2011:108). The researcher must thus determine that the results of the experiment are valid. Validity in essence refers to how well the research instrument measures what it claims to measure (Hofstee, 2013:116). The validity of this study was guaranteed by using valid and tested scales and methods throughout the research.

In this study, concepts of interpersonal and impersonal influences and status consumption were clearly defined in accordance with the literature. *Construct validity* (conceptualisation and operationalisation) was ensured by using definitions from literature to confirm that the instrument effectively measured the relevant theoretical constructs. *Construct validity* was accomplished by using measurement instruments and scales that have been used successfully in prior research studies (Creswell, 2014:242). Furthermore, validity of the concepts was guaranteed and possible wording problems in the questionnaire were eliminated through the pretesting process (Creswell, 2014:160). *Measurement validity* indicates the relationship between the measuring instrument and the theoretical concept (Creswell, 2014:159-160). *Face validity* refers to what the measurement instrument will measure (Babbie, 2010:153). The questionnaire used in this study was compiled into two differing sections: Section B – which investigated the respondents' reaction towards interpersonal and impersonal influences and status consumption regarding clothing brands, and Section F – which supplied demographic information of the respondents. *Content validity* takes into consideration how the gauges of the measurement instrument cover all the factors of the construct being measured (Creswell, 2014:159-160; Babbie, 2010:155). To certify the content validity and internal consistency of the questionnaire for this study, Cronbach's alpha values were calculated. It can be noted that the items in Section B and Section F were related directly to the hypotheses of this study. *Internal validity* threats were controlled in this research study by ensuring treatments, experimental procedures, or experiences of the respondents that undermined the ability to obtain correct inferences from the data regarding the population were eliminated (Creswell, 2014:176; Berndt & Petzer, 2011:109-110). *External validity* is needed to generalise the research outcomes to the applicable target population (Berndt & Petzer, 2011:109). The sample selected for the study appropriately represented the target population with the intention of making conjectures about the population in question. It can be concluded that an appropriate and accurate sample was selected as strict guidelines were given to the trained assistants to follow regarding the identification of the

target population. Threats to external validity occur when researchers obtain erroneous inferences from the sample; when the researcher generalizes outside the population groups in the research to other social or racial groups not being researched, to past or future situations, or to settings not considered (Creswell, 2014:176; Berndt & Petzer, 2011:111).

Reliability describes the retest-ability and consistency of a test (Creswell, 2014:247; Babbie, 2010:150). This means, significant results attained from research testing must be essentially repeatable with the same outcomes (Babbie, 2010:150; Hancké, 2009:90). Reliability can be affected by the sample size, the response rate, the questionnaire design and the method of data analysis (Berndt & Petzer, 2011:67). To ensure these errors did not occur, all the concepts pertaining to this study were conceptualised and defined accurately. Before the finalisation of the questionnaire, a pre-test was performed ensuring that the wording, constructs and intentions of the measurement instrument were clear; and that the information upon it was reliable. For Section B of the questionnaire, closed questions to be answered with a Likert- type scale were used, thus, allowing for more than one indicator per variable. Section F employed direct quantification questions to ensure that the respondents could complete their personal information easily and adequately. Lastly, adequate instructions were given to the respondents and interviewers to avoid any errors that might have occurred in completing the questionnaire. A covering letter and instructions was presented together with the questionnaire.

4.7 ETHICAL ISSUES

According to Berndt and Petzer (2011:286-287), ethics are commonly defined as standards for conduct that differentiate between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. It is imperative to maintain a high standard of ethical behaviour when conducting research and gathering information (Cravens & Piercy, 2013:155-156; Berndt & Petzer, 2011:286-287). Before beginning with respondent recruitment and data collection for this study, the confirmation and approval of the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences at the University of Pretoria was sought and given (included in **Addendum B**).

The subsequent section outlines the strategies that were taken by the researcher to ensure ethical conduct during the research process. On the cover page, the following was made available to the respondents:

- The respondents were invited to participate in the research – to complete a questionnaire that would take approximately 15 minutes. It was made clear that their involvement in the research was voluntary and anonymous; and if the respondents chose to withdraw from the research, they could do so without any consequences.

- The questionnaires were completed anonymously and respondents were assured that no professional or personal repercussions would occur; and the information given could not be traced back to them.
- The identification of the research coordinators and their contact details was also made available on the cover page to allow for enquiry if necessary.
- Respondents were informed about the purpose of the research endeavour: to gain a better understanding of the driving forces of status consumption across the various ethnicities in South Africa.
- The respondents were thanked for their participation in the study. They were also afforded the opportunity to enter into a competition where they could have won a gift voucher of R450. This was anonymous and voluntary.

In addition, the researcher was given training on the importance of obtaining truthful answers and assured that fraud and cheating during the data collection process would not be condoned. It must also be noted that all literature used in the dissertation was appropriately referenced and any form of plagiarism was guarded against from all phases of this research study (Hofstee, 2013:211-212).

4.8 CONCLUSION

Various elements that pertain to the research design and execution thereof have been described in this chapter. These elements include the research design, sample and sampling procedures, the development of the questionnaire and how the data was collected and analysed for this study. An operationalisation table was drawn up to translate the theoretical concepts into measurable variables. The quality of the data with regards to its validity and reliability was discussed. To substantiate whether the data was collected in an ethical manner, important ethical issues were discussed.

This chapter has formed the basis of the results which will be discussed in the following chapter.



CHAPTER 5

Results and discussion

This chapter presents the results of the research in terms of the main objectives and hypotheses that were formulated for the research.

5.1 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE

One thousand and fourteen (N = 1014) valid questionnaires were completed by respondents residing in the Tshwane metropolitan area. The demographic section of the questionnaire contained specific demographic requirements deemed necessary for the purpose of this study. The subsequent section depicts an overview of the sample's demographic characteristics, which will provide a suitable background for the results given in the chapter. **Table 5.1** summarises the sample characteristics.

TABLE 5.1: SAMPLE DEMOGRAPHICS

Sample variable in questionnaire	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Categories of Analysis	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Classification according to the Employment Equity Act (N=1014)			Population Groups (N=990)		
White	522	51.47	White	522	52.72
Black	356	35.10	Black	356	35.96
Indian	52	5.12	Indian	52	5.25
Coloured	60	5.91	Coloured	60	6.06
Asian	11	1.08	-	-	-
Other	13	1.28	-	-	-
Age at last birthday (N = 1013)			Age Groups (N=1013)		
Age was given in years and sorted into groups for analysis			< 30	303	29.91
			30-39	238	23.49
			40-49	190	18.76
			50-59	180	17.77
			60 and over	102	10.07
Total monthly household income (N=1007)			Total monthly household income (N=1007)		
Less than R5 000	160	15.89	< R5 000	160	15.89
R5 000 - R9 999	133	13.20	R5 000 - R9 999	133	13.20
R10 000 - R14 999	129	12.81	R10 000 - R14 999	129	12.81
R15 000 - R24 999	185	18.37	R15 000 - R24 999	185	18.37
R25 000 or more	400	39.72	R25 000 or more	400	39.72
Level of education (N=1011)			Level of education groups (N=1011)		
Lower than Grade 10	24	2.37	-	-	-
Grade 10 or 11	51	5.04	Lower than Grade 12	75	7.41
Grade 12	272	26.90	Grade 12	272	26.90
Degree or Diploma	415	41.05	Degree or Diploma	415	41.05
Postgraduate	249	24.63	Postgraduate	249	24.63
Gender (N=1013)			Gender (N=1013)		
Male	441	43.53	Male	441	43.53
Female	572	56.47	Female	572	56.47

5.1.1 Population groups

The general aim of this study was to empirically investigate potential important differences in the relationship between interpersonal and impersonal influences on different population groups' clothing brand status consumption across the South African market. Five population categories were distinguished in the questionnaire. More than half of the sample (51.47%) was White respondents and just over a third of the sample was Black respondents (35.10%). Coloured and Indians were not well presented. Thus, this may not be seen as an accurate representation of the real South African market as it has been established that the country's approximately 54 million people are 80.5% Black, 8.8% are Coloured, 8.3% are White and 2.5% are either Asian or Indian (Statistics South Africa, 2015). The non-probability sampling procedures contributed to under presentation of Black, Indian and Coloured respondents relative to White respondents. Although a quota sampling technique was used to enhance the inclusion of the different population groups, it was not successful due to time and financial constraints imposed on the study. The results obtained from this research study can therefore not be generalised to the larger South African population (Berndt & Petzer, 2011:173-174). For the analysis of the data only viable sample sizes of the population groups were attended to i.e. White (52.72%); Black (35.96%); Coloured (6.09%); Indian (5.25%). **Figure 5.1** illustrates the sample characteristics in terms of demographics for population groups:

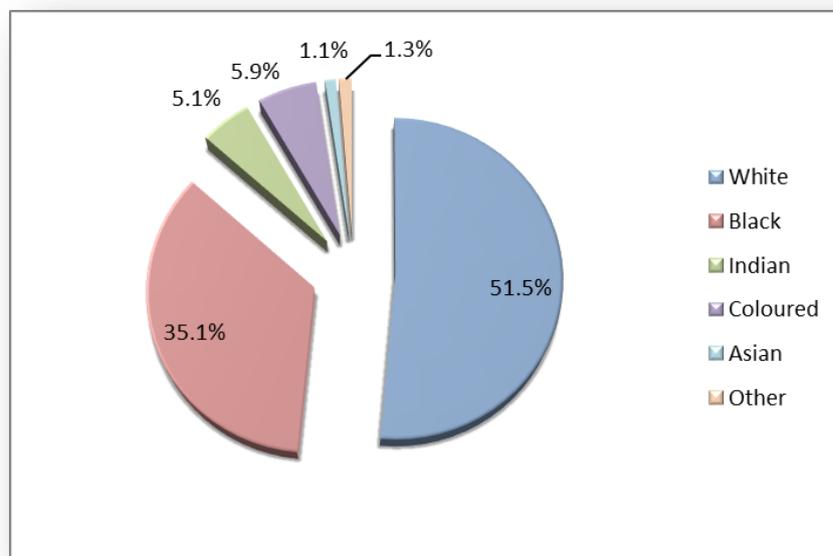


FIGURE 5.1: REPRESENTATION OF THE POPULATION GROUPS (N=1014)

5.1.2 Age

Age was used as a precondition for participation in the study to recruit individuals that could make independent decisions regarding status consumption of clothing brands. The respondents of this

study were asked to specify their exact age in an open question in the demographic section of the questionnaire. The age of respondents varied from 19 years of age to over 60. For analysis purposes, these ages were further divided into five groups: <30, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, and 60 and over. Of the usable 1014 questionnaires, there was one missing age value. Descriptive statistics showed that 29.91% of the respondents were less than 30 years old possibly because the trained assistants who collected the data were university students belonging to almost the same age group. Additionally, the nature of the recruitment process whereby data was collected on a basis of convenience sampling allowed the trained assistants to distribute it among their friends and peers as well. The second largest age group was 30-39 years (23.49%) followed by 18.76% of the respondents who were between the ages of 40-49 years and the remaining respondents (17.77%) were 50-59 years old. The smallest portion of the sample (10.07%) belonged to the age group 60 years and over. In terms of data analysis, the different age categories were well represented considering the sample size. **Figure 5.2** depicts the different age groups.

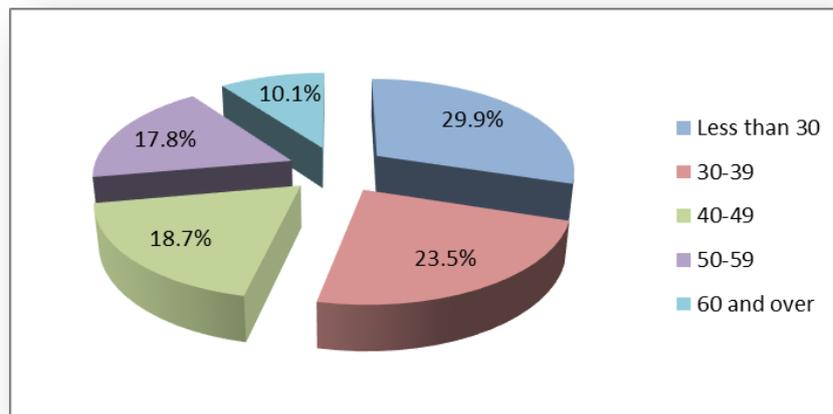


FIGURE 5.2: AGE CATEGORIES OF RESPONDENTS (N=1013)

5.1.3 Monthly household income

Income was an important demographic characteristic as literature suggests that a higher income is associated with a higher social standing in one's community (Vyas & Kumaranayake, 2006). Also a growing disposable income in the South African middle class is producing consumer demand for luxury (status) products (PWC, 2012). There were seven missing values in the 1014 usable questionnaires. Nearly 60% of the respondents were in the two higher income brackets. Nearly 40% of the sample had a monthly household income of R25 000 or more, placing them in the upper middle to upper income class, whereas almost 20% of the respondents had a monthly household income of R15 000-R24 999, which is characteristic of middle incomes in South Africa. The lower income groups represented near 35% of the sample, with a collective 262 respondents (almost 30% of the sample) being low income consumers who earned less than R10 000 per month. **Figure 5.3** presents the different income groups used for analysis.

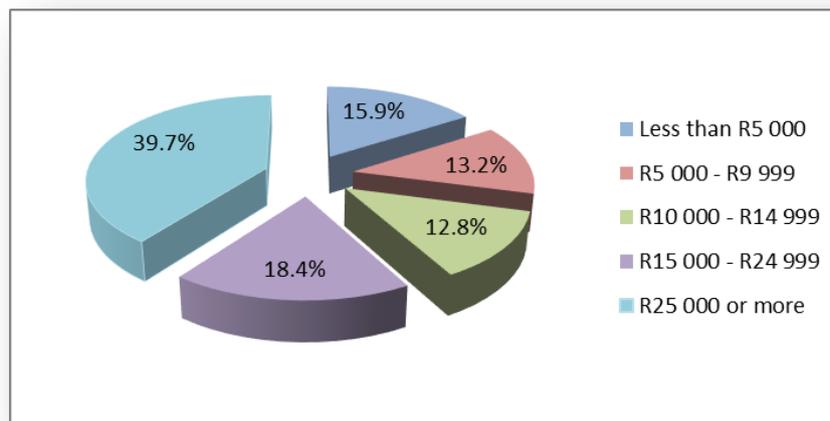


FIGURE 5.3: RESPONDENTS' MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME (N=1007)

5.1.4 Level of education

Level of education was included in the demographic portion of the questionnaire as higher levels of education positively correlate with higher income levels and higher income levels could lead to an increased consumption of status products (Taylor & Yu, 2009:5-7). Accordingly, higher levels of education could possibly lead to an increased propensity towards status consumption. Of the respondents (N = 1014; Missing: n = 3), 41.05% had a degree or diploma and nearly a quarter (24.63%) had a postgraduate degree. The remaining 26.90% of the respondents completed Grade 12 certificates and 51 (5.04%) of the respondents completed Grade 10 or 11 and a mere 24 (2.37%) had a level of education lower than Grade 10. For analysis purposes the level of education category was re-divided into four groups namely, Lower than Grade 12 (< Grade 12) (7.41%), Grade 12 (26.90%); degree/ diploma (41.05%), and postgraduate qualification (24.63%). The original levels of education percentages as well as new percentages are presented in **Table 5.1**.

5.1.6 Gender

The majority of the respondents were female (56.47%) and the remaining 43.53% were male as tabulated in **Table 5.1**.

5.2 INITIAL DATA ANALYSIS

Status consumption refers to a motivational process whereby people try improve their social standing by consuming products that signify status for them and their significant others (Eastman & Eastman, 2011; Shukla, 2010; O'Cass & McEwen, 2004). Efforts have been made to understand status consumption across various cultures (Shukla, 2010; Singh *et al.*, 2003) and the motives that

drive it (Goldsmith & Clark, 2012; Kamineni, 2005), but limited research exists in terms of the South African context.

5.2.1 Results and interpretations of the exploratory factor analysis (EFA)

The scale established by Eastman, Goldsmith and Flynn (1999) was used to investigate status consumption but, to establish the underlying relationship of the independent factors and their underlying components as proposed by the authors, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) had to be performed first to verify the scale in the context of the study. In general, EFA is used in quantitative analysis to summarise large datasets organised into patterns and relationships that are comprehensible and can be interpreted easily, creating descriptive categories of common variables (Yong & Pearce, 2013; Babbie, 2010:491). Thus, EFA, which is a complex statistical technique, serves to separate ideas and constructs (Costello & Osborne, 2005) and is used to unearth patterns through testing predictions and investigating datasets (Yong & Pearce, 2013). EFA was used to uncover the number of factors present and to see which variables belong together (inter-correlations), by grouping variables into meaningful categories (Yong & Pearce, 2013; Mazzocchi, 2008:220).

SPSS software, Version 21 was utilised to carry out the EFA, using Principal Axis Factoring (PFA) with Kaiser Normalization as the extraction method, and Varimax rotation. *Varimax* is an orthogonal rotation method that creates independent factors that reduce the number of variables and helps to simplify the interpretation of the factors (Mazzocchi, 2008:229). Kaiser's criterion was used to adopt factors, by retaining only factors with an Eigenvalue of above one (> 1) (Mazzocchi, 2008:232; Costello & Osborne, 2005). The averaged extracted communalities were calculated to establish the Eigenvalue cut-off (Yong & Pearce, 2013). Also, items with a loading < 0.4 or with a double loading were omitted from further analysis.

Three meaningful factors as presented in **Table 5.2** were retained from the EFA as they best explained the correlation amongst the measured variables, and the scree plot (see **Addendum D**) also visually interprets the three factors. Initially **Interpersonal influences** had two constructs: *normative receptiveness* and *informative influences*. Both these constructs were further separated into two dimensions each. *Normative receptiveness* consisted of *value expressiveness* and *utilitarian influences* and *informative influences* consisted of *family or others* and *peer communication*. **Impersonal influences** also consisted of two dimensions namely *advertising* and *social media influences*. On the basis of Kaiser's criteria, the three factors had Eigenvalues of above one, i.e., normative receptiveness (11.99), impersonal influences (1.71) and informative influences (1.16). The three retained factors explained 56.69% of the cumulative variation in consumers' status consumption of clothing brands (see **Table 5.2**). The scree plot also shows three distinct factors as there are three data points above the breakpoint in the data where the

curve flattens (Costello & Osborne, 2005). **Table 5.2** depicts the rotated factor matrix with the respective item loadings. The rotated factor loadings show that the three determined factors are quite attractive as they have at least four variables that are above 0.40 each.

TABLE 5.2: RESULTS OF THE EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS (N = 1014)

V	Item	F1	F2	F3
V13	I generally purchase clothing brands that I think others will approve of	.77		
V7	I like to know which clothing brands will impress others	.74		
V12	If other people can see which clothing brands I use, I tend to purchase the brands they would expect me to buy	.72		
V9	I often identify with other people by purchasing the same clothing brands as them	.69		
V4	It is important that others like the clothing brands I buy	.67		
V10	If I want to be like someone, I often try to buy the same clothing brands that they buy	.66		
V27	I achieve a sense of belonging by purchasing the same clothing brands that others purchase	.64		
V5	Advertisements give me an idea of which clothing brands to buy to impress others	.61		
V24	My friends/colleagues encourage me to buy clothing brands that would impress others	.55		
V22	To ensure I buy the right clothing brand, I often observe what others are buying or using	.52		
V6	I ask my friends/colleagues for advice about which clothing brands to buy	.48		
V19	I rarely purchase the latest fashion styles unless I am sure my friends/colleagues approve of them	.48		
V8	Advertisements are helpful to know which clothing brands will, or will not reflect the kind of person I am	.46		
V20	Social media (e.g. Facebook/ Twitter/Instagram) helps me keep up with fashion trends		.78	
V26	Social media (e.g. Facebook/ Twitter/Instagram) tells me what clothing brands people with lifestyles similar to mine are using		.75	
V18	Social media (e.g. Facebook/ Twitter/Instagram) indicates to me which clothing brands will or will not reflect the kind of person I am		.66	
V16	Social media (e.g. Facebook/ Twitter/Instagram) indicates to me what clothing brands to buy to impress others		.60	
V2	Advertisements give me an idea of which clothing brands people with lifestyles similar to mine are using		.59	
V29	Advertisements are useful to me to keep up with current fashion trends		.59	
V1	I chat about clothing brands with my friends/colleagues on social media		.47	
V21	I frequently consult family members about a clothing brand before I buy it			.68
V25	If I have little experience with a clothing brand, I would ask my family about the brand			.62
V15	I often consult others to help me choose the best option available from a range of brands			.50
V28	I get information about clothing brands that have status from my friends/colleagues			.45
	Eigenvalue	11.99	1.71	1.16
	% Variance explained	26.36	18.40	11.92
Descriptive statistics and reliability for measures				
	Mean	2.72	3.29	3.04
	Standard Deviation	1.34	1.53	1.49
	Cronbach Alpha	0.93	0.89	0.80

Note: Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 6 iterations.

The factors were labelled: F1: Normative Receptiveness; F2: Impersonal Influences; F3: Informative influences, and are discussed subsequently:

Factor 1: Normative Receptiveness (NR)

Normative receptiveness was measured with items from Bearden et al's (1989) reference group influence scale. The items tapped into the respondents' understanding of how reference groups that they belong to or aspire to, and significant others influence their status consumption of clothing brands. These items reflect on how consumers are driven by normative receptiveness which are

consumption decisions based on what the consumer believes will impress others (Weber, 2014:9; Ang, Cheng, Lim & Tambyah 2001).

Normative receptiveness as per the original scale consisted of two dimensions, namely value expressiveness and utilitarian influences. Value expressiveness was measured using four items (V7, V9, V10 and V27) related to a person's self-identification and self-image enhancement as well as their cohesiveness with his or her reference groups' values and attitudes (Bearden *et al.*, 1989). Utilitarian influence also had four items (V4, V12, V13 and V19) measuring an individual's susceptibility to conforming to a reference group's expectations and behaviour to gain approval and avoid punishment (Bearden *et al.*, 1989). However, during EFA these two dimensions collapsed into a single construct that was labelled *normative receptiveness*. This occurred even though a clear distinction in literature exists between the two dimensions of normative receptiveness (Bearden *et al.*, 1989; O'Cass & McEwen, 2004). This collapse could be ascribed to the fact that in a person's mind, these concepts are not so concretely distinguished and both merely represent a single concept, namely others' opinion about the appropriateness of consuming the clothing brand (as this study referred to). All the original items measuring normative receptiveness were retained. Items V6, V22 and V24 that were originally used to measure informative influences, and items V5 and V8 that were originally used to measure impersonal influences also loaded onto factor 1 (NR). The reason for this could be due to the wording of these items which indicated that individuals look to others for encouragement and approval of clothing brand purchases and to avoid sanctions. On closer scrutiny, all these items involved the opinions of others.

Normative receptiveness had an Eigenvalue of 11.99 and explained 26.36% of the variance in respondents' status consumption of clothing brands. The mean $M_{\text{normative receptiveness}} = 2.72$ (Max = 7) indicated a relatively low association in terms of respondents' agreement with the statements measuring normative receptiveness. The high Cronbach's alpha of 0.93, indicates very good internal consistency in responses to these items. The standard deviation ($SD_{\text{normative receptiveness}} = 1.34$) indicates considerable variation in the data (Babbie, 2010:431-432), which was later investigated.

Factor 2: Impersonal Influences (ImI)

This factor measured the influence of advertisements and social media on status consumption. The items that were included tapped into the respondents' reliance on, communication through and affiliation with these forms of media to make decisions on consuming clothing brands. Moreover, this factor aimed to reveal to what extent such communications influence consumers' clothing decisions (Sproles & Burns, 1994:250; 252).

Impersonal influences had two separate dimensions, namely advertising and social media. Items V5, V2, V8 and V29, were used to measure advertising and were indicative of one-way communication that is marketer controlled. Items V16, V18, V20 and V26 were used to measure the influence of social media and indicated socialisation via internet interactions amongst consumers. *Advertising* and *social media* also collapsed into a single factor that was labelled *impersonal influence*. Of the original eight items (V2, V5, V8, V16, V18, V20, V26 and V29) that were included in the questionnaire to measure impersonal influences, six items were retained due to their factor loadings. The remaining two items (V5 and V8) achieved higher loadings for factors associated with normative receptiveness and because of this were re-allocated to this factor. Moreover, V1 originally associated with *informative influence* also loaded onto factor 2 (ImI), possibly due to the wording of the item which dealt with social media.

With an Eigenvalue of 1.71, this factor explained 18.40% of the variance in respondents' status consumption of clothing brands. The mean for this factor ($M_{F_2} = 3.29$; Max = 7), was the highest, suggesting a stronger association with impersonal influences in terms of status consumption of clothing brands. The Cronbach's alpha (0.89) also confirmed a high internal consistency in responses. The standard deviation ($SD_{F_2} = 1.53$) shows that the values fluctuated, suggesting considerable differences in certain demographic segments (Babbie, 2010:431-432). Thus responses in terms of impersonal influences varied considerably among respondents.

Factor 3: Informative Influences (InI)

Informative influences were initially measured using eight items (V1, V6, V15, V21, V22, V24, V25 and V28) that helped reveal respondents' thoughts with regard to seeking socially appropriate information from others before making a consumption decision to minimize the risk of making a poor decision (Goldsmith & Clark, 2012). Seeking appropriate information inevitably influences product evaluations and consumer decision-making processes (Wang *et al.*, 2012; Sproles & Burns, 1994:149).

Again, informative influences as a construct were split into *family and others* and *peer communication* as the literature indicates that consumers act differently towards the advice/information received from family or others than from peers (Wang *et al.*, 2012; Kaiser, 1997:167). Influences related to family and others influences were measured with four items (V15, V21, V22 and V25) extracted from Bearden *et al.*'s (1989) reference group influence scale and four items (V1, V6, V24 and V28) from Wang *et al.*'s (2012) peer communication scale. Again, these two dimensions (family or others and peer communication) collapsed into one factor, which was labelled *Informative influences*. As stated previously, V1 loaded onto factor 2 (ImI) while V6, V22 and V24 loaded onto factor 1 (NR). Only four of the original items (V15, V21, V25 and V28) were retained as descriptors of informative influence.

The Eigenvalue was 1.16, and the factor explained 11.92% of the variance in respondents' status consumption of clothing brands. A mean of 3.04 ($M_{F3} = 3.04$) indicated that respondents' reliance on informative influences such as family, peers and others when making decisions about clothing brands with status was average. The Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha_{F3} = 0.80$) indicated that the internal reliability for the informative influence construct was high. The standard deviation ($SD_{F3} = 1.49$) indicated notable variation in responses that will be investigated further.

Status Consumption (SC)

As mentioned, items measuring the construct *Status Consumption* (the dependent variable) were not included in the EFA as the aim of the EFA was to establish the coherent independent factors and their components. All five items relating to status consumption (V3, V11, V14, V17 and V23) were retained as descriptors of the construct. The items used to measure status consumption were adapted from Eastman *et al.*'s (1999) status consumption scale, which was confirmed following six diverse studies (Eastman *et al.*, 1999). This one-dimensional scale was confirmed to be self-reporting, valid and internally consistent (Weber, 2014), revealing a consumer's intent to consume status products (Weber, 2014:50, Eastman & Liu, 2012, Clark *et al.*, 2007, Eastman *et al.*, 1999). A Cronbach's α value of 0.83 for *Status Consumption* confirmed internal consistency. The mean for status consumption ($M_{SC} = 2.76$) indicated an average inclination to consume with status in mind, and the standard deviation ($SD_{SC}=1.45$) suggests noteworthy differences in responses that deserved further investigation in terms of subsets of the sample (Babbie, 2010:431-432).

The construct labels proposed in the operationalisation of this study fit the extracted factors, and the factors normative receptiveness, impersonal influences and informative influences were retained. Internal consistency for the scales was assessed using Cronbach's alpha values, which were all above the recommended 0.7, thus indicating acceptable internal consistency within the constructs (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). No considerable increases in the Cronbach's alpha values for any of the constructs could be achieved by the removal of any additional items.

As the initial six factors collapsed into only three factors (independent variables) after the EFA, the hypotheses were adapted accordingly, and a new model was specified with the following hypotheses:

- H1: There will be significant differences in **normative receptiveness** across different population groups' **status consumption** of clothing brands.
- H2: There will be significant differences in **informative influences** across different population groups' **status consumption** of clothing brands.
- H3: There will be significant differences in **impersonal influences** across different population groups' **status consumption** of clothing brands.

The revised model is presented in **Figure 5.4** indicating the hypotheses.

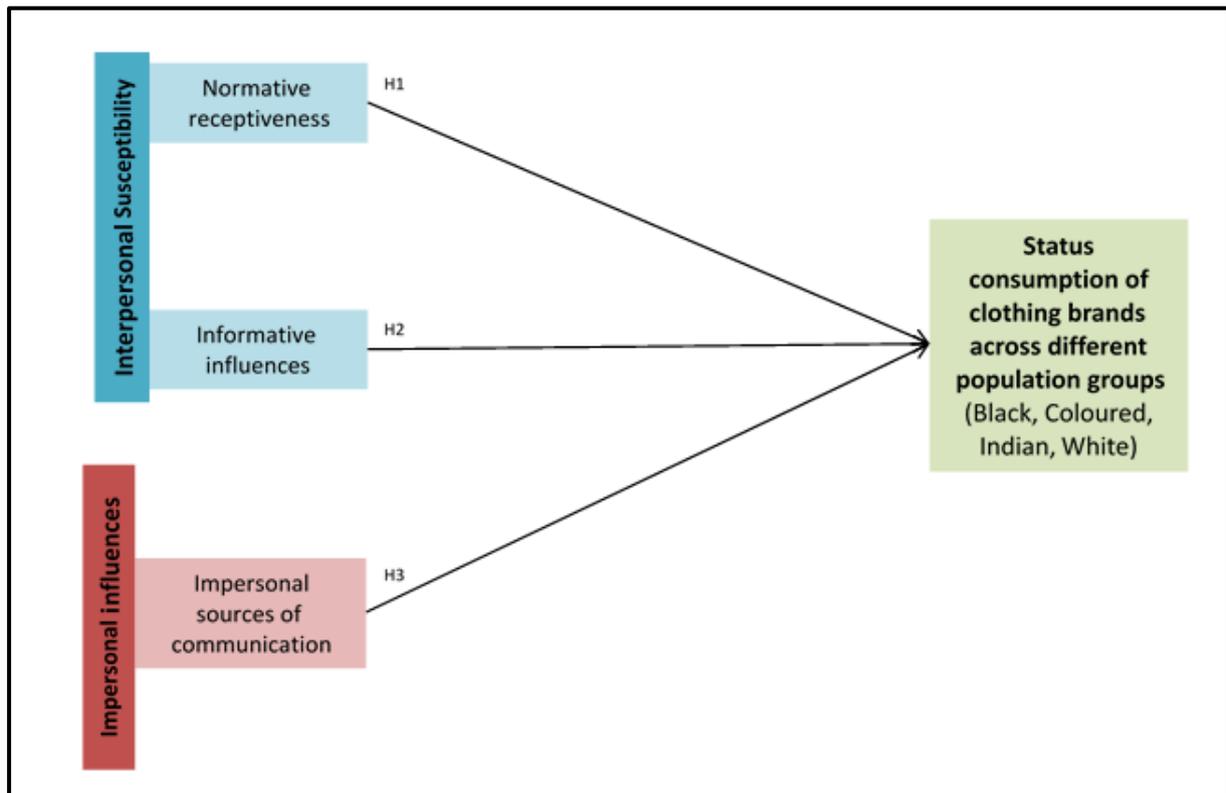


FIGURE 5.4: REVISED CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

5.2.2 Results of the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA)

Statistical software *AMOS* was used to perform the CFA, which is used to test a precise theory or hypothesis regarding the number or formation of dimensions underlying a set of variables. The CFA is also used to confirm the factorial validity of those models obtained from EFA results (Yong & Pearce, 2013). It complies with the measurement models, which allow the researcher to evaluate the acceptability of the latent variables in terms of the evident indicators. CFA is hypothesis-driven and is founded on existing theory (Mazzocchi, 2008:319). In this study, the primary items and variables retained from the EFA were composed as a measurement model and assessed via CFA.

The fit indices achieved from the CFA indicated a relatively good model fit. The model fit was described by using the following fit indices χ^2 (df; p = value); CFI and NFI (ideally >0.9 and as close to 1 as possible) and RMSEA (ideally below 0.05) (Mazzocchi, 2008:330, 332). The Chi-Square (χ^2) value assesses overall model fit and how much inconsistency there is between the fitted covariance matrices and the sample (Babbie, 2010:484; Hooper *et al.*, 2008). The CFA obtained a $\chi^2=1964.081$, $df = 250$, at $p < 0.0001$, showing an acceptable fit and that the minimum was attained. The RMSEA had a value of 0.08 which is higher than the recommended 0.06. Ideally, a suitable threshold includes a value of less than 0.07 with a cut-off at 0.06 (Hooper *et al.*, 2008), which indicates a moderate fit. Values for the CFI and NFI vary between 0 and 1, with 0.90

representing good fit (Hooper, Coughlan & Mullen, 2008). However, the NFI has the disadvantage of being sensitive to sample size (Hooper *et al.*, 2008). The CFI is a modified form of the NFI that performs adequately even if given a small sample size (Hooper *et al.*, 2008). The CFI = 0.90 and NFI = 0.89 in the measurement model indicate a moderate to relatively good fit in line with a minimum threshold of 0.9 (Mazzocchi, 2008:322).

The measurement model was accepted as the goodness-of-fit statistics presented mostly satisfactory fit indices. This could be because this study used existing scales in an emerging context. In previous studies, more homogenous groups were used whereas this research involved a more heterogeneous sample. For future reference, the model fit could be improved by adding other explanatory variables to explain status consumption of clothing brands, or the measurement of the latent constructs could be altered with better wording, or more reverse items could be included (Mazzocchi, 2008:331-332).

5.2.3 Pearson's correlation coefficient

Pearson's correlations were performed to establish the comparative correlation between the dependent variable (status consumption) and each independent variable (i.e. normative receptiveness, informative influences and impersonal influences). The Pearson correlation coefficient (r) is the most common bivariate correlation technique used to assess the correlation between two variables without additional delineation between the independent and dependent variables (Berndt & Petzer, 2013:239; Mazzocchi, 2008:174).

A Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) between 0.50 and 1.00 indicate a strong relationship between variables, while values between 0.30 and 0.50 indicate medium strong relationships, and values lower than 0.30 indicate a weak relationship (Yong & Pearce, 2013). All the correlations between the various constructs were positive and relatively high, significant at $p < 0.001$. **Table 5.3** presents the Pearson's correlation coefficients, means, standard deviations as well as minimum and maximum values. The positive correlations suggest that the independent variables do in fact have a positive effect on status consumption and it can be assumed that these variables are predictive of status consumption in the overall population (Mazzocchi, 2008:174).

The highest correlation ($r = 0.80$, $p < 0.001$) was between *normative receptiveness* and *status consumption* of clothing brands. This indicates that status consumption is strongly influenced by the approval of others and consumers of status laden products see the purchasing thereof as a means to impress others (Weber, 2014:9; Ang *et al.*, 2001) as well as a way to visibly fit into their reference group (Burger *et al.*, 2014; Goldsmith & Clark, 2012; O'Cass & McEwen, 2004). There was also a strong positive relationship between *impersonal influences* and *status consumption* of clothing brands ($r = 0.63$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that status consumption is indeed influenced by

dimensions such as advertising and social media. Furthermore, a positive correlation of 0.57, $p < 0.001$ was calculated between *informative influences* and *status consumption*. To reduce the risk of making the wrong decision in terms of status products, consumers seek out the advice of family, professionals and friends (Goldsmith & Clark, 2012; Sproles & Burns, 1994:149). Even though the correlation of *informative influences* was the weakest correlations of the three, it was nevertheless fairly strong.

TABLE 5.3: PEARSONS' CORRELATION MATRIX

	1	2	3	4	Mean	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Normative receptiveness	1	.723*	.740*	.801*	2.72	1.34	1.00	6.77
Impersonal influences		1	.674*	.627*	3.29	1.53	1.00	7.00
Informative influences			1	.569*	3.04	1.49	1.00	7.00
Status consumption				1	2.76	1.45	1.00	7.00

Note: *All correlations were significant at $p < 0.001$ (2-tailed)

5.3 TESTING OF THE HYPOTHESES

5.3.1 General linear model (GLM) and Analysis of Covariance

General linear models (GLM) were performed to assess differences in status consumption across the different population groups. The GLM is a model of a dependent or response variable measured on a continuous scale with a number of independent variables as predictors. The independent variables may be measured on a continuous scale (called covariates) or on a categorical scale (called factors). The main effects and interactions between the factors can also be included in the analysis (Mazzocchi, 2008:161). The GLM includes analysis of variance tests (ANOVA), Regression Analysis and Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) as special cases. If all the independent variables are categorical, then the model is ANOVA; if all the independent variables are continuous, then the model is called Regression. If the independent variables are a combination of continuous and categorical variables, it may be called Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA), which is also commonly termed a General Linear Model. ANOVA and ANCOVAs are conducted to test the significant differences between group means as well as the variations within and between each group in terms of a continuous dependent variable and independent variables that are either categorical or categorical and continuous (Babbie, 2010:494).

GLM is an ANOVA procedure in which calculations are done utilising the least square regression approach to portray the statistical relationship between one or more predictions in a continuous response variable (Mazzocchi, 2008:378). In this study status consumption is maintained as the dependent variable throughout the univariate analyses and the predictors are the independent variables (normative receptiveness, informative influences and impersonal influences) tested on a

continuous scale, demographic factors (population group, age, level of education, gender, and income) as well as the interaction between the independent and demographic factors. The demographic factors measured on a categorical scale were *population group*, *gender*, and *level of education*. For analysis purposes, age and income were changed into categorical factors by dividing them into categorical groups. Four levels were distinguished for population (i.e. Black, White, Coloured and Indian), age involved five levels (i.e. >30, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, ≥ 60 years), gender comprised two levels (i.e. male and female), level of education consisted of four levels (<Grade 12, Grade 12, Degree/Diploma, Postgraduate) and monthly household income included five levels (i.e. <R5 000, R5 000 - R9 999, R10 000 - R14 999, R15 000 – R24 999, \geq R25 000).

The *F*-statistics of the regression output also corresponded with the one-way ANCOVA hypothesis that all the means are equal, or that there will be no difference in the means of the dependent variable across the various groups formed by the categories of independent variables (Mazzocchi, 2008:161). The test between subjects determines which factors and/or interactions between factors are significant, and if they are significant, it would be related to the dependent variable *status consumption*. Further inferences can be substantiated by gathering insights from the descriptive statistics (Mazzocchi, 2008:100). The graphs presented (**Figure 5.5** to **Figure 5.16**) provide graphical illustration of the tabulated results. An interaction effect can usually be seen as a set of non-parallel lines. The graphs to follow are all more or less parallel, with no crossed or interacting lines – which indicates that there is no statistical significant difference between the independent variables or the interactions thereof (e.g. normative receptiveness*age) and the dependent variable (status consumption) (Laerd Statistics, 2013). The interaction between the independent variable and demographic factor is indicated with an asterisk (*) in the tables and text. The *parameter estimates tables* for each GLM test are included in **Addendum E. Tables 5.4 – 5.15** present the results for the GLM.

5.3.1.1 Normative receptiveness

Hypothesis 1 states that there will be significant differences in **normative receptiveness** across different population groups' **status consumption** of clothing brands.

To test for significant difference in normative receptiveness across population groups, various demographic factors (i.e. age group, gender, level of education, and income) were introduced into the GLM. In the next section, results for the GLM in terms of the tests of between-subjects effects for normative receptiveness and demographic factors as well as the interaction effect of a combination of these factors with normative receptiveness is presented and discussed.

- **Normative receptiveness across population groups and age groups**

Table 5.4 presents tests of between-subjects effects for normative receptiveness and demographic factors: population group and age group as well as the interaction effect of age group*normative receptiveness and population group*normative receptiveness on status consumption.

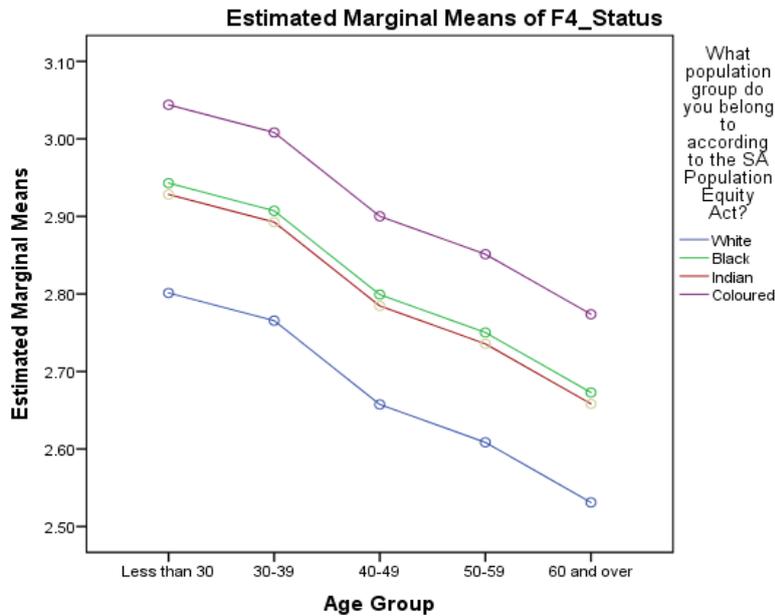
TABLE 5.4: GLM: NORMATIVE RECEPTIVENESS ACROSS POPULATION GROUPS AND AGE GROUPS

	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	1349.384 ^a	15	89.959	120.537	0.000
Intercept	13.113	1	13.113	17.571	0.000
Normative receptiveness	575.811	1	575.811	771.538	0.000*
Age Group	1.656	4	0.414	0.555	0.695
Age Group*Normative receptiveness	0.540	4	0.135	0.181	0.948
Population group	6.522	3	2.174	2.913	0.034***
Population group*Normative receptiveness	4.606	3	1.535	2.057	0.104

Notes: Dependent variable: Status consumption: * Significant at $p < 0.000$; ** Significant at $p < 0.01$; *** Significant at $p < 0.05$

The effect of *normative receptiveness* on status consumption of clothing brands was highly significant ($F = 777.53/df = 1, p = 0.000$); the effect of *population group* ($F = 2.17/df = 3, p = 0.034$) was also statistically significant in terms of the status consumption of clothing brands ($p < 0.05$). This indicates that across population groups there are differences in the influence of normative receptiveness, which explains the high SD indicated in the descriptive analysis of the means (**Table 5.2**). The influence of *age* on status consumption ($F = 0.555/df = 4, p = 0.695$) was not significant. Similarly, the interaction effects between: *age group*normative receptiveness* ($p = 0.948$); *population group*normative receptiveness* ($p = 0.104$) did not differ significantly in terms of status consumption.

Figure 5.5 depicts the status consumption relative to age group in terms of normative receptiveness across the different population groups. The marginal mean of each population group per age group is given on the y-axis. It is evident through the parallel spacing of each linear graph that there is no interaction between factors and no statistically significant difference in status consumption of different age groups across the different population groups. It appears that the influence of normative receptiveness on status consumption decreases with age across all four of the population groups. With Whites the lowest mean is for the ≥ 60 year old age group and the highest mean is for the Coloured age group of less than 30 years.



Covariates appearing in the model are evaluated at the following values: F1_Normative = 2.7321

FIGURE 5.5: NORMATIVE RECEPTIVENESS ACROSS POPULATION GROUPS AND AGE GROUPS

- Normative receptiveness across population groups and gender**

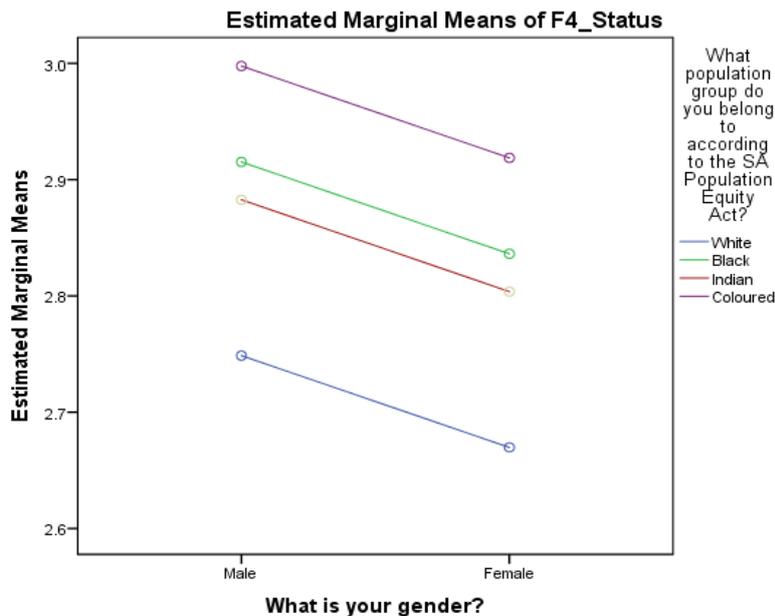
Table 5.5 presents tests of between-subjects effects for normative receptiveness and demographic factors: population group and gender, as well as the interaction effect of *gender*normative receptiveness* and *population group*normative receptiveness* on status consumption.

TABLE 5.5: GLM: NORMATIVE RECEPTIVENESS ACROSS POPULATION GROUPS AND GENDER

	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	1339.743 ^a	9	148.860	198.873	0.000
Intercept	18.296	1	18.296	24.443	0.000
Normative receptiveness	588.106	1	588.106	785.690	0.000*
Gender	1.523	1	1.523	2.035	0.154
Gender*Normative receptiveness	0.620	1	0.620	0.828	0.363
Population group	9.843	3	3.281	4.383	0.004**
Population group*Normative receptiveness	6.120	3	2.040	2.726	0.043***

Notes: Dependent variable: Status consumption; * Significant at $p < 0.000$, ** Significant at $p < 0.01$, *** Significant at $p < 0.05$

Again, normative receptiveness had a highly significant effect on status consumption ($F = 785.69/df = 1, p < 0.000$). The interaction effect between *gender*normative receptiveness* ($p = 0.363$) was not significant. However, there was a significant difference across population groups ($F = 4.38/df = 3, p = 0.004$) at the $p < 0.01$ level and *population group*normative receptiveness* ($F = 2.72/df = 3, p = 0.043$) at the 5% level. This indicates that across population groups effect of normative receptiveness will differ between males and females.



Covariates appearing in the model are evaluated at the following values: F1_Normative = 2.7329

FIGURE 5.6: NORMATIVE RECEPTIVENESS ACROSS POPULATION GROUPS AND GENDER

Figure 5.6 visually presents these findings. When considering the marginal means of normative receptiveness in this graph, it becomes clear that men tend to be more affected by normative receptiveness than women across all the population groups. This means that men's reference groups have a strongly influential effect on their consumption and that they strongly consider their reference groups' advice when purchasing status clothing brands.

- ***Normative receptiveness across population groups and education level***

Table 5.6 presents tests of between-subjects effects for normative receptiveness and demographic factors: population group and education as well as the interaction effect of *education*normative receptiveness* and *population group*normative receptiveness* on status consumption.

TABLE 5.6: GLM: NORMATIVE RECEPTIVENESS ACROSS POPULATION GROUPS AND EDUCATION LEVEL

	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	1345.485	13	103.499	138.265	0.000
Intercept	12.119	1	12.119	16.190	0.000
Normative receptiveness	485.433	1	485.433	648.495	0.000*
Education level	2.035	3	0.678	0.906	0.438
Education*Normative receptiveness	1.893	3	0.631	0.843	0.470
Population group	10.160	3	3.387	4.524	0.004**
Population group*Normative receptiveness	6.096	3	2.032	2.715	0.044***

Notes: Dependent variable: Status consumption; * Significant at $p < 0.000$, ** Significant at $p < 0.01$, *** Significant at $p < 0.05$

The GLM showed that the effect of normative receptiveness on status consumption of clothing brands was significant ($F = 648.49/df = 1, p = 0.000$). There were significant differences across

population group ($F = 4.52/df = 3, p = 0.004$) at $p < 0.01$ level as well as across *population group*normative receptiveness* ($F = 2.715/df=3, p = 0.044$) at $p < 0.05$ level.

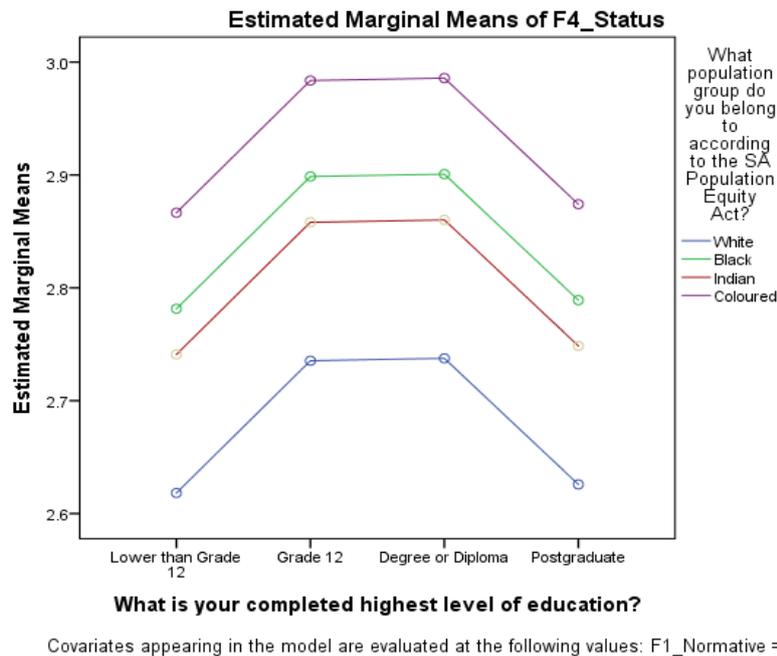


FIGURE 5.7: NORMATIVE RECEPTIVENESS ACROSS POPULATION GROUPS AND EDUCATION LEVEL

Figure 5.7 depicts the status consumption of clothing brands across the various population groups considering their level of education, in terms of normative receptiveness. The graph illustrates the minor differences in marginal means across the population groups and level of education. For example, there is a wider spacing between the graphs representing the Coloured population group and the White population group on the plane, indicating that the Coloured population group overall, irrespective of level of education is more susceptible to normative receptiveness when consuming status clothing brands than the other population groups, while there is a larger difference in normative receptiveness in status consumption between the Coloured and White population groups. Also, normative receptiveness is less influential among respondents who have an education level Lower than Grade 12 or a Postgraduate, compared with those who have a Grade 12 or a Degree/Diploma – who are more highly influenced by normative receptiveness. This phenomenon can be investigated further.

- **Normative receptiveness across population groups and income**

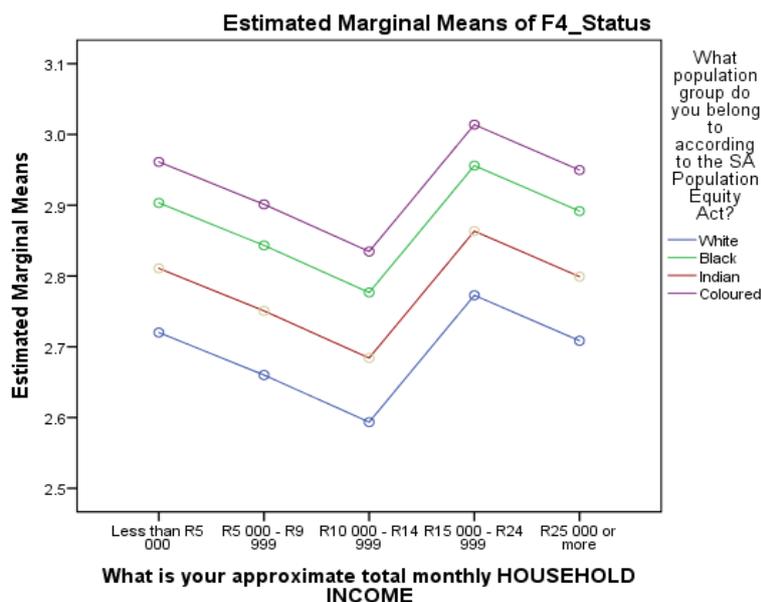
Table 5.7 presents tests of between-subjects effects for normative receptiveness and demographic factors, namely population group and income as well as the interaction effect of *income*normative receptiveness* and *population group*normative receptiveness* on status consumption.

TABLE 5.7: GLM: NORMATIVE RECEPTIVENESS ACROSS POPULATION GROUPS AND INCOME

	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	1341.875	15	89.458	119.879	0.000
Intercept	16.366	1	16.366	21.931	0.000
Normative receptiveness	515.535	1	515.535	690.843	0.000*
Income	3.772	4	0.943	1.264	0.283
Income*Normative receptiveness	4.775	4	1.194	1.600	0.172
Population group	6.735	3	2.245	3.008	0.029***
Population group*Normative receptiveness	3.154	3	1.051	1.409	0.239

Notes: Dependent variable: Status consumption; * Significant at $p < 0.000$, ** Significant at $p < 0.01$, *** Significant at $p < 0.05$

Table 5.6 illustrates that the effect of normative receptiveness on status consumption of clothing brands was significant, ($F = 690.84/df = 1, p = 0.000$) and significant differences across population groups ($F = 3.00/df = 3, p = 0.029$) were also found at $p < 0.05$ level. The GLM shows that across population groups, consumers in different income groups do not differ significantly in terms of the influence of normative receptiveness on their consumption of status clothing brands. The interaction effects of *income*normative receptiveness* ($p = 0.172$) and *population group*normative receptiveness* ($p = 0.239$) were not significant.



Covariates appearing in the model are evaluated at the following values: F1_Normative = 2.7325

FIGURE 5.8: NORMATIVE RECEPTIVENESS ACROSS POPULATION GROUPS AND INCOME

Figure 5.8 visually presents the findings. The lines are parallel to each other and follow the same pattern. The graph also shows that the influence of normative receptiveness on status consumption is at its lowest point for all four of the population groups when respondents earned R10 000 – R14 999 and peaked in income groups R15 000 – R24 999. This indicates that respondents in the latter income group, which is the middle income group across the different population groups, are more disposed to normative influences when consuming status clothing brands. The results indicate the significance of normative receptiveness in terms of status

consumption of clothing brands. This is affirmed by the literature which states that one's reference groups are influential in terms of an individual's status consumption (Burger *et al.*, 2014; Goldsmith & Clark, 2012; O'Cass & McEwen, 2004).

Therefore, *H1: There will be significant differences regarding normative receptiveness across different population groups' status consumption of clothing brands* can be accepted as significant differences across population groups were confirmed.

5.3.1.2 Informative influences

Hypothesis 2 proposes significant differences in **informative influences** across different population groups' **status consumption** of clothing brands. To test for significant differences in informative influences across population groups, various demographic factors (i.e. age group, gender, level of education, and income) were introduced into the GLM. Again, four population categories were distinguished (i.e. Black, White, Coloured and Indian). The other demographic factors' coincided with categories described under 5.3.2.1. The next section will discuss the results of the GLM modelling in terms of informative influences.

- **Informative influences across population groups and age groups**

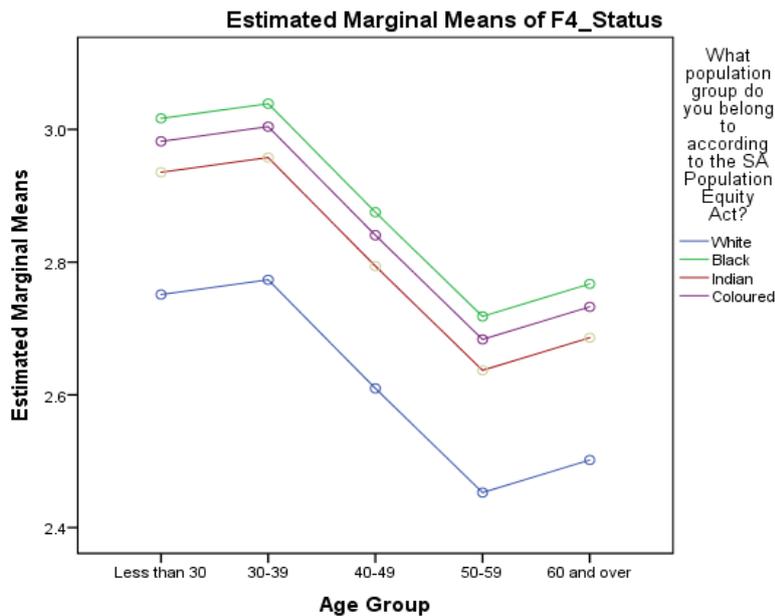
Table 5.8 presents tests of between-subjects effects for informative influences and demographic factors: *population group* and *income* as well as the interaction effect of *income*informative influences* and *population group*informative influences* on status consumption.

TABLE 5.8: GLM: INFORMATIVE INFLUENCE ACROSS POPULATION GROUPS AND AGE GROUPS

	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	726.341 ^a	15	48.423	35.124	0.000
Intercept	67.532	1	67.532	48.985	0.000
Informative influences	296.819	1	296.819	215.300	0.000*
Age Group	11.847	4	2.962	2.148	0.073
Age Group*Informative influences	6.831	4	1.708	1.239	0.293
Population group	4.086	3	1.362	0.988	0.398
Population group*Informative influences	3.042	3	1.014	0.736	0.531

Notes: Dependent variable: Status consumption; * Significant at $p < 0.000$; ** Significant at $p < 0.01$; *** Significant at $p < 0.05$

Table 5.8 indicates that the effect of informative influences on status consumption of status clothing brands is significant, $F = 215.30/df = 1$, $p = 0.000$. This coincided with literature implying that informational influences compel consumers to learn about products or services by acquiring information from others and this information plays a role in their product evaluations and consumption decisions (Wang *et al.*, 2012; Sproles & Burns, 1994:149). The interaction effects of *age group*informative influences* ($p = 0.293$) and *population group*informative influences* ($p = 0.531$) as well as *age group* ($p = 0.073$) and *population group* ($p = 0.398$) were not statistically significant.



Covariates appearing in the model are evaluated at the following values: F3_Informative = 3.0450

FIGURE 5.9: INFORMATIVE INFLUENCES ACROSS POPULATION GROUPS AND AGE GROUPS

Figure 5.9 depicts the population groups relative to age group and informative influences' marginal mean. The parallel spacing of the lines in the graph indicates that there is no interaction between factors and no statistically significant difference in terms of each population group's propensity towards status consumption and the effect of informative influences. It is, however, evident that of all the population groups, the means for Black consumers is the highest, indicating stronger informative influences compared to the other population groups. Respondents in the age group 30-39 years across all the population groups (the Millennial cohort) seem to be influenced the most by informative influences such as family, peers and others when consuming status clothing brands.

- **Informative influences across population groups and gender**

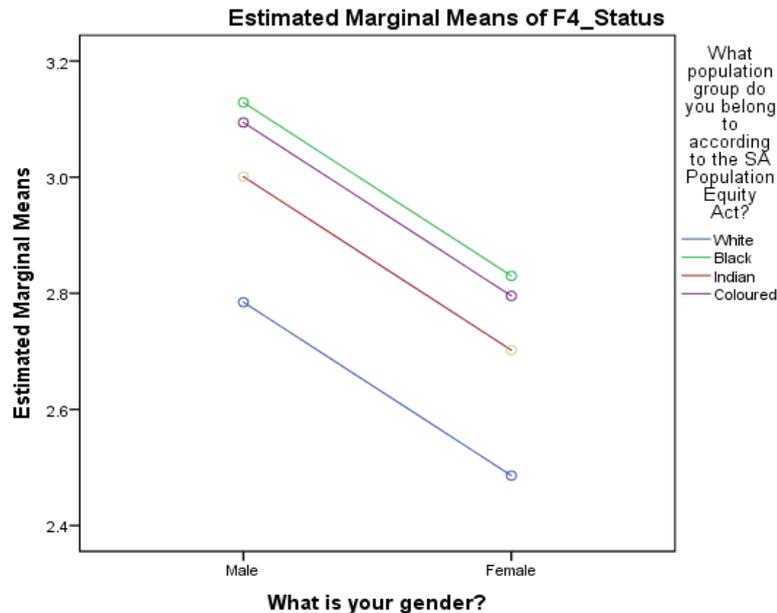
Table 5.9 presents tests of between-subjects effects for informative influences and demographic factors: *population group* and *gender* as well as the interaction effect of *gender*informative influences* and *population group*informative influences* on status consumption.

TABLE 5.9: GLM: INFORMATIVE INFLUENCE ACROSS POPULATION GROUPS AND GENDER

	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	725.011 ^a	9	80.557	58.866	0.000
Intercept	88.782	1	88.782	64.877	0.000
Informative influences	288.041	1	288.041	210.483	0.000*
Gender	2.239	1	2.239	1.636	0.201
Gender*Informative influences	0.342	1	0.342	0.250	0.617
Population group	6.951	3	2.317	1.693	0.167
Population group*Informative influences	2.256	3	0.752	0.550	0.649

Notes: Dependent variable: Status consumption; * Significant at $p < 0.000$, ** Significant at $p < 0.01$, *** Significant at $p < 0.05$

The GLM for informative influences across gender and population groups indicated that the effect of informative influences on status consumption of clothing brands was significant, $F = 210.48/df = 1, p = 0.000$). However, the interaction effect between *gender*informative influences* ($p = 0.617$) and *population*informative influences* ($p = 0.649$), *population group* ($p = 0.649$) and *gender* ($p = 0.201$) were not statistically significant across population groups. **Table 5.9** indicates that there are no significant gender differences in the mean of informative influences across population groups.



Covariates appearing in the model are evaluated at the following values: F3_Informative = 3.0445

FIGURE 5.10: INFORMATIVE INFLUENCES ACROSS POPULATION GROUPS AND GENDER

Figure 5.10 visually illustrates the findings. Lines are parallel. Although the differences between males and females were not significant, the graph indicates that men are more disposed to informative influences when engaging in status consumption of clothing brands than females across all the population groups. In this sample, men in the Black population group are most affected by informative influences such as family, friends or others when consuming status clothing brands, while White women are the least affected.

- ***Informative influences across population groups and education level***

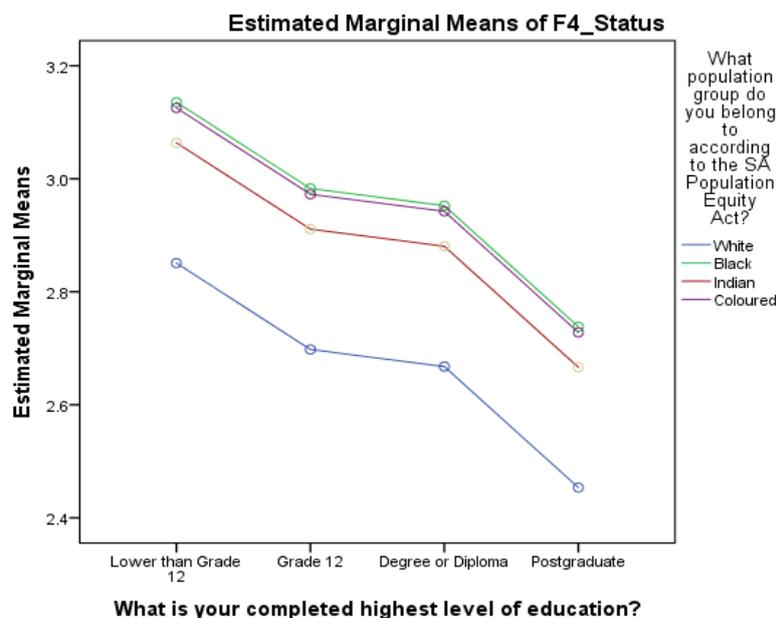
Table 5.10 presents tests of between-subjects effects for informative influences and demographic factors, namely *population group* and *education* as well as the interaction effect of *education*informative influences* and *population group*informative influences* on status consumption.

TABLE 5.10: GLM: INFORMATIVE INFLUENCE ACROSS POPULATION GROUPS AND EDUCATION LEVEL

	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	719.196 ^a	13	55.323	39.986	0.000
Intercept	74.130	1	74.130	53.579	0.000
Informative influences	260.507	1	260.507	188.289	0.000*
Education level	0.792	3	0.264	0.191	0.903
Education level*Informative influences	2.420	3	0.807	0.583	0.626
Population group	8.062	3	2.687	1.942	0.121
Population group*Informative influences	4.043	3	1.348	0.974	0.404
Error	1346.194	973	1.384		

Notes: Dependent variable: Status consumption; * Significant at $p < 0.000$, ** Significant at $p < 0.01$, *** Significant at $p < 0.05$

The GLM indicated that the effect of informative influences on status consumption of clothing brands was significant ($F = 188.289/df = 1, p = 0.000$), although differences in informative influences on status consumption across population groups or level of education groups were not significant.



Covariates appearing in the model are evaluated at the following values: F3_Informative = 3.0420

FIGURE 5.11: INFORMATIVE INFLUENCES ACROSS POPULATION GROUPS AND EDUCATION LEVEL

Figure 5.11 presents the results visually with the lines positioned parallel to each other. Responses for the Black and Coloured population groups were very similar, as the linear graphs follow almost the same place on the plot. There is a drop in the mean as the level of education increases. This could indicate that consumers with higher education levels might be less affected by informative influences like family, their peers and others when making decisions about buying clothing brands with status. Noteworthy, though, is the lower normative influence on White consumers compared to other population groups.

- **Informative influences across population groups and income**

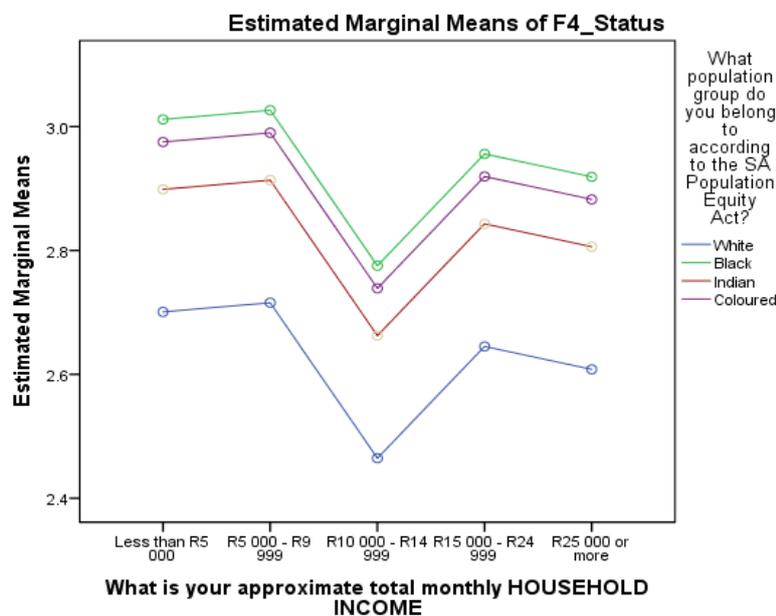
Table 5.11 presents tests of between-subjects effects for informative influences and specific demographic factors, namely: *population group* and *income* as well as the interaction effect of *income*informative influences* and *population group*informative influences* on status consumption.

TABLE 5.11: GLM: INFORMATIVE INFLUENCE ACROSS POPULATION GROUPS AND INCOME

	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	705.039 ^a	15	47.003	33.668	0.000
Intercept	71.517	1	71.517	51.228	0.000
Informative influences	260.498	1	260.498	186.594	0.000*
Income	3.411	4	0.853	0.611	0.655
Income*Informative influences	1.564	4	0.391	0.280	0.891
Population group	7.094	3	2.365	1.694	0.167
Population group*Informative influences	4.404	3	1.468	1.052	0.369
Error	1349.999	967	1.396		

Notes: Dependent variable: Status consumption; * Significant at $p < 0.000$; ** Significant at $p < 0.01$; *** Significant at $p < 0.05$

The GLM model does not indicate statistically significant differences for informative influences and their interaction with income on population groups' status consumption of clothing brands although a significant effect for informative influences ($F = 186.59/df = 1, p < 0.000$) in general on the status consumption of clothing brands is confirmed. Figure 5.12 confirms the significant effect between informative influences and status consumption.



Covariates appearing in the model are evaluated at the following values: F3_Informative = 3.0430

FIGURE 5.12: INFORMATIVE INFLUENCES ACROSS POPULATION GROUPS AND INCOME

Figure 5.12 indicates that individuals, regardless of their population group, who earn R10 000 – R14 999 monthly – which is the average household income in Tshwane – seem to be the least influenced by informative influences when it comes to status consumption of clothing brands. The

graph also shows that the marginal mean for status consumption begins to rise when the income increases above R14 999 monthly but declines again with incomes higher than R24 999, suggesting that higher income groups are less affected by informative influences and might not use the advice of family and friends/peers when making decisions about what status products to purchase.

Therefore, *H2: There will be significant differences regarding informative influences across different population groups' status consumption of clothing brands* is not supported. Albeit informative influences effect status consumption, significant differences in this independent variable's effect on status consumption across the diverse South African population groups under study could not be confirmed.

5.3.1.3 Impersonal influences

Hypothesis 3 states that there will be significant differences in **impersonal influences** across different population groups' **status consumption** of clothing brands. To test for significant difference in impersonal influences across population groups, various demographic factors (i.e. age group, gender, level of education, and income) were introduced into GLM modelling. In the following section the results of GLM modelling in terms of impersonal influences are presented.

- **Impersonal influences across population groups and age groups**

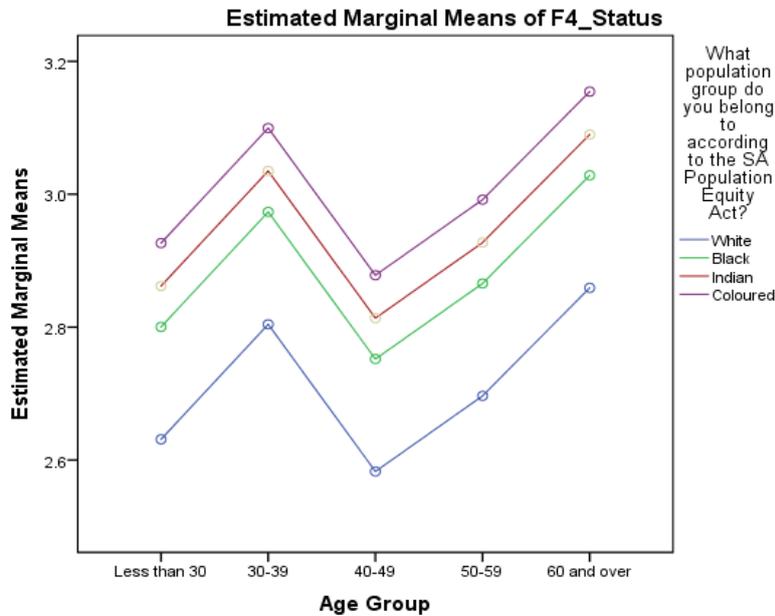
Table 5.12 presents tests of between-subjects effects for impersonal influences and demographic factors, i.e. *population group* and *age group* as well as the interaction effect of *age group*impersonal influences* and *population group*impersonal influences* on status consumption

TABLE 5.12: GLM: IMPERSONAL INFLUENCE ACROSS POPULATION GROUPS AND AGE GROUPS

	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	843.646 ^a	15	56.243	44.423	0.000
Intercept	44.914	1	44.914	35.475	0.000
Impersonal influences	310.777	1	310.777	245.462	0.000*
Age Group	2.590	4	0.647	0.511	0.727
Age Group*Impersonal influences	3.817	4	0.954	0.754	0.556
Population group	4.074	3	1.358	1.073	0.360
Population group*Impersonal influences	1.901	3	0.634	0.500	0.682

Notes: Dependent variable: Status consumption; * Significant at $p < 0.000$; ** Significant at $p < 0.01$; *** Significant at $p < 0.05$

The GLM revealed that the effect of impersonal influences on status consumption of clothing brands is statistically significant, $F = 245.46/df = 1$, $p = 0.000$. The interaction effects of *age groups*impersonal influences* ($p = 0.556$) and *population group*impersonal influences* ($p = 0.682$) as well as *age group* ($p = 0.727$) and *population group* ($p = 0.360$) were, however, not significant.



Covariates appearing in the model are evaluated at the following values: F2_Impersonal = 3.2961

FIGURE 5.13: IMPERSONAL INFLUENCE ACROSS POPULATION GROUPS AND AGE GROUPS

Figure 5.13 depicts means of impersonal influences of the different population groups relative to age. It appears that consumers' susceptibility to impersonal influences when consuming status clothing brands increases up to the age of 39 years, then decreases to the lowest influence for 40-49-year-old consumers and then ascends once more as age increases. Impersonal influences seem the strongest among Coloured consumers across all age groups. Even though age differences were not statistically significant, impersonal influences on the 30 to 39-year-olds (thus the Millennial cohort) as well as the >60-year-old category is the strongest, suggesting that they are more disposed to media influences when engaging in status consumption of clothing brands, and this is true across all the population groups.

- Impersonal influences across population groups and gender**

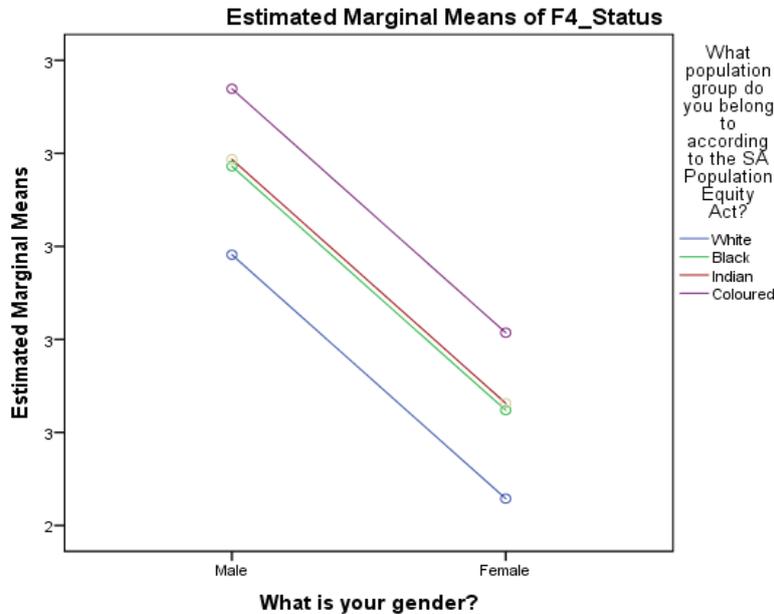
Table 5.13 presents tests of between-subjects effects for impersonal influences and demographic factors, i.e. *population group* and *gender* as well as the interaction effect of *gender*impersonal influences* and *population group*impersonal influences* on status consumption

TABLE 5.13: GLM: IMPERSONAL INFLUENCE ACROSS POPULATION GROUPS AND GENDER

	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	896.841 ^a	9	99.649	82.977	0.000
Intercept	49.676	1	49.676	41.365	0.000
Impersonal influences	317.897	1	317.897	264.710	0.000*
Gender	5.092	1	5.092	4.240	0.040***
Gender*Impersonal influences	1.710	1	1.710	1.424	0.233
Population group	5.330	3	1.777	1.480	0.219
Population group*Impersonal influences	3.066	3	1.022	0.851	0.466

Notes: Dependent variable: Status consumption; * Significant at $p < 0.000$; ** Significant at $p < 0.01$; *** Significant at $p < 0.05$

The GLM showed that the effect of impersonal influences on status consumption of clothing brands was statistically significant, $F = 264.71/df = 1, p = 0.000$. The interaction effects of *gender*impersonal influences* ($p = 0.233$) and *population group*impersonal influences* ($p = 0.466$) in this model were, however, not significant. However, significant differences were confirmed within the gender category ($F = 4.240/df = 1, p = 0.040$) at the 5% level ($p < 0.05$).



Covariates appearing in the model are evaluated at the following values: F2_Impersonal = 3.2967

FIGURE 5.14: IMPERSONAL INFLUENCE ACROSS POPULATION GROUPS AND GENDER

Figure 5.14 displays differences across population groups although differences are not significant. The effect of impersonal influences on males and females across the different populations groups is not significantly different in terms of their consumption of status clothing brands. The graph shows that men across all population groups tend to be more strongly influenced by impersonal influences than females – with Coloured men being affected the most and White women the least affected.

- ***Impersonal influences across population groups and education level***

Table 5.14 presents tests of between-subjects effects for impersonal influences and demographic factors, i.e. *population group* and *education level* as well as the interaction effect of *education*impersonal influences* and *population group*impersonal influences* on status consumption

TABLE 5.14: GLM: IMPERSONAL INFLUENCE ACROSS POPULATION GROUPS AND EDUCATION LEVEL

	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	863.338 ^a	13	66.411	53.403	0.000

Intercept	52.110	1	52.110	41.904	0.000
Impersonal influences	261.767	1	261.767	210.496	0.000*
Education level	8.262	3	2.754	2.215	0.085
Education level*Impersonal influences	11.261	3	3.754	3.018	0.029***
Population group	3.729	3	1.243	1.000	0.392
Population group*Impersonal influences	3.260	3	1.087	0.874	0.454
Error	1211.239	974	1.244		

Notes: Dependent variable: Status consumption; * Significant at $p < 0.000$; ** Significant at $p < 0.01$; *** Significant at $p < 0.05$

The GLM shows a statistically significant effect of impersonal influences on population groups' status consumption of clothing brands, $F = 210.49/df = 1, p = 0.000$. The interaction effect between level of education*impersonal influences is also statistically significant ($F = 3.01/df = 3; p = 0.029$) at the 5% level ($p < 0.05$) although the interactive effect with population group was not significant.

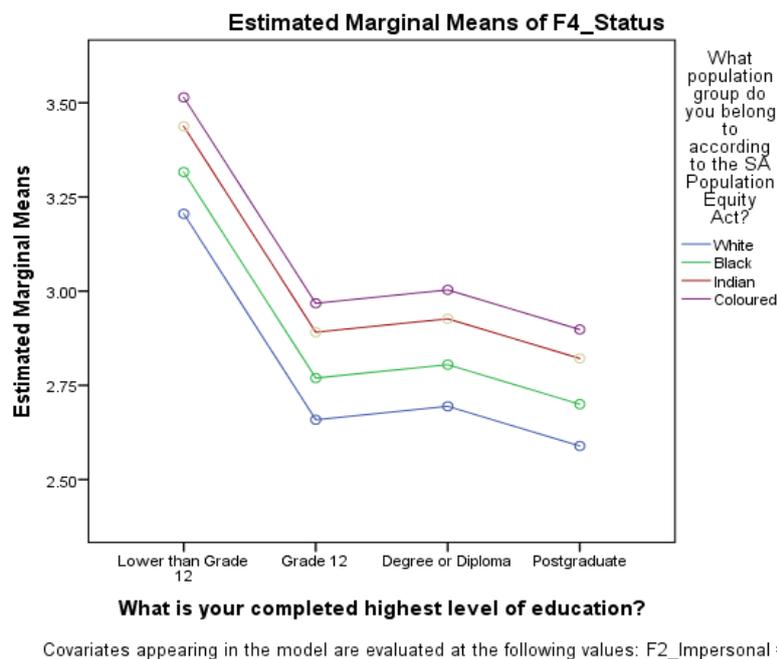


FIGURE 5.15: IMPERSONAL INFLUENCE ACROSS POPULATION GROUPS AND EDUCATION LEVEL

Figure 5.15 visually shows that for all population groups, status consumption decreases as education level increases, although a slight rise in status consumption is evident for those who have degrees or diplomas, after which status consumption decreases again.

- **Impersonal influences across population groups and income**

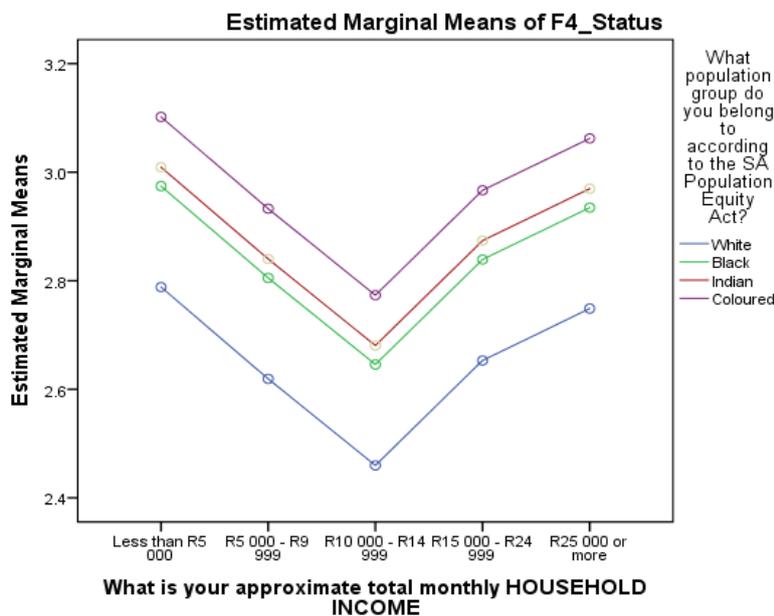
Table 5.15 presents tests of between-subjects effects for impersonal influences and demographic factors, i.e. *population group* and *income* as well as the interaction effect of *income*impersonal influences* and *population group*impersonal influences* on status consumption.

TABLE 5.15: GLM: IMPERSONAL INFLUENCES ACROSS POPULATION GROUPS AND INCOME

	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	835.120a	15	55.675	43.847	0.000
Intercept	46.086	1	46.086	36.295	0.000
Impersonal influences	261.055	1	261.055	205.596	0.000*
Income	2.054	4	0.514	0.404	0.806
Income*Impersonal influences	1.706	4	0.427	0.336	0.854
Population group	2.284	3	0.761	0.600	0.615
Population group*Impersonal influences	0.651	3	0.217	0.171	0.916

Notes: Dependent variable: Status consumption; * Significant at $p < 0.000$, ** Significant at $p < 0.01$, *** Significant at $p < 0.05$

Table 5.15 shows that income ($p = 0.806$) and population group ($p = 0.615$) or the interactive effect of income*impersonal influences ($p = 0.854$) and population group*impersonal influences ($p = 0.916$) were not statistically significant in terms of consumers' status consumption of clothing brands although impersonal influences on status consumption of clothing brands in general, is significant, $F = 205.59/df = 1$, $p = 0.000$. Therefore, other demographic factors than income will affect population groups' consumption of status brands.



Covariates appearing in the model are evaluated at the following values: F2_Impersonal = 3.2931

FIGURE 5.16: IMPERSONAL INFLUENCES ACROSS POPULATION GROUPS AND INCOME

Figure 5.16 illustrates that, regardless of their population group, individuals with the lowest income and those with the highest incomes are more strongly affected by impersonal influences when purchasing status clothing brands.

Hypothesis H3: *There will be significant differences regarding impersonal influences of communication across different population groups' status consumption of clothing brand* is hence partially rejected. Even though impersonal influences significantly affect status consumption, differences among the different population groups were limited to *gender* and the interactive effect of *education*impersonal influences*.

The Parameter estimates table (included in **Addendum E**) confirms the significant/insignificant effect on status consumption for each demographic factor.

The decision tree developed in this study (**Figure 5.17** and included in **Addendum F**), is a classifier that seeks to understand the motivation behind status consumption with regard to the selected independent variables under study. Every independent influence is taken into account and the best inference possible is made with regard to status consumption. The algorithm looks at different attributes present in the collected data and uses these attributes to split the data into subsets. Thus the tree shows significant clusters grouped into nodes. If the subset is pure, no more branches are necessary. If not, a different attribute is looked at and data is split again (IBM Corporation, 2012).

The procedure to create a decision tree is generally known as CHAID (*Chi-squared Automatic Interaction Detector*). The actual technique used here to create this decision tree is called a Classification and Regression Tree (CART or CRT). The difference is that in CHAID the dependent variable is a nominal variable, but in this study the response variable is status consumption which is measured on a continuous scale between 1 and 7. A model was created to predict the status consumption score using the following as potential predictors: independent variables - normative receptiveness score, impersonal influence score and informative influence score and demographic factors - gender, age group, population group, level of education, income (IBM Corporation, 2012).

CART attempts to segment the sample into subgroups such that the variability of status consumption within subgroups is less than the overall variability. The overall mean score for status consumption is 2.76, which is below average. It was found through the decision tree that the most important predictor of status consumption is normative receptiveness. In the first two steps of creating the tree, four subgroups were created according to the normative receptiveness scores: normative receptiveness score between 1 - 2.346: Mean status consumption score 1.799, normative receptiveness score >2.346 - 3.346: Mean status consumption score 2.838, normative receptiveness score >3.346 - 4.731 Mean status consumption score 3.823, normative receptiveness score > 4.731: Mean status consumption score 4.155.

In the following steps, normative receptiveness, impersonal influences, population group, education level, income and gender were used as various subsets to produce 15 subgroups (end nodes) with mean scores varying between 5.8571 and 1.2846: Node 23, which consisted of females with a normative receptiveness (mean) score >5.423 had the highest mean score (5.8571) for status consumption. Node 25 consisted of respondents with an education level >Grade 12 and with a normative receptiveness score <1.269, and had the lowest mean value for status consumption (1.2846).

In other words, status consumption is most influenced by normative receptiveness (i.e. a person's reference group) when a consumer is female and least influenced by normative receptiveness

when the consumer's education level is higher than Grade 12, implying as in the GLMs, that people who are more knowledgeable are less influenced by conformity, or the opinions of others.

5.4 CONCLUSION

The results presented in this chapter identified prevailing themes in terms of influences of status consumption across population groups. This chapter presented the analyses required to address the hypotheses that were formulated based on literature for this study. The demographic characteristics of the sample are provided with a discussion of limitations as a result of the convenience sampling method. The reliability and validity of the findings were addressed through the appropriate procedures, including the calculation of Cronbach's alpha before proceeding with further analyses. EFA preceded CFA to confirm the factor structure for the general linear model (GLM) and Analysis of Covariance as the indices generally indicate that the proposed model fits the data, further confirming the construct validity of the proposed instrument. Pearson's correlation reiterated theory, indicating high correlations between the independent variables and status consumption (the dependent variable). Inferential data analysis, the general linear model, was used to analyse the usable data collected from the questionnaires. The GLM confirmed the significant effect of normative receptiveness, informative influences and impersonal influences on status consumption of clothing brands. Small significant differences did occur across population groups in terms of normative receptiveness and impersonal influences. The hypotheses formulated could only partially be accepted as only *H1: There will be significant differences regarding normative receptiveness across different population groups' status consumption of clothing brands* can be accepted as significant differences across population groups were confirmed; and Hypothesis *H3: There will be significant differences regarding impersonal influences of communication across different population groups' status consumption of clothing brand* is partially rejected because although impersonal influences significantly influence status consumption, variances among the different population groups were limited to *gender* and the interactive effect of *education*impersonal influences*. In the next chapter a final conclusion and implications regarding the findings obtained in this current chapter will be provided.



CHAPTER 6

Conclusions of the study

This chapter provides a discussion of the findings. Implications and conclusions of the findings are structured according to the research hypotheses. Limitations of the study are indicated and recommendations are made for further study.

6.1 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

Reflection on the study is imperative in order to make sure that the objectives have been met, that accurate and ethical processes were kept to, and that the findings are reliable and presented correctly. To begin with, an in-depth literature review of current literature was undertaken to help identify and structure the objectives/hypotheses of the study. The literature review also helped to structure the conceptual framework and questionnaire.

Access to luxury products and status consumption in emerging markets has become a global occurrence (Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited, 2015). Clothing brands, especially, have become a shared product embedded with status and are a visible way for consumers' to communicate their status to others (O'Cass & Frost, 2002a). In the past, retailers and marketers have intensified their efforts to expand their products into developing markets as developed markets are almost saturated. They are now not only focusing on higher economic consumers markets but are targeting lower income consumer market segments too (Ko & Megehee, 2012). However, marketing strategies pertaining to status consumption still tend to be based on a developed market context and are not necessarily relevant to developing countries where the profile of customers differs notably. Predictors of status consumption in one context, culture or country may not necessarily be relevant or significant for another (Shukla, 2010). This research aimed to investigate empirically how status consumption differs across the different population groups in the emerging South African market and to examine the effect that susceptibility to interpersonal and impersonal influences has on different population groups' status consumption of clothing brands. Due to the growth and availability of status brands and increase in disposable income of especially middle income consumers in South Africa, this research in a local context is long overdue. Therefore, it was identified that in a complex and diverse market like South Africa there is a need for research that could contribute to more appropriate brand positioning and market segmentation for status clothing brands.

For this research study the conceptual framework, as well as the research hypotheses, were derived from consumer socialisation theory (Moschis & Churchill, 1978) which identifies socialising

agents such as parents, peers and media, as very important mediators from whom consumers learn consumption patterns. These socialisation agents also aid brand/product preference development. This happens firstly through exposure to the products, then by emulating behaviour and thereafter by using those examples as a frame of reference – because they are familiar with them and can forecast the consequences of consumption, thus reducing risk (Wang *et al.*, 2012; Singh *et al.*, 2003; Lachance *et al.*, 2003). Socialisation agents can be interpersonal or impersonal in nature. The interpersonal influences, namely normative receptiveness (value expressiveness and utilitarian influences) and informative influences (family/others and peer communication) in conjunction with the impersonal influences (advertising and social media) were drawn from literature and included in the initial conceptual framework for the study as presented in **Figure 3.1**. The theory of consumer socialisation was considered a suitable framework as it explains how consumers are socialised over time through interpersonal and impersonal agents. Through these agents, certain competencies and skills are acquired that eventually result in the preference for and purchasing of certain products that may include status-bearing clothing brands. Brand managers who are able to comprehend cross-national differences in consumer socialisation will enhance their competitive advantage, which is particularly important in trying economic times (Yang *et al.*, 2014).

A survey research design was used and data were collected through a self-administered questionnaire developed from existing scales, the aim being to collect quantitative data. Eastman, Goldsmith and Flynn's (1999) status consumption scale; Bearden, Netemeyer and Teel's (1989) reference group influence scale; Wang, Yu and Wei's (2012) peer communication scale, and Jin and Lutz's (2013) attitude towards advertising (social role) scale were adapted for the questionnaire. For example, wording was changed in all the scales to include the phrase 'clothing brands' at one point or another; and Jin and Lutz's (2013) attitude towards advertising (social role) scale was reworded to include 'social media' in the questions posed to the respondents. Even though existing scales were used, reliability coefficients were calculated to validate the internal consistency of the measures. Prior to data collection, a pilot test was done to test the questionnaire and to eliminate errors as well as enhance the reliability of the instrument. Small alterations to the wording and instructions were made to ensure overall clarity. Furthermore, a cover letter attached to the questionnaire clarified the research aim and ethical aspects – for example, it was explained that the study was being conducted for academic purposes and that answers would be kept anonymous, that participation was voluntary. The amount of time required to complete the questionnaire was also stated.

Ethical approval was received from the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences at the University of Pretoria before data collection commenced. Subsequently, data collection occurred in April-May 2016 (cross-sectional) with the help of trained fieldworkers who distributed the self-administered questionnaires by hand to men and women, aged 19 and over,

living in the Tshwane metropolitan. A total of 1014 usable questionnaires were collected over the allocated period. The large sample contributed to the reliability of the data.

Data from the completed questionnaires were coded by fieldworkers, checked and then captured by the resource company *Datanet*. Subsequently, the data was analysed by a professional statistician in accordance with the objectives and requests of the researcher. Some statistical methods that were used during analysis were descriptive statistics, exploratory factor analysis, confirmatory factor analysis, General linear model (GLM) and decision/classification trees.

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) had to be performed to verify the scale in the context of the study. The selected scales were used to investigate consumers' consumption of status brands but as they have not been used in this South African context before, the items from the questionnaire pertaining to consumers' status consumption of clothing brands were subjected to an EFA to establish the relevance of the dimensions of the scale. From the EFA, three factors were retained that best explained the correlation amongst the measured variables. The interpersonal influences, *Normative receptiveness* (consisting of value expressiveness and utilitarian influences) and *Informative influences* (containing family or others and peer communication) collapsed into just two constructs: *Normative receptiveness* and *Informative influences*. Impersonal influences also initially consisted of two dimensions: *advertising* and *social media influences* also collapsed into one factor, *Impersonal influences*. As the initial six factors collapsed into just three independent variables, the hypotheses were modified accordingly, and a new conceptual framework (**Figure 5.4**) was created with the following hypotheses:

H1: There will be significant differences regarding **normative receptiveness** across different population groups' **status consumption** of clothing brands.

H2: There will be significant differences regarding **informative influences** across different population groups' **status consumption** of clothing brands.

H3: There will be significant differences regarding **impersonal influences** across different population groups' **status consumption** of clothing brands.

Subsequently, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed to confirm the factorial validity of the model obtained from the EFA. The measurement model was accepted as the goodness-of-fit statistics indicated mostly satisfactory fit indices ($\chi^2=1964.081$, $df = 250$, at $p < 0.0001$; RMSEA = 0.08; CFI = 0.09; NFI = 0.89). Furthermore, the EFA and the CFA confirmed the factor structure for General linear model (GLM) as the indices indicated that the proposed model fitted the data – endorsing the construct validity of the measurement instrument. GLM was performed to find support for the hypotheses. *Status consumption* was maintained as the dependent variable throughout the GLM analyses and the predictors were the independent variables (*normative receptiveness*, *informative influences* and *impersonal influences*) measured on a continuous scale; and the demographic factors (population group, age, level of education, gender, and income) as

well as the interaction between the independent and demographic factors were also used as predictors. The demographic factors that were not measured on a categorical scale were arranged into categories for the purpose of the data analysis i.e. age and income. Pearson's correlation confirmed the literature that was examined and the findings of the GLM as high correlations between the independent variables and status consumption (the dependent variable) were obtained. The correlations indicated a positive relationship between the normative receptiveness, interpersonal influences and impersonal influences and status consumption of the overall sample as all correlations between the various constructs were positive and relatively high. *Normative receptiveness* and *status consumption* of clothing brands ($r = 0.80, p < 0.001$) depicted a positive correlation that indicated status consumption is highly influenced by the approval of others and consumers purchase status goods as a way to impress others (Weber, 2014:9; Ang *et al.*, 2001) as well as to fit into their reference group by looking the same as to their socialising agents (Burger *et al.*, 2014; Goldsmith & Clark, 2012; O'Cass & McEwen, 2004). Furthermore, a positive correlation of 0.57, $p < 0.001$ was found between *informative influences* and *status consumption*, also revealing status consumption to be influenced by information gained from communication with others such as family and peers. The strong positive relationship between *impersonal influences* and the *status consumption* of clothing brands ($r = 0.63, p < 0.001$), revealed that status consumption is also strongly influenced by factors such as advertising and social media.

Significant effects of normative receptiveness, informative and impersonal influences on status consumption of clothing brands were confirmed by the GLM ($p < 0.001$). Additionally, significant differences did occur across population groups in terms of normative receptiveness and impersonal influences ($p < 0.05$). The GLM provided support for differences across population groups in terms of the independent variables as well as demographic factors; however, differences across population groups were not consistent and varied in terms of status consumption. The hypotheses formulated could only be partially accepted as only significant differences across population groups were confirmed for *H1: There will be significant differences regarding normative receptiveness across different population groups' status consumption of clothing brands*. Hypothesis *H2: There will be significant differences regarding informative influences across different population groups' status consumption of clothing brands* was rejected because while informative influences significantly influence status consumption, no significant differences were apparent across population groups. Hypothesis *H3: There will be significant differences regarding impersonal influences of communication across different population groups' status consumption of clothing brand* is partially rejected because while impersonal influences significantly influence status consumption, variances among the different population groups were limited to *gender* and the interactive effect of *education*impersonal influences*.

The decision tree presented in **Figure 5.17** reiterates that normative receptiveness is the most significant influence on status consumption compared to informative and impersonal influences.

Node 23 shows that females with a normative receptiveness (mean) score of more than 5.42 and who had the highest mean score (5.85) for status consumption would, be most likely be motivated by normative receptiveness. Conversely, the respondents presented by node 25 who had an education level higher than Grade 12 and a normative receptiveness (mean) score of less than 1.26, displayed the lowest mean value for status consumption (1.28), indicating that higher an individual's level of education, the less their status consumption is affected by normative receptiveness.

Based on the research literature and the results presented in Chapter 5, the following findings were made and interpreted according to the sample characteristics of interpersonal influences (normative receptiveness and informative influences) and impersonal influences. The findings are interpreted in the light of existing literature so as to establish if population groups are differently influenced by interpersonal and impersonal drivers in terms of their status consumption of clothing brands. It must be noted that throughout the study, care was taken to maintain reliability and validity. Chapter 4 elaborates on how this was accomplished. The researcher is satisfied that the overall aim and objectives were satisfactorily addressed.

6.2 CONCLUSIONS IN TERMS OF THE SAMPLE

6.2.1 Population groups

The findings suggest that the Coloured population group was generally more disposed to interpersonal and impersonal influences followed by the Black population, the Indian population and lastly the White population. This confirms the findings of Burger *et al.*, (2014) and Kaus (2013) suggesting that Black, Coloured and Indian households in South Africa showed an increase of 35-50% in the purchasing of status goods. The literature suggests that the purchasing of such visible goods is linked to the idea of an asset deficit compared to that of the White middle class (Burger *et al.*, 2014; Lamont & Molnar, 2001). The findings do support the notion that previously disadvantaged population groups play 'catch-up' and by purchasing products with status, like clothing brands, they obtain a better social standing (Eastman & Eastman, 2011). It has been indicated in a study by Lamont and Molnar (2001) that the Black American population's purchasing habits reflect their determination to be equal and contributing members of society at large and refute any stereotypes of their racial group being low class and divested of spending power. This could reflect the Coloured population's status consumption/purchasing behaviour as this group also had limited political and economic opportunities during the Apartheid period and are perhaps trying to make up for such losses in the new South Africa (Adams *et al.*, 2012). Moreover, advertisers in the USA believe that for the African-American population, signalling and attaining

status through branded consumer goods has more value than aspects like education, and it is easier to acquire a high level of status through such consumption than through a job (Lamont & Molnar, 2001:38).

Consumption particular to certain population groups could also be explained by the way they are socialised. This concept links to value expressiveness whereby individuals attempt to enhance their self-image by imitating the values, norms and attitudes of their reference group (be it aspirational or associative) (Dos Santos, 2013:174; Sproles & Burns, 1994:141) and by displaying this behaviour to society at large (Weber, 2014:29; Lamont & Molnar, 2001; Bearden *et al.*, 1989). This is supported by literature via the concept of acculturation. In a study by Dubey (1993), the Hispanic sample who were born and raised in the USA, through an external acculturation process, fitted into the American environment and were socialised similarly to Whites and non-Hispanics. It was further found that the Hispanics' consumption patterns and consumer skills regarding apparel were not really affected by their ethnic backgrounds. Other socialising factors like income, gender, age and peer group were more influential (Dubey, 1993). It must be noted that this study regards each population group as being indigenous to South Africa and does not take immigration into account. Here, the concept of acculturation can be understood as the different South African population groups being acculturated to each other by the 'new' South Africa – forming one large acculturated consumer market.

6.2.1 Age

The age groups included for analysis were Less than 30 years (29.91%), 30-39 years (23.49%), 40-49 years (18.76%), 50-59 years (17.77%) and > 60 years (10.07%). The >30 age group represented the largest proportion of the sample. Generation Y, or Millennial consumers were born between 1976 and 1994 (Pentecost & Andrews, 2010) and made up approximately 53% of the sample. The large proportion of Millennials could be because the trained assistants (fourth year students from the age of 22 years old) were likely to recruit respondents from their social and reference groups during the data collection process. Generation Y is considered the 'born to shop' generation and apportions a lot of discretionary income towards clothing (Chung Tinf Ting, 2010:31). This identification is ascertained from the fact that consumers of Generation Y developed as independent shoppers, unattended by their working parents who form part of Generation X or the Baby Boomers generation (Chung Tinf Ting, 2010:31). This identification can also be due to the fact that the act of shopping is a form of recreation for Generation Y constituents. Moreover, Generation Y is consistently influenced by television, social media and the internet. This reality justifies their positive relationship between watching television and materialism (Bakewell & Mitchell, 2009:97). Thus it can be said that Generation Y consumers aspire to the affluent lifestyles portrayed through the media (Bakewell & Mitchell, 2009:97) and attempt to purchase status symbols that will reflect said lifestyle. **Figure 5.5** depicts that the age group <30 years was

engaged in status consumption the most. The figure also indicates that status consumption across all population groups decreases with age regardless of the effects of normative receptiveness. This finding is supported by literature that states that as consumers get older, they are less focused on appearance and more on their health (Kaiser, 1997:131). On the other hand, **Figure 5.9** shows status consumption across all population groups increases until age 30-39, then decreases, and then again increases from the age of 50, when informative influences are included in the model. The same pattern of status consumption is evident when impersonal influences are factored into the model as depicted in **Figure 5.13**. However, for the impersonal influences model, the second increase occurs at age 40, not 50, and increases consistently from this point. These two graphs also indicated that ages 30-39 exercised the most status consumption.

6.2.3 Gender

The sample consisted of 1014 respondents living or working in the Tshwane areas of whom 572 were female and 441 were male. This imbalance could be due to women's greater interest in, knowledge of and sensitivity towards fashion cues (Kaiser, 1990:278) and made them more likely to complete the given questionnaire when they were invited to do so. The findings show that, compared to women, men across all population groups were more disposed to interpersonal and impersonal influences in terms of status consumption. The literature confirms that males may be more materialistic and are more orientated to external validation by visually depicting their status and achievements – emphasising their affinity for (status clothing) brands (O'Cass & McEwen, 2004).

6.2.4 Education level

Social standing is determined by various factors such as level of education (Solomon & Rabolt, 2004). For the purpose of data analysis, level of education was divided into four groups: Lower than Grade 12 (7.41%), Grade 12 (26.90%), degree or diploma (41.05%), and postgraduate degree (24.63%). The findings from the GLM that used normative receptiveness as an independent influencing factor indicated that as education levels increased, so did status consumption – up to a point. Subsequently, as the highest levels of education were reached, status consumption began to decrease. When considering impersonal influences and informative influences in the model, status consumption decreased as levels of education increased and did not pivot at a point. This might be because consumers with postgraduate degrees view their level of education as a status symbol and do not have the need to elevate their social standing through purchasing status clothing brands. The minor significant effect between education and impersonal influences (seen in the GLM) suggests that those respondents/individuals with higher education levels are more knowledgeable and are less susceptible to influences from others and the media.

6.2.5 Income

Of the sample, 39.72% had a monthly household income of R25 000 or more and 18.37% of the respondents had a monthly household income of R15 000 - R24 999. Over a quarter of the respondents (26.01%) earned R5 000 – R14 999 and 15.89% earned a monthly household income of less than R5 000. It has been suggested in theory that a larger income is aligned with a higher social standing (Shukla, 2010; Vyas & Kumaranayake, 2006; Lamont & Molnar, 2001). With the notable increase in disposable income in the South African middle class, consumer demand for luxury (status) products has also grown (PWC, 2012). However, the findings of this study depicted that individuals are less affected by interpersonal and impersonal influences as their income increased. The GLMs (**Figure 5.8** and **Figure 5.12**, respectively) showed that as individuals earn more, their susceptibility to interpersonal and impersonal influences in terms of status consumption decreased, then increased to a threshold and subsequently decreased. This is consistent with Cronje et al. (2016) who also found that middle income groups are more motivated by interpersonal influences than the higher income groups. However, the GLM (**Figure 5.16**) that used impersonal influences as an independent construct showed a steep decrease to a pivot point where after, as individuals moved to a higher income bracket, their status consumption increased. This notion is supported by the literature, as in economically emerging countries the desire for people to flaunt their rising income is apparent; and because social standing is associated with wealth, a means to communicate a high level of income and position in society is through visible products and status consumption (Kaus, 2013; Lamont & Molnar, 2001). Furthermore, spending on clothing is a clear signal of wealth in anonymous social interactions due to its prominent visibility (Charles *et al.*, 2009; Kamineni, 2005; O’Cass & Frost, 2002b), which explains why those with a high income would consume status clothing products to ‘show-off’ their wealth to their reference groups and broader society and gain social membership (Lamont & Molnar, 2001).

6.3 CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS REGARDING INTERPERSONAL INFLUENCES

Interpersonal influences are extended through socialising agents and concern the process in which an individual's beliefs, attitudes and behaviours are affected by others (Wang *et al.*, 2012; Singh *et al.*, 2003). This study hypothesized that there will be differences in interpersonal influences across different population groups' status consumption of clothing brands. Moreover, hypotheses were also created to propose differences in normative receptiveness and informative influences across the different population groups' status consumption of clothing brands. The impact of consumer socialisation in terms of interpersonal influences will also be incorporated into the following discussion.

6.3.1 Normative receptiveness

Normative receptiveness is essentially consumption decisions that are based on what the consumer believes will impress others (Ang *et al.*, 2001). Normative receptiveness, initially, included the dimensions – value expressiveness (a consumer's need to better their self-image by associating with specific reference groups) (Bearden *et al.*, 1989) and utilitarian influence (compliance to achieve acceptance from significant others and avoid punishment or sanctions) (McDonald, 2005:39; Solomon & Rabolt, 2004:2). It was found in this study that people did not distinguish between value expressiveness and utilitarian influences as the EFA collapsed the two dimensions into the single construct: normative receptiveness.

Normative receptiveness is considered a prominent influencing factor of status consumption as confirmed by the Pearson's correlation and the GLM. A high positive correlation of 0.801 was calculated indicating that status consumption is strongly influenced by other people's approval and the consumers of status products buy such goods as a means to impress others (Weber, 2014:9; Ang *et al.*, 2001) and to visibly fit into their social/reference group (Burger *et al.*, 2014; Goldsmith & Clark, 2012; O'Cass & McEwen, 2004; Lamont & Molnar, 2001). The findings of this study show that status consumption decisions are profoundly influenced by the behaviours and opinions of one's reference group, more so than informative and impersonal influences. This confirms the findings in literature as a consumer's purchasing decisions are said to be strongly influenced by the behaviours and opinions of group members and group expectations (Solomon & Rabolt, 2004:395).

Across population groups normative receptiveness significantly influenced status consumption of clothing brands. The significant differences were in terms of age, gender, level of education and income (as mentioned above). This is consistent with the literature that states that status consumption is influenced by consumer reference groups (Cronje *et al.*, 2016; O'Cass & McEwen, 2004). Moreover, symbolic peers and role-models who are prominent in the media, influence the purchasing behaviour of late adolescents and young adults (Lachance *et al.*, 2003; Mau, Schramm-Klein & Reisch, 2014) - this reiterates the effect normative receptiveness has on status consumption via consumer socialisation and interpersonal susceptibility. Status-conscious individuals examine their social environment and through this alter their purchasing behaviour to complement their desired status, to ensure their image complements that of their reference group and they avoid punishment for unacceptable behaviour (Burger *et al.*, 2014; Goldsmith & Clark, 2012; O'Cass & McEwen, 2004). Male respondents across the population groups were more susceptible to normative receptiveness, especially males belonging to the Coloured population group. Reinforcement occurs through punishment or reward given by socialising agents (i.e. reference groups) who accept or reject a person's behaviour (Moschis & Churchill, 1978; Wang *et al.*, 2012). Males model their behaviour on society, they have been socialised to interpret social

and cultural meanings linked to gender (Kaiser, 1997:73). This is apparent throughout history where men have succumbed to restricted dress codes that portrayed a serious and masculine image (Kaiser, 1997:79) that was mundane and conservative (Kaiser, 1997:87). For example, men's loafers have had few variations and for years have been perceived as masculine, comfortable, expensive and rather high in status (Kaiser, 1997:88). This idea of conforming to society and limitations on dress may be a reason why men revealed higher status consumption than women. Because they cannot show their social esteem through dress as much as females may be able to, they display their social position and tastes through status branded menswear. For example, a male partner at an accounting firm who wants to show his high position in the company may wear an Armani suit to exhibit his status as such a brand is reserved for a high-earning income group.

Of the four population groups, the Coloured and Black segments of the sample were most likely to be influenced by normative receptiveness when engaging in status consumption when compared to the remaining two population groups. This could be because Coloured and Black people have a collective cultural distinctiveness (Adams *et al.*, 2012) seen through their common consumption – meaning consumers appear to buy the same products as a means of fitting into their respective groups (Burton, 2005; Lamont & Molnar, 2001). This links to the idea of self-monitoring (ensuring they fit into their community), which influences the desire for status consumption (Ercis *et al.*, 2010; O'Cass & McEwen, 2004). The Coloured and Black populations collectivistic culture could justify why these population groups showed a difference from the White population group (who are more individualistic) in terms of normative receptiveness. This disparity in consumption among cultures is known as the phenomenon *socio-cultural variations* (Burton, 2005).

Consumer socialisation is said to differ across cultures and between developed and developing markets (Basu & Sondhi, 2014). Individuals who commonly have a shared culture, perspective and/or take part in shared activities are characterised as a reference group (Shibutani, 1974:32;250). People are shaped by their reference group's expectations (Burger *et al.*, 2014; Goldsmith & Clark, 2012; O'Cass & McEwen, 2004), as these groups serve as a point of comparison for a person and direct his/her behaviour by way of values or attitudes specific to the group (Kaiser, 1990:359). This confirms that normative receptiveness across population groups will be different as found in this study. Additionally, consumer socialisation has also been found to be influenced by collectivism and individuality – characteristics that differ between cultures (Escalas & Bettman, 2015; Yang *et al.*, 2014; Adams *et al.*, 2012; Workman & Lee, 2011; Üstüner & Holt, 2010). Thus in summary, the findings are supported by the literature regarding the following: consumer socialisation differs across population groups; this in turn creates differences in normative receptiveness as each population group will connect to their various cultural reference groups in a different manner with different ideologies for status consumption.

The findings of this study confirm that normative receptiveness has a significant impact on consumers' status consumption of clothing brands. Moreover, the literature indicated that the way a person socialises and learns from the environment is gained from socialising agents like one's reference group (Singh *et al.*, 2003; Wang *et al.*, 2012). Thus marketers could use normative receptiveness as a powerful marketing tool whereby brand or status product awareness could be created through, for example, word-of-mouth, where an individual and his/her reference group socialise around a product.

6.3.2 Informative influences

The learning processes of consumer socialisation exemplify informative influences and show that individuals mainly gain information via questioning, observation and experience (De la Ville & Tartas, 2010:29-31; Minahan & Huddleston, 2010; Neeley, 2005; Singh *et al.*, 2003). Informative influences force individuals to learn about consumption through information obtained from family, peers or others, which in turn influences product evaluations and consumer decision processes (Wang *et al.*, 2012; Sproles & Burns, 1994:149). The consumer socialisation theory confirms that informative influences help consumers to gain correct information about products and reduce risks when making a consumption decision (Goldsmith & Clark, 2012).

Informative influences initially had the dimensions of family or others and peer communication, yet the EFA collapsed these separate dimensions into the single construct *informative influences* – indicating that the sample did not distinguish between who they could approach for information. This could be because consumers consult whoever they feel is the most knowledgeable on the subject from which they are attempting to glean information. Interpersonal susceptibility relates to who can teach the individual about appropriate decision-making by wielding informative influences when the individual asks for information from the particular socialising agent/reference group and the group provides it accordingly (Kaiser, 1997:357). Thus, a socialising agent supplies informational group influence to the individual based on their previous experience and knowledge gained (Kaiser, 1997:357).

The findings indicate that informative influences can be regarded as a moderate influential factor for status consumption. Informative influences showed a significant effect on status consumption with reference to Pearson's correlation (0.569) and the GLM modelling – indicating that individuals might be more or less compelled to learn about (status) goods by obtaining from family, others or peer communication information that will influence their willingness to make a purchase (Wang *et al.*, 2012; Sproles & Burns, 1994:149).

However, across population groups, the findings showed no significant differences in terms of the effect of informative influences on status consumption. This was evident irrespective of age, income, gender or education. This could be because across population groups information from

family, peers or others is regarded in the same manner. In other words, for all population groups it is important to gain information about status products from those most knowledgeable about them. Thus reference groups and significant others are important socialisation agents, from whom information is collected (Burger *et al.*, 2014; Goldsmith & Clark, 2012; O’Cass & McEwen, 2004), irrespective of which population group a person belongs to. Thus, this study’s findings suggest that informative influences are not more important in some population groups than others. Ultimately, it can be deduced that across all the population groups, the idea of acquiring information from family, peers or others with regard to status clothing and the consumption thereof is similar.

With regard to the graphs (**Figures 5.9 to 5.12**), the marginal means for each model showed that the Black and then the Coloured population groups had the highest likelihood of their status consumption being influenced by informative influences, followed by the Indian and White population groups. Although, no significant difference in status consumption was found across the population groups, these marginal mean differences could in fact be supported by the literature as is evident in the previous section. It states that the Black population group’s greater affinity toward status consumption could originate from their economic deficit in the past and the need to visibly prove themselves equal to society at large (Adams *et al.*, 2012, Burton, 2005; Lamont & Molnar, 2001) – a credible reason for the Coloured population group too (Adams *et al.*, 2012); and that they may well be higher self-monitors who require information from their significant others to fit into their respective reference groups (Ercis *et al.*, 2010; O’Cass & McEwen, 2004) based on their collective cultural distinctiveness (Adams *et al.*, 2012).

6.4 CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS REGARDING IMPERSONAL INFLUENCES

Advertising and social media collapsed into the single construct, impersonal influences, in the data analysis indicating that the sample did not distinguish between the media format. Impersonal sources are considered a moderate to good influential factor for status consumption according to the GLM and Pearson’s correlation (0.627). This is consistent with the literature that suggests, one-way transmissions (traditional advertising) and interactive communications (social media or alternative/new media) amongst or between people, brands or retailers have a relative influence on status consumption (Vinerean *et al.*, 2013; Lee & Ma, 2012; Chu & Kim, 2011; Wright *et al.*, 2010; Kaiser, 1997:459). Advertising influences in particular directly affect consumer consumption (Liu, 2010) and also provide appearance imagery, moulding consumers’ ideas of an attractive, fashionable or suitable appearance (Lamont & Molnar, 2001; Kaiser, 1997:234).

Findings showed that all the population groups utilise impersonal sources of communication in more or less the same way and are equally responsive to these influences as regards their status consumption. The findings also indicate that minor significant differences regarding gender, level of

education and impersonal influences exist. **Figure 5.14** clearly shows that the notion of the effect of impersonal influences on status consumption is evident across all population groups. Moreover, the graph visually indicates the finding that males across all population groups tend to be more influenced by impersonal influences than females – with the Coloured male sample attaining the highest marginal mean and White females the lowest marginal mean. It is understood that advertising is used to create a desirable image applicable to specific social classes, or those who aspire to belong to a certain social class, to persuade such individuals to purchase the advertised (status) brand, regardless of price, to obtain a (perceived) status (Wilk, 2002; Kaiser, 1997:497). As men learn their social roles through society and media, they express their identity through material possessions (Kaiser, 1997:73,88,92). Moreover, men have been found to be more active in processing advertising cues and to be attracted to the conspicuous use of status products (O’Cass & McEwen, 2004). Also, status clothing brands are consumed to depict the consumers’ prestige and success and to boost their portrayed image (McDonald, 2005:184). These insights may explain why they are more susceptible to impersonal influences.

Additionally, the effect of impersonal influences in terms of level of education across the different population groups was also significant. A rise in status consumption among those who have degrees or diplomas was found. This is consistent with the literature (focusing on White females) that found that women of this population group who live in urban areas, have a higher level of education and higher income, and consume more status products than rural White women with less education (Riquelme, Rios & Al-Sharhan, 2011). Yet, the findings in this current study deviate slightly as they showed that with an even higher education (postgraduate), status consumption begins to diminish; indicating that consumers who obtain the highest levels of education may be less susceptible to status consumption.

Findings also indicated that the Coloured and Black populations showed a greater disposition to impersonal influences. This might be due to how marketers equate social membership to consumption or portray status and success in the media, thereby influencing their purchases (Lamont & Molnar, 2001). In this study by Lamont and Molnar (2001) an interviewee stated that money is seen as a “passport to acceptance” – suggesting that consumption is used as a tool to gain access into and recognition from social groups (Shukla, 2010; O’Cass & McEwen, 2004). With regard to the South African market, this means that status brands (which are already seen as a method to assert social rank – as discussed in this dissertation) could very well be marketed in such a way through normative receptiveness and/or impersonal influences to depict access to higher perceived social status. Furthermore, the results of a study conducted by Chu and Kim (2011) indicated that perceived tie strength is directly related to consumers’ intentions to seek and pass on product-focused information via online social media. This shows that social media is used by those who have some sort of relationship or group reference to disperse (status) product information. This all relates to the consumer socialisation theory where such impersonal influences

would affect consumption behaviour via socialising agents or learning processes. Advertising and social media, as stated, provide appearance imagery which people model themselves after to fit into a certain role or perceive a specific image. The learning dimension of consumer socialisation via impersonal influences is obtained through the information and (status) product-sharing available on advertising and media platforms. With this understanding and the findings obtained in this study, it can be suggested that marketers of status products could modify their marketing strategies to use electronic media – taking into account the influence and power such media has given consumers (Du Toit, 2013:90). The emphasis on social/digital media demonstrates that marketers need to focus on being consumer-centric because people's habits are changing (De Kock, 2015) and businesses need to keep up in order to turn a profit and remain relevant.

6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RETAIL AND MARKETERS

This research study has brought about a better understanding of the effects of interpersonal and impersonal influences on consumers' status consumption of clothing brands. Recommendations for retail and marketers in terms of how to use this to better position their status products, segment their target market as well as reach their target market are discussed next.

A useful marketing strategy and fundamental marketing concept, as touched on in Chapter 1, is market segmentation (Cravens & Piercy, 2013:71-75; Martins, 2002) as it allows brands to make informed decisions about which markets, or segments, to pursue as the most lucrative (Clark *et al.*, 2007; Mpinganjira, 2013:274-277), and it allows brands to allocate their resources to key customer groups (Cravens & Piercy, 2013:71-75; Mpinganjira, 2013:274-277). For instance, this study has brought to light that across all of the population groups, status consumption is significantly influenced by normative receptiveness and that the Coloured and Black population groups are marginally more predisposed to status consumption. Furthermore, men across all population groups show a higher affinity for status consumption. Thus, marketers could segment the South African market by targeting their status products through means of normative receptiveness (the most influential factor on status consumption as found in this study) to all males regardless of ethnicity. Marketers could even fine-tune their efforts to Coloured men using normative receptiveness and impersonal influences as this group showed that they would be most impacted by these factors in terms of driving their status consumption. Moreover, spontaneity, competence, quality, monetary value, and simplicity drive male fashion leaders (Workman & Cho, 2012). This highlights that marketers and retailers should provide the (status) product in an environment that includes all these factors.

Another innovative marketing strategy that could be used from the information gleaned in this study is as follows: a promotion code could be given to a consumer (on their first purchase of the status product being marketed) which the consumer can allocate to another five individuals. These nominated family members, friends or peers (reference group members) would subsequently be entitled to a percentage off their first purchase and would also be given the promotion code to allocate to another five individuals. It is likely that the chosen individuals will be a part of the initial consumer's reference group, thus the brand is able to directly penetrate their consumer market at its core – emphasising the idea of normative receptiveness and the effects of interpersonal influences on consumption, because through these referral codes the individual is more likely to use the promotion and buy the product as another member of their reference group has done so. Moreover, this promotion code strategy could also increase the brand's customer database and market for them to target as they will have the personal details of those individuals given the promotion code. Furthermore, in terms of a status clothing product, people who wear the clothing subsequently become 'walking advertisements' for the brand as they socialise with their respective reference groups and talk about the clothing they are wearing and the novel promotion that accompanied the purchase. This could lead to multiple subsequent purchases of the branded product as more people in the initial consumer's reference group acquire the products using the promotion, and as a means of fitting in, buy more of the brand that everyone in the reference group is now wearing. Thus the brand becomes a status signal for a specific reference group, and the consumers who wear the branded clothing become socialising agents to the rest of their group members as they teach them that wearing the brand is appropriate consumption behaviour and a means of conforming to group expectations.

In terms of impersonal influences, marketers can align their campaigns with social channels/social media that their targeted customers or prospective markets are presently using (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest, YouTube). This allows brands to join conversations that are already active and steer them towards the specified status products – thus using active social influence to their benefit. Another means to enlist customers is through the use of customer testimonials. These allow marketers to tap into cultural/reference groups and speak to the targeted customers on a personal level. Testimonials can act as socialising agents that provide actual or prospective customers with the information they desire and instil in them an idea of what is appropriate consumption (according to the status brand). For example, to target a person's need for an enhanced self-image within their reference group or to society at large (value expressiveness), a testimonial can be given whereby a consumer of the status product talks about how the product has made him or her feel more respected within his or her social/cultural group. This idea could especially work for male (status) consumers of any population group, as men are particularly susceptible to interpersonal influences (as established in this study) and learn their identity through other men via their reference groups or the media – to which they are also highly susceptible. With

this strategy retailers and marketers can combine interpersonal and impersonal influences to reach their target market.

The decision tree presented in Chapter 5 also brings about the idea of market segmentation and indicates marketers could target women of a certain education level through normative receptiveness. An example would include social media campaigns where information sharing and word-of-mouth can be instituted amongst this target market, introducing the relevant status brands or products to be retailed. Again social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube and Pinterest can be utilized to provide content and join conversations.

This study indicated that people do not distinguish between media formats (as social media and advertising collapsed into the single factor *Impersonal influences*) thus many creative means can be used by marketers to action the findings of this study and reach the targeted consumers in the best way possible. For example, user-generated content could be undertaken by a brand as a means of using interpersonal and impersonal influences to propagate status clothing brand consumption. A hash-tag with a catchy saying that epitomises the brand could be created for consumers to use to tag the brand in posts and images that they put up on social media showing them doing something enjoyable or pioneering and associated with the brand. For example, consumers of a high-end accessory brand could post a picture on Instagram of themselves having fun on a lavish yacht wearing the status brand's sunglasses; or consumers could post pictures of themselves shopping on the avenue des *Champs-Élysées* carrying a high status handbag for the world to see. This user-generated content can be used as part of the brands campaign to drive awareness and sales because potential consumers will be indirectly marketed to as they see ordinary people doing extraordinary things with the branded products – and they will want to emulate these individuals and the products they use. The people who create such content are not celebrity influencers, but are rather people with a more attainable social status, real people that a layman can associate with and may even belong to the same reference group as – this brings in the notion of interpersonal influences whereby a person's consumption is socialised by their significant others. Through such user generated content, the brand emphasises that anyone can attain a high status with the right branded products.

New status products should be made easily available to the targeted reference groups so members can discuss and drive each other's purchases. Moreover, retailers and marketers should work together to select merchandise that will communicate with the target market most effectively. Such merchandise can be communicated through advertising and social media in a manner that brings about the concept of consumer socialisation – whereby targeted socialising agents could influence members of their reference groups (target market) to consume the advertised status brand/product – as indicated above.

Even though the findings of this study didn't show consistent difference across population groups in terms of interpersonal and impersonal influences, other socio-cultural influences (i.e. identity, customs and traditions) might affect population groups differently. Because of worldwide increased competition fuelled by advances in the technology of transportation, manufacturing and communication (He *et al.*, 2010), the South African consumer market has also become a global market. Globalization has enabled individuals to cross borders – creating culturally diverse, heterogeneous populations (Burton, 2000). Furthermore, with the persistent influx of refugees and immigrants the world over for the past century (and still continuing), such individuals have started to, or have already settled into the societies in which they find themselves in spite of diversities in origins and religions (Burton, 2000). Because of this, it is emphasised that strategic multicultural marketing needs to be undertaken as the world becomes increasingly heterogeneous within societies, and distances inevitably become smaller (Burton, 2000). Tapping into consumer cultural identities and individualistic needs and wants is a necessity for successful marketing and campaigning (Lamont & Molnar, 2001). Understanding the composition of a multicultural consumer market nowadays is pertinent to marketing practices (Burton, 2000) and for companies to remain relevant and competitive. Tailoring campaigns to the individual cultural/population groups being targeted by a status brand will ensure that customers know that the brand understands their specific needs and lifestyle – that is, the need to complement those in their reference group. As consumer socialisation varies across cultures and between developed and developing markets (Basu & Sondhi, 2014) so needs and taste will also differ. Thus culture's impact on socialisation processes and outcomes (Yang *et al.*, 2014) indicate that consumer goods and advertising are dictated by culture (Laroche, Yang, Kim & Richard, 2007) and that products cannot always be advertised or presented to a broader population but should rather be fine-tuned to individual population groups to get the most revenue out of the most feasible target market.

Multicultural marketing views the market in diverse ethnic segments and aims to collect information from these potential customers relative to their different identities, customs, relationships and traditions (Burton, 2005; Lamont & Molnar, 2001). This marketing perspective can be used to better capture ethnic cultural worlds and define each population group as fundamentally distinct and add to identifying and reinforcing this individuality (Lamont & Molnar, 2001). Targeting different population group markets is seen as appropriate due to the increasing size and buying power of these markets, as well as their vast growth potential (Burton, 2000). Many firms have included innovative marketing strategies like new product lines, customised promotions and focused marketing to reap the benefits from multicultural markets (Burton, 2000). South Africa has a large and rising population of consumers with increasing disposable income that has become important to international and local retailers (Anton *et al.*, 2016; Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited, 2015; PWC, 2012). The South African market has previously been treated as a single market; however, better segmentation of this market needs to occur in order for marketers to better position their

status products through more effective marketing communications. There is a plethora of opportunity in the South African market that must be tapped into.

Products are bought by consumers not only for functional purposes but also to generate and uphold a desired social image that may emanate from the use of a specific brand (He *et al.*, 2010). Individuals use brands to interact with other people by communicating aspects of their identity. Interestingly, marketers to the Black community in the USA believe that they play a social role in which they provide a positive and truthful image of the Black population with regard to their purchasing power – and in turn also bring about an element of renewed respect for this population group (Lamont & Molnar, 2001). The Black population's conspicuous/status consumption could also be due to the targeted marketing they experience, whereby their increased level of spending on status products could arise from how marketers equate social membership to consumption (Lamont & Molnar, 2001). This study attempts to display the need for marketers to align their marketing endeavours with the interests and influencers of diverse South African population groups; however, it must be done ethically. Multicultural marketing should not merely be a money-making scheme but rather a means to target the different population groups morally and provide them with products and services most suited to them and promote a sense of community within groups and reverence between groups.

Social membership and the display of buying power and consumption connect intimately with a positive group identity (Lamont & Molnar, 2001). Marketers can use cultural uniqueness to market the same product to a specific population group's tastes and usage (Lamont & Molnar, 2001). For example, a clothing brand could style their pieces presented in their advertising campaigns in different ways to best suit the different preferences of the diverse population groups. Marketing agencies are defining Black consumers as essentially individual and distinct from other ethnic groups, and marketers are now striving to produce and reinforce this fundamental uniqueness (Lamont & Molnar, 2001). The move to segmented ethnic marketing has widened the range of tools and approaches (such as personal interviews and ethnographics) used by marketers to improve upon capturing diverse ethnic cultural worlds (Lamont & Molnar, 2001). Marketers to the South African market could use normative receptiveness (e.g. reference groups or cultural collectivism) to engage in positive group identity and market status products that will most adequately fit this identity. This could be done by using groups of friends in adverts or using word-of-mouth tools in social media (like the share option on Facebook) to make consumers aware of and spread information about status products.

The results of this study have produced some scope for market researchers by offering insight into the reasons behind status consumption across the various South African population groups. Moreover, this study depicts the motivation behind status consumption in terms of interpersonal influences and impersonal sources. An improved understanding of the studied sample should

enable marketers and retailers to obtain the respective market's attention. The findings should also enable marketers and retailers to generate a more loyal customer base – by providing clothing that caters precisely to the group's needs for status and being able to modify their shopping experience according to their attitude towards status products.

It can be said that this study has offered insights into the South African markets status consumption behaviour. Nevertheless, it can be recommended that more research into this market group should be undertaken to gain even more insight.

6.6 LIMITATIONS AND POSSIBILITIES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Even though particular care was taken throughout this study to ensure that the research was conducted in an ethical manner and to establish validity and reliability, certain limitations have to be noted.

This research was undertaken for the purposes of a postgraduate degree. It was to be completed within a two-year period. This aspect influenced decisions with regard to the planning and execution of the research. Some financial support was provided by a bursary from The University of Pretoria for tuition fees. Nevertheless, financial resources were limited – this influenced the sample size and the population that could be considered to participate in the study. Thus it can be said that limited finances influenced the sample size and sampling method. The sample consisted of 1014 respondents, obtained from a quota and a convenience sampling method. Although a large sample was recruited, this is still a rather small sample size and cannot be used as the basis for generalised results. The fact that a convenience sample was used brings about a sampling error – which will inevitably limit the study's accuracy (Berndt & Petzer, 2011:147). The effects of this error can be lessened in future research by using an even bigger sample closer to the population size (Berndt & Petzer, 2011:147) even though this may not be so viable as it may become very costly. Using a non-probability sampling may have been a factor in the low frequencies of Black, Indian and Coloured respondents relative to White respondents. Even though a quota sampling procedure was followed to ensure all the population groups were included, equal representation of all population groups was still not achieved. This emphasises the restrictions and shortcomings of these types of sampling techniques (Berndt & Petzer, 2011:173-174). Moreover, convenience sampling techniques permitted the trained assistants to distribute the questionnaires among their friends and peers. As the majority of the trained fieldworkers were white female fourth year students, it is possible that most of their friends, family and peers who were invited to participate are of the same population group (as this study investigated in depth). Thus, the majority of respondents were from the White population group. To ensure this does not occur in

future studies and for a more equal representation of each population group under study, each trained assistant can be allotted a specific number of respondents from each population group from which to collect data, or data can be collected through a data company like *Consulta Research*, or the research can be applied to a bigger population.

Findings of this study were limited to respondents, male and female over the age of 19 living in Tshwane – the sampling was limited to Tshwane due to financial and time constraints. Moreover, most of the respondents were less than 30 years old, belonged to the White population group, earned R25 000 or more per month and had some form of tertiary education which made these groups over-represented. Consequently, these results cannot be generalised to the larger South African population as the data may not be a truthful reflection of all the South African consumers (with regard to the population groups under study). Future studies can take place in other geographic areas to determine whether the results of this study are viable in more areas in South Africa. Further comparative studies can be conducted by comparing in depth different ages in the status product consumer market, to discover whether there are similarities and/or differences across generational groups. It could be insightful to perform comparative studies concerning the consumer groups' income levels from which to draw inferences. Additionally, applying this study solely to males and females as a comparative study to gain more insights about the gender differences in status consumption and their attraction to interpersonal and impersonal influences could be interesting and assist in creating marketing strategies. Research concerning the effects of interpersonal influences and impersonal influences on status consumption is lacking, thus further study on this topic will assist in filling the knowledge gap.

Self-administered questionnaires were used in this research to collect data as they are comparatively cheap and less time-consuming. The use of trained fieldworkers enabled respondents to ask for clarity with regard to any uncertainties they may have had; however, bias from respondents' misinterpretation of the questions was still possible. Quantitative methodologies like this dissertation present a lot of promise regarding the study of consumers' status-consumption motivation and intent to purchase status clothing brands. However, there is a need in the research for a further understanding of how and why interpersonal and impersonal influences impact on consumer status consumption and what influence the socio-psychological factors have on the intentions and behaviours to purchase status clothing brands. Thus, qualitative methods could be used in future studies to obtain a greater understanding as to why the respondents of this study gave their particular answers. This will allow researchers to obtain detailed insights regarding the target population's motivations for or against the consumption of status products. Furthermore, a longitudinal design could be followed in future studies where certain respondents can be studied over a longer period of time in order to identify any changes in status consumption or susceptibility to interpersonal or impersonal influences over a specified number of years or as life changes occur. However, this will entail a great deal more financial support and time.

To better understand the way in which status consumption may be affected by impersonal influences, a future study could be conducted to identify if different formats of social media (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Tinder, Tumblr etc.) usage has a significant impact on the purchasing of status products. This study does shed light on the increasing use of social media in South Africa (Goldstuck, 2016) as well as social media platforms used to indicate an individual's status (Lee & Ma, 2012). The study also noted that brands use social media for marketing purposes (Cravens & Piercy, 2013:392). Therefore, more insights will allow marketers to see if there is an ever-increasing direct correlation between social media usage and status consumption. Additionally, spokesperson or brand ambassador endorsements of status products through impersonal sources of communication could also be delved into in future studies as such individuals are seen to be part of aspirational reference groups and would thus be identified as socialising agents to the relevant individuals being targeted by the status brand. For example, status brand awareness and consumption could be promoted on the Instagram pages of relevant South African influencers like TV and radio personality Bonang Matheba, hip hop artist AKA or celebrity Pearl Thusi, who inspire ordinary to live their lifestyles and consequently consume the products they do.

Additionally, future studies could also extend the knowledge gained from this study about the relationship between status consumption and interpersonal influences by measuring the closeness of the relationship the sample has with their family, friends and colleagues. Interpersonal influences are understood to be more substantial when an individual is closer to or more interested in their significant others or associated group (Burger *et al.*, 2014; Dos Santos, 2013:167-169; Goldsmith & Clark, 2012; O'Cass & McEwen, 2004). Furthermore, marketers and retailers could do research concerning what specific status products fit their consumer according to aspects like population group or gender. For example, products may need to be differentiated in a specific way to a Black male consumer as opposed to a Coloured female consumer. It is in the marketer's or retailer's interest to find out how in order to create the best possible avenue for the consumer to buy their status goods. Thus in-depth research into each customer profile is essential.

This current study focused solely on interpersonal and impersonal influences for status consumption without the consideration of other motivational factors that may align with buying clothing for special occasions or events, for instance graduations or weddings. Investigating other psychographic and social influences in terms of specific events could bring about a higher propensity toward status consumption in developing markets (Cronje *et al.*, 2016). Moreover, future studies could investigate at specifically which stage of the consumer socialisation learning processes status consumption is likely to be learnt or have the greatest impact on consumer behaviour, and which specific socialising agents are most likely to bring about interpersonal susceptibility and status consumption.

Ultimately, future studies could also look into the amount of acculturation established in South Africa - if the country and its inhabitants are moving towards complete assimilation into one society or if there will always be an established separate sense of identity within the South African community at large (Burton, 2005). Or future studies could even delve into the effects of interpersonal and impersonal influences on status consumption of immigrants to South Africa, looking into acculturation also.

6.7 FINAL CONCLUSION

In an attempt to better understand the drivers of and market for status products in South Africa this study contributes by filling the knowledge gap in terms of interpersonal and impersonal influences that drive status consumption.

The findings from this dissertation present useful information to marketers to create their own segmentation strategies regarding the marketing of status laden products or services to the South African market. Marketers should advocate discussions regarding the different population group segments of the market and deduce potential implications for consumption, marketing strategies and management as well as diverse consumer behaviour.

This study also identified that no matter how diverse the population of South Africa may be, all people belonging to the various population groups (and their status consumption) are influenced by interpersonal and impersonal influences. True, some population groups may be more susceptible to such influences than others, but to some extent, interpersonal and impersonal influences affect people's status consumption. Thus it can be concluded that this study shows that individuals become socialised via these interpersonal and impersonal influences.

This research can be used to fine-tune market segmentation and interpersonal and/or impersonal influences can be used to target specific consumers – as established in the recommendations section of this chapter. Furthermore, this study brings to light that people want to conform to their reference groups – as indicated via normative receptiveness being the most effective influence on people's status consumption. Moreover, informative sources like family, friends and peers (reference groups) and impersonal sources (like the media, be it user-generated content, brand-generated advertising or conversational content on social media platforms) can be used by marketers to modify the format or way in which they want to present status brands, status clothing brands and/or status products to the market.

Lastly, throughout this study the theory of consumer socialisation was used to explain differences in consumer socialisation and the importance of socialisation agents in consumers' decision-making behaviour. The theory provided was effective as it highlights the use of socialising agents and learning processes as a means for consumers to learn and adhere to what is seen as appropriate consumption. Moreover, interpersonal susceptibility seems to be a very important aspect as normative receptiveness was found to be the most important influencing factor across all populations' status consumption.

Ultimately, based on this research, there is an assortment of recommendations made for future research or build onto this existing study. Topics relating to status consumption, interpersonal influences and impersonal influences can certainly be expanded on and researched more in the clothing industry. Moreover, this complex consumer behaviour still requires more research to acquire more in-depth information and understanding of the impact of interpersonal and impersonal influences on status consumption – especially across population groups in South Africa.



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ADDENDUM A

Plagiarism declaration

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

The Department of Consumer Science places great emphasis upon integrity and ethical conduct in the preparation of all written work submitted for academic evaluation. While academic staff teaches you about referencing techniques and how to avoid plagiarism, you too have a responsibility in this regard. If you are at any stage uncertain as to what is required, you should speak to your lecturer before any written work is submitted.

You are guilty of plagiarism if you copy something from another author's work (eg a book, an article or a website) without acknowledging the source and pass it off as your own. In effect you are stealing something that belongs to someone else. This is not only the case when you copy work word-for-word (verbatim), but also when you submit someone else's work in a slightly altered form (paraphrase) or use a line of argument without acknowledging it. You are not allowed to use work previously produced by another student. You are also not allowed to let anybody copy your work with the intention of passing it off as his/her work.

Students who commit plagiarism will not be given any credit for plagiarised work. The matter may also be referred to the Disciplinary Committee (Students) for a ruling. Plagiarism is regarded as a serious contravention of the University's rules and can lead to expulsion from the University. The declaration which follows must accompany all written work submitted while you are a student of the Department of Consumer Science. No written work will be accepted unless the declaration has been completed and attached.

Full names of student: **Stavroula Kolatsis**

Student number: **10164848**

Topic of work: **Interpersonal and impersonal influences on different population groups' clothing brand status consumption in an emerging context**

Declaration

1. I understand what plagiarism is and am aware of the University's policy in this regard.
2. I declare that this research proposal is my own original work. Where other people's work has been used (either from a printed source, Internet or any other source), this has been properly acknowledged and referenced in accordance with departmental requirements.

3. I have not used work previously produced by another student or any other person to hand in as my own.
4. I have not allowed, and will not allow, anyone to copy my work with the intention of passing it off as his or her own work.

SIGNATURE

.....

ADDENDUM B

Ethics approval



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences
Ethics Committee

E-mail: ethics.nas@up.ac.za

Date: 02/07/2016

ETHICS SUBMISSION: LETTER OF APPROVAL

Dr S Donoghue
Department of Consumer Science
Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences
University of Pretoria

Reference number: EC160606-045

Project title: An exploration of the differences in consumers' purchase and consumption of selected products based on specific consumer-related variables in an emerging context

Dear Dr Donoghue,

We are pleased to inform you that your submission conforms to the requirements of the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences Ethics committee on the condition that the only participation of the subjects is as described in the proposal narrative.

Please note that you are required to submit annual progress reports (no later than two months after the anniversary of this approval) until the project is completed. Completion will be when the data has been analysed and documented in a postgraduate student's thesis or dissertation, or in a paper or a report for publication. The progress report document is accessible of the NAS faculty's website: Research/Ethics Committee.

If you wish to submit an amendment to the application, you can also obtain the amendment form on the NAS faculty's website: Research/Ethics Committee.

The digital archiving of data is a requirement of the University of Pretoria. The data should be accessible in the event of an enquiry or further analysis of the data.

Yours sincerely,

P/P M Potgieter

Chairperson: NAS Ethics Committee

ADDENDUM C

Questionnaire



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences
Department of Consumer Science
+27 012 420 2488/ 2575

3 May 2016

Dear respondent

RESEARCH PROJECT: An investigation of consumer-related characteristics influencing specific types of purchase decisions

Thank you for considering participation in this research project that the final year students in the Department of Consumer Science have to execute as part of an investigation that has been on-going for the past four years. Our research has attracted the interest of prominent industries in South Africa, as part of a specific research focus in our department. Students have to submit their contributions in the form of a scientifically documented research script as part of the prerequisites for obtaining their B Consumer Science degrees.

The purpose of the 2016 research endeavour is to gain a better understanding of consumer-related characteristic influencing specific types of purchase decisions. To take part in this study, you must reside in Tshwane. It will take approximately 15 minutes of your time to complete this questionnaire. Please answer the questions carefully and give your honest opinion throughout. There is no right or wrong answer.

All information will be dealt with anonymously and it will not be possible to eventually trace your information back to you in any way as the questionnaires are completed anonymously and are returned in sealed envelopes. If, for any reason, you wish to withdraw anyway, please feel free to inform the student. Respondents may provide their cell phone details voluntarily on the tear off strip below and enter it into a separate envelope for participation in a lucky draw to win a gift voucher to

the value of R500 at the closure of data collection. Three names will be drawn, and the winner will be notified telephonically.

Please read the questions carefully and give your honest opinion throughout. **Thank you for your participation!**

RESEARCH COORDINATORS: DR S DONOGHUE AND PROF ALET C ERASMUS

CONTACT: 012 420 2488/ 012 420 2575



IF YOU WISH TO PARTICIPATE IN THE LUCKY DRAW, PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR CELL NUMBER ONLY AND PLACE THE STRIP IN THE ENVELOPE WHEN RETURNING YOUR COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE

CELL NUMBER: _____

Section B: PRESTIGE OF CLOTHING BRANDS

2. The following statements investigate your thoughts/ actions about the prestige of the clothing brands that you buy compared to the brands that other people buy or own. Please respond to every statement honestly and indicate your response with an X in the adjacent column. In terms of clothing brands	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Undecided/neutral	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Office use	
I chat about clothing brands with my friends/colleagues on social media	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V2.1	
Advertisements give me an idea of which clothing brands people with lifestyles similar to mine are using	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V2.2	
A clothing brand is more valuable to me if it has some snob appeal	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V2.3	
It is important that others like the clothing brands I buy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V2.4	
Advertisements give me an idea of which clothing brands to buy to impress others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V2.5	
I ask my friends/colleagues for advice about which clothing brands to buy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V2.6	
I like to know which clothing brands will impress others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V2.7	
Advertisements are helpful to know which clothing brands will, or will not reflect the kind of person I am	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V2.8	
I often identify with other people by purchasing the same clothing brands as them	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V2.9	
If I want to be like someone, I often try to buy the same clothing brands that they buy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V2.10	
The status of a clothing brand is irrelevant to me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V2.11	
If other people can see which clothing brands I use, I tend to purchase the brands they would expect me to buy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V2.12	
I generally purchase clothing brands that I think others will approve of	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V2.13	
I would pay more for a clothing brand if it had status	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V2.14	
I often consult others to help me choose the best option available from a range of brands	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V2.15	
Social media (e.g. Facebook/ Twitter/Instagram) indicates to me what clothing brands to buy to impress others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V2.16	
I am interested in new clothing brands with status	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V2.17	
Social media (e.g. Facebook/ Twitter/Instagram) indicates to me which clothing brands will or will not reflect the kind of person I am	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V2.18	
I rarely purchase the latest fashion styles unless I am sure my friends/colleagues approve of them	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V2.19	
Social media (e.g. Facebook/ Twitter/Instagram) helps me keep up with fashion trends	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V2.20	
I frequently consult family members about a clothing brand before I buy it	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V2.21	
To ensure I buy the right clothing brand, I often observe what others are buying or using	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V2.22	
I would buy a clothing brand just because it has status	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V2.23	
My friends/colleagues encourage me to buy clothing brands that would impress others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V2.24	
If I have little experience with a clothing brand, I would ask my family about the brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V2.25	
Social media (e.g. Facebook/ Twitter/Instagram) tells me what clothing brands people with lifestyles similar to mine are using	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V2.26	
I achieve a sense of belonging by purchasing the same clothing brands that others purchase	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V2.27	
I get information about clothing brands that have status from my friends/colleagues	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V2.28	
Advertisements are useful to me to keep up with current fashion trends	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V2.29	

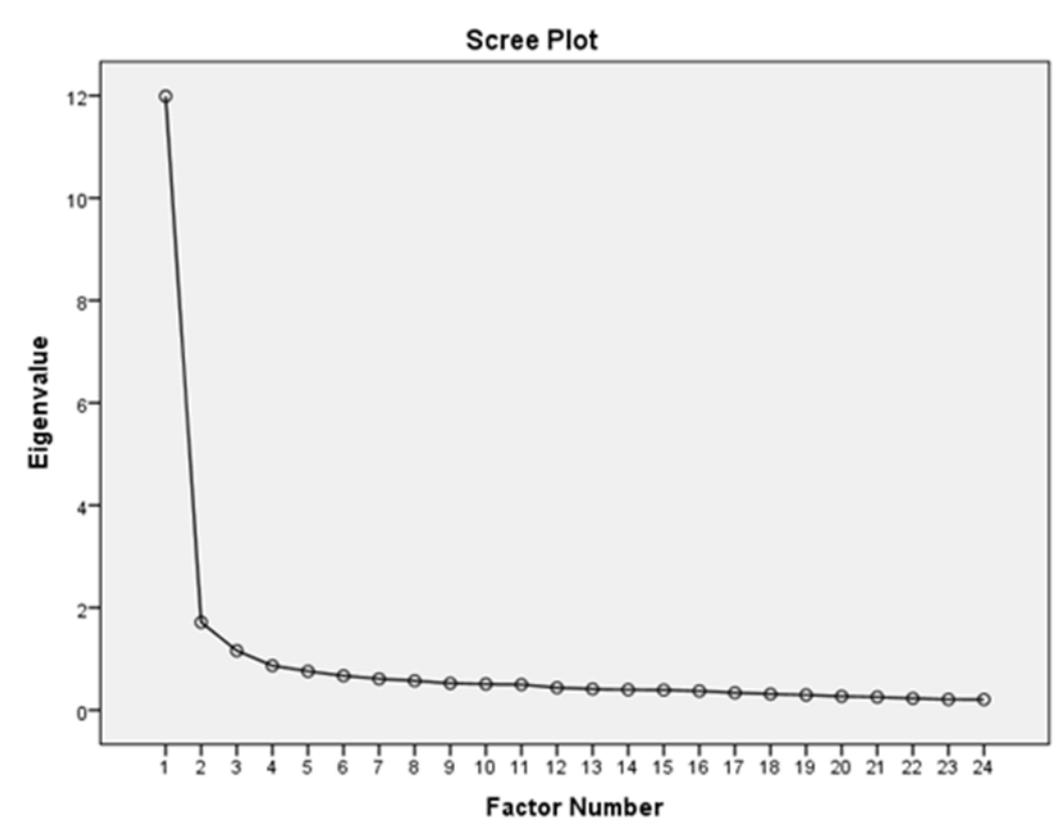
Section F: TELL US MORE ABOUT YOURSELF											Office use			
This section is as important. Please answer every question by marking every relevant answer with an X														
What is your gender?				Male		1	Female		2		V8.1			
What is your age?						Years					V8.2			
What is your completed highest level of education?		Lower than grade 10	1	Grade 10 or 11	2	Grade 12	3	Grade 12 + Degree/ diploma	4	Post graduate	5	V8.3		
What is your approximate total monthly HOUSEHOLD INCOME (Bruto – before deductions)?		Less than R5000	1	R5000 to R9999	2	R10000 to R14999	3	R15000 to R24999	4	R25000 or more	5	V8.4		
What population group do you belong to according to the SA Population Equity Act?														
White	1	Black	2	Indian	3	Coloured	4	Asian-	5	Other: Please specify		6	V8.5	
What is the name of the suburb where you live in Tshwane? <i>Please specify.</i>												V8.6		

Thank you for your participation!

Remember to enter your cell phone number on the separate tear slip if you wish to enter into the lucky draw for the gift voucher.

ADDENDUM D

Scree plots from exploratory factor analysis



ADDENDUM E

Parameter estimates from GLM

(Note: in all the following tables the dependent variable is Status Consumption)

TABLE E.1: PARAMETER ESTIMATES FOR NORMATIVE RECEPTIVENESS ACROSS POPULATION GROUPS AND AGE GROUPS

Parameter	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Intercept	0.473	0.306	1.543	0.123	-0.129	1.074
Normative Receptiveness	0.842	0.097	8.685	0.000	0.652	1.033
Age Group=1 (< 30 years)	0.294	0.230	1.274	0.203	-0.158	0.745
Age Group=2 (30-39 years)	0.315	0.228	1.381	0.168	-0.133	0.763
Age Group=3 (40-49 years)	0.262	0.235	1.112	0.267	-0.200	0.724
Age Group=4 (50-59 years)	0.193	0.239	0.808	0.419	-0.276	0.663
Age Group=5 (>60 years)	0 ^a					
Age Group=1 * Normative receptiveness	-0.009	0.074	-0.116	0.907	-0.153	0.136
Age Group=2 * Normative receptiveness	-0.030	0.073	-0.406	0.685	-0.173	0.113
Age Group=3 * Normative receptiveness	-0.050	0.077	-0.647	0.518	-0.200	0.101
Age Group=4 * Normative receptiveness	-0.042	0.081	-0.525	0.600	-0.201	0.116
Age Group=5 * Normative receptiveness	0 ^a					
Population group=1 (White)	-0.401	0.255	-1.574	0.116	-0.902	0.099
Population group=2 (Black)	-0.055	0.264	-0.208	0.836	-0.573	0.463
Population group=3 (Indian)	-0.612	0.361	-1.695	0.090	-1.320	0.097
Population group=4 (Coloured)	0 ^a					
Population group=1 * Normative receptiveness	0.058	0.084	0.694	0.488	-0.106	0.222
Population group=2 * Normative receptiveness	-0.017	0.084	-0.201	0.841	-0.182	0.148
Population group=3 * Normative receptiveness	0.182	0.114	1.590	0.112	-0.042	0.406
Population group=4 * Normative receptiveness	0 ^a					

TABLE E.2: PARAMETER ESTIMATES FOR NORMATIVE RECEPTIVENESS ACROSS POPULATION GROUPS AND GENDER

Parameter	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Intercept	0.668	0.241	2.771	0.006	0.195	1.140
Normative receptiveness	0.824	0.078	10.549	0.000	0.670	0.977
Gender=1 (Male)	0.183	0.128	1.426	0.154	-0.069	0.434
Gender=2 (Female)	0 ^a					
Gender=1 * Normative receptiveness	-0.038	0.042	-0.910	0.363	-0.120	0.044
Gender=2 * Normative receptiveness	0 ^a					
Population group=1 (White)	-0.474	0.251	-1.888	0.059	-0.967	0.019
Population group=2 (Black)	-0.028	0.260	-0.107	0.915	-0.539	0.483
Population group=3 (Indian)	-0.602	0.362	-1.662	0.097	-1.312	0.109
Population group=4 (Coloured)	0 ^a					
Population group=1 * Normative receptiveness	0.082	0.083	0.993	0.321	-0.080	0.245
Population group=2 * Normative receptiveness	-0.020	0.084	-0.237	0.812	-0.185	0.145
Population group=3 * Normative receptiveness	0.178	0.115	1.553	0.121	-0.047	0.403
Population group=4 * Normative receptiveness	0 ^a					

TABLE E.3: PARAMETER ESTIMATES FOR NORMATIVE RECEPTIVENESS ACROSS POPULATION GROUPS AND EDUCATION LEVEL

Parameter	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Intercept	0.672	0.266	2.523	0.012	0.149	1.195
Normative receptiveness	0.806	0.089	9.077	0.000	0.632	0.981
Education level=1 (Lower than Grade 12)	-0.049	0.309	-0.159	0.873	-0.655	0.556
Education level=2 (Grade 12)	0.243	0.177	1.374	0.170	-0.104	0.590
Education level=3 (Degree or diploma)	0.023	0.160	0.144	0.886	-0.291	0.337
Education level=4 (Postgraduate)	0 ^a					
Education level=1 * Normative receptiveness	0.015	0.089	0.171	0.864	-0.159	0.190
Education level=2 * Normative receptiveness	-0.049	0.061	-0.798	0.425	-0.169	0.071
Education level=3 * Normative receptiveness	0.032	0.056	0.578	0.564	-0.078	0.143
Education level=4 * Normative receptiveness	0 ^a					
Population group=1(White)	-0.494	0.252	-1.960	0.050	-0.990	0.001
Population group=2 (Black)	-0.029	0.261	-0.112	0.911	-0.540	0.482
Population group=3 (Indian)	-0.588	0.357	-1.647	0.100	-1.289	0.113
Population group=4 (Coloured)	0 ^a					
Population group=1 * Normative receptiveness	0.090	0.084	1.078	0.281	-0.074	0.254
Population group=2 * Normative receptiveness	-0.021	0.084	-0.243	0.808	-0.186	0.145
Population group=3 * Normative receptiveness	0.169	0.114	1.488	0.137	-0.054	0.393
Population group=4 * Normative receptiveness	0 ^a					

TABLE E.4: PARAMETER ESTIMATES FOR NORMATIVE RECEPTIVENESS ACROSS POPULATION GROUPS AND INCOME

Parameter	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Intercept	0.647	0.249	2.600	0.009	0.159	1.135
Normative receptiveness	0.843	0.083	10.146	0.000	0.680	1.006
Income=1 (<R5 000)	0.315	0.212	1.489	0.137	-0.100	0.730
Income=2 (R5 000 - R9 999)	0.321	0.210	1.531	0.126	-0.090	0.733
Income=3 (R10 000 - R14 999)	-0.114	0.196	-0.579	0.562	-0.499	0.272
Income=4 (R15 000 - R24 999)	0.074	0.171	0.436	0.663	-0.261	0.410
Income=5 (R25 000 or more)	0 ^a					
Income=1 * Normative receptiveness	-0.111	0.063	-1.751	0.080	-0.235	0.013
Income=2 * Normative receptiveness	-0.135	0.067	-2.019	0.044	-0.267	-0.004
Income=3 * Normative receptiveness	0.000	0.067	-0.006	0.995	-0.132	0.132
Income=4 * Normative receptiveness	-0.004	0.060	-0.062	0.950	-0.122	0.114
Income=5 * Normative receptiveness	0 ^a					
Population group=1 (White)	-0.444	0.252	-1.763	0.078	-0.938	0.050
Population group=2 (Black)	-0.078	0.263	-0.295	0.768	-0.594	0.438
Population group=3 (Indian)	-0.613	0.362	-1.692	0.091	-1.324	0.098
Population group=4 (Coloured)	0 ^a					
Population group=1 * Normative receptiveness	0.074	0.084	0.884	0.377	-0.090	0.239
Population group=2 * Normative receptiveness	0.007	0.085	0.085	0.933	-0.159	0.174
Population group=3 * Normative receptiveness	0.169	0.116	1.465	0.143	-0.058	0.396
Population group=4 * Normative receptiveness	0 ^a					

TABLE E.5: PARAMETER ESTIMATES FOR INFORMATIVE INFLUENCE ACROSS POPULATION GROUPS AND AGE GROUPS

Parameter	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Intercept	0.804	0.421	1.908	0.057	-0.023	1.631
Informative influences	0.633	0.118	5.367	0.000	0.402	0.865
Age Group=1 (< 30 years)	0.667	0.316	2.113	0.035	0.048	1.286
Age Group=2 (30-39 years)	0.686	0.314	2.182	0.029	0.069	1.303
Age Group=3 (40-49 years)	0.164	0.323	0.507	0.612	-0.471	0.799
Age Group=4 (50-59 years)	0.356	0.320	1.110	0.267	-0.273	0.985
Age Group=5 (>60 years)	0 ^a					
Age Group=1 * Informative influences	-0.137	0.090	-1.516	0.130	-0.315	0.040
Age Group=2 * Informative influences	-0.136	0.092	-1.478	0.140	-0.317	0.045
Age Group=3 * Informative influences	-0.018	0.096	-0.191	0.848	-0.207	0.170
Age Group=4 * Informative influences	-0.133	0.096	-1.384	0.167	-0.321	0.056
Age Group=5 * Informative influences	0 ^a					
Population group=1 (White)	-0.202	0.347	-0.582	0.561	-0.882	0.478
Population group=2 (Black)	0.046	0.359	0.129	0.897	-0.658	0.750
Population group=3 (Indian)	-0.561	0.524	-1.070	0.285	-1.590	0.468
Population group=4 (Coloured)	0 ^a					
Population group=1 * Informative influences	-0.010	0.099	-0.096	0.924	-0.204	0.185
Population group=2 * Informative influences	-0.004	0.101	-0.038	0.970	-0.202	0.194
Population group=3 * Informative influences	0.169	0.148	1.142	0.254	-0.121	0.459
Population group=4 * Informative influences	0 ^a					

TABLE E.6: PARAMETER ESTIMATES FOR INFORMATIVE INFLUENCE ACROSS POPULATION GROUPS AND GENDER

Parameter	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Intercept	1.170	0.321	3.645	0.000	0.540	1.800
Informative influences	0.534	0.091	5.860	0.000	0.355	0.713
Gender=1 (Male)	0.221	0.173	1.279	0.201	-0.118	0.560
Gender=2 (Female)	0 ^a					
Gender=1 * Informative influences	0.025	0.051	0.500	0.617	-0.074	0.125
Gender=2 * Informative influences	0 ^a					
Population group=1 (White)	-0.270	0.336	-0.803	0.422	-0.929	0.389
Population group=2 (Black)	0.110	0.349	0.317	0.751	-0.574	0.795
Population group=3 (Indian)	-0.494	0.519	-0.950	0.342	-1.513	0.526
Population group=4 (Coloured)	0 ^a					
Population group=1 * Informative influences	-0.013	0.097	-0.134	0.893	-0.204	0.177
Population group=2 * Informative influences	-0.025	0.099	-0.252	0.801	-0.219	0.169
Population group=3 * Informative influences	0.131	0.147	0.894	0.371	-0.157	0.420
Population group=4 * Informative influences	0 ^a					

TABLE E.7: PARAMETER ESTIMATES FOR INFORMATIVE INFLUENCE ACROSS POPULATION GROUPS AND EDUCATION LEVEL

Parameter	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Intercept	1.234	0.356	3.467	0.001	0.535	1.932
Informative influences	0.491	0.102	4.806	0.000	0.291	0.692
Education level=1 (Lower than Grade 12)	0.215	0.384	0.559	0.577	-0.539	0.969
Education level=2 (Grade 12)	-0.044	0.238	-0.184	0.854	-0.512	0.424
Education level=3 (Degree or diploma)	0.065	0.212	0.307	0.759	-0.351	0.481
Education level=4 (Postgraduate)	0 ^a					
Education=1 * Informative influences	0.060	0.101	0.592	0.554	-0.139	0.259
Education=2 * Informative influences	0.095	0.072	1.317	0.188	-0.046	0.236
Education level=3 * Informative influences	0.049	0.064	0.763	0.446	-0.077	0.175
Education level=4 * Informative influences	0 ^a					
Population group=1 (White)	-0.283	0.340	-0.831	0.406	-0.949	0.384
Population group=2 (Black)	0.120	0.352	0.342	0.732	-0.570	0.811
Population group=3 (Indian)	-0.581	0.517	-1.125	0.261	-1.595	0.433
Population group=4 (Coloured)	0 ^a					
Population group=1 * Informative influences	0.003	0.099	0.027	0.979	-0.191	0.196
Population group=2 * Informative influences	-0.036	0.101	-0.360	0.719	-0.234	0.161
Population group=3 * Informative influences	0.171	0.147	1.161	0.246	-0.118	0.460
Population group=4 * Informative influences	0 ^a					

TABLE E.8: PARAMETER ESTIMATES FOR INFORMATIVE INFLUENCE ACROSS POPULATION GROUPS AND INCOME

Parameter	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Intercept	1.265	0.338	3.746	0.000	0.602	1.928
Informative influences	0.531	0.098	5.408	0.000	0.339	0.724
Income=1 (<R5 000)	0.208	0.300	0.694	0.488	-0.381	0.797
Income=2 (R5 000 - R9 999)	0.066	0.286	0.232	0.816	-0.495	0.628
Income=3 (R10 000 - R14 999)	-0.196	0.264	-0.742	0.458	-0.714	0.322
Income=4 (R15 000 - R24 999)	0.219	0.237	0.927	0.354	-0.245	0.684
Income=5 (R25 000 or more)	0 ^a					
Income=1 * Informative influences	-0.038	0.081	-0.471	0.638	-0.196	0.120
Income=2 * Informative influences	0.014	0.085	0.159	0.873	-0.153	0.180
Income=3 * Informative influences	0.017	0.079	0.217	0.828	-0.139	0.173
Income=4 * Informative influences	-0.060	0.075	-0.796	0.426	-0.208	0.088
Income=5 * Informative influences	0 ^a					
Population group=1 (White)	-0.316	0.341	-0.928	0.354	-0.986	0.353
Population group=2 (Black)	0.038	0.359	0.106	0.916	-0.667	0.743
Population group=3 (Indian)	-0.756	0.530	-1.425	0.154	-1.796	0.285
Population group=4 (Coloured)	0 ^a					
Population group=1 * Informative influences	0.014	0.100	0.138	0.890	-0.182	0.210
Population group=2 * Informative influences	-0.001	0.103	-0.005	0.996	-0.204	0.203
Population group=3 * Informative influences	0.223	0.151	1.482	0.139	-0.072	0.519
Population group=4 * Informative influences	0 ^a					

TABLE E.9: PARAMETER ESTIMATES FOR IMPERSONAL INFLUENCE ACROSS POPULATION GROUPS AND AGE GROUPS

Parameter	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Intercept	0.586	0.426	1.377	0.169	-0.249	1.421
Impersonal influences	0.779	0.122	6.373	0.000	0.539	1.019
Age Group=1 (< 30 years)	0.270	0.309	0.876	0.381	-0.335	0.876
Age Group=2 (30-39 years)	0.375	0.305	1.228	0.220	-0.224	0.975
Age Group=3 (40-49 years)	0.112	0.320	0.351	0.726	-0.516	0.741
Age Group=4 (50-59 years)	0.292	0.311	0.940	0.347	-0.317	0.901
Age Group=5 (>60 years)	0 ^a					
Age Group=1 * Impersonal influences	-0.151	0.089	-1.693	0.091	-0.326	0.024
Age Group=2 * Impersonal influences	-0.130	0.092	-1.424	0.155	-0.310	0.049
Age Group=3 * Impersonal influences	-0.118	0.096	-1.232	0.218	-0.306	0.070
Age Group=4 * Impersonal influences	-0.138	0.098	-1.402	0.161	-0.331	0.055
Age Group=5 * Impersonal influences	0 ^a					
Population group=1 (White)	-0.138	0.357	-0.386	0.700	-0.837	0.562
Population group=2 (Black)	0.200	0.371	0.540	0.590	-0.527	0.927
Population group=3 (Indian)	0.161	0.527	0.305	0.761	-0.874	1.195
Population group=4 (Coloured)	0 ^a					
Population group=1 * Impersonal influences	-0.048	0.101	-0.475	0.635	-0.246	0.150
Population group=2 * Impersonal influences	-0.099	0.102	-0.968	0.333	-0.300	0.102
Population group=3 * Impersonal influences	-0.068	0.146	-0.469	0.639	-0.354	0.217
Population group=4 * Impersonal influences	0 ^a					

TABLE E.10: PARAMETER ESTIMATES FOR IMPERSONAL INFLUENCE ACROSS POPULATION GROUPS AND GENDER

Parameter	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Intercept	0.613	0.328	1.866	0.062	-0.031	1.257
Impersonal influences	0.668	0.092	7.254	0.000	0.487	0.849
Gender=1 (Male)	0.342	0.166	2.059	0.040	0.016	0.669
Gender=2 (Female)	0 ^a					
Gender=1 * Impersonal influences	0.055	0.046	1.193	0.233	-0.036	0.146
Gender=2 * Impersonal influences	0 ^a					
Population group=1 (White)	-0.102	0.341	-0.300	0.764	-0.771	0.566
Population group=2 (Black)	0.277	0.354	0.782	0.435	-0.418	0.972
Population group=3 (Indian)	0.219	0.515	0.426	0.670	-0.792	1.231
Population group=4 (Coloured)	0 ^a					
Population group=1 * Impersonal influences	-0.077	0.097	-0.796	0.426	-0.267	0.113
Population group=2 * Impersonal influences	-0.135	0.098	-1.368	0.171	-0.327	0.058
Population group=3 * Impersonal influences	-0.113	0.142	-0.792	0.428	-0.391	0.166
Population group=4 * Impersonal influences	0 ^a					

TABLE E.11: PARAMETER ESTIMATES FOR IMPERSONAL INFLUENCE ACROSS POPULATION GROUPS AND EDUCATION LEVEL

Parameter	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Intercept	1.114	0.362	3.080	0.002	0.404	1.823
Impersonal influences	0.542	0.102	5.309	0.000	0.341	0.742
Education level=1 (Lower than Grade 12)	0.018	0.352	0.052	0.958	-0.672	0.709
Education level=2 (Grade 12)	-0.417	0.238	-1.752	0.080	-0.885	0.050
Education level=3 (Degree or diploma)	-0.474	0.210	-2.260	0.024	-0.886	-0.062
Education level=4 (Postgraduate)	0 ^a					
Education=1 * Impersonal influences	0.181	0.096	1.895	0.058	-0.006	0.369
Education=2 * Impersonal influences	0.148	0.068	2.186	0.029	0.015	0.280
Education level=3 * Impersonal influences	0.176	0.061	2.884	0.004	0.056	0.295
Education level=4 * Impersonal influences	0 ^a					
Population group=1 (White)	-0.089	0.348	-0.255	0.798	-0.771	0.594
Population group=2 (Black)	0.238	0.362	0.657	0.511	-0.473	0.948
Population group=3 (Indian)	0.143	0.517	0.276	0.782	-0.871	1.157
Population group=4 (Coloured)	0 ^a					
Population group=1 * Impersonal influences	-0.067	0.099	-0.674	0.500	-0.261	0.128
Population group=2 * Impersonal influences	-0.132	0.101	-1.311	0.190	-0.330	0.066
Population group=3 * Impersonal influences	-0.067	0.143	-0.466	0.641	-0.347	0.214
Population group=4 * Impersonal influences	0 ^a					

TABLE E.12: PARAMETER ESTIMATES FOR IMPERSONAL INFLUENCE ACROSS POPULATION GROUPS AND INCOME

Parameter	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Intercept	0.895	0.349	2.562	0.011	0.209	1.580
Impersonal influences	0.658	0.100	6.553	0.000	0.461	0.855
Income=1 (<R5 000)	0.301	0.303	0.993	0.321	-0.294	0.895
Income=2 (R5 000 - R9 999)	-0.019	0.291	-0.065	0.948	-0.590	0.552
Income=3 (R10 000 - R14 999)	-0.108	0.261	-0.414	0.679	-0.621	0.404
Income=4 (R15 000 - R24 999)	-0.063	0.237	-0.266	0.790	-0.528	0.402
Income=5 (R25 000 or more)	0 ^a					
Income=1 * Impersonal influences	-0.079	0.077	-1.032	0.302	-0.230	0.071
Income=2 * Impersonal influences	-0.034	0.077	-0.435	0.664	-0.185	0.118
Income=3 * Impersonal influences	-0.055	0.072	-0.759	0.448	-0.197	0.087
Income=4 * Impersonal influences	-0.010	0.070	-0.142	0.887	-0.147	0.127
Income=5 * Impersonal influences	0 ^a					
Population group=1 (White)	-0.169	0.353	-0.477	0.633	-0.862	0.525
Population group=2 (Black)	0.100	0.375	0.267	0.790	-0.636	0.836
Population group=3 (Indian)	0.018	0.534	0.035	0.972	-1.029	1.066
Population group=4 (Coloured)	0 ^a					
Population group=1 * Impersonal influences	-0.044	0.102	-0.432	0.666	-0.244	0.156
Population group=2 * Impersonal influences	-0.069	0.105	-0.658	0.511	-0.275	0.137
Population group=3 * Impersonal influences	-0.034	0.148	-0.228	0.820	-0.324	0.257
Population group=4 * Impersonal influences	0 ^a					

ADDENDUM F

Decision tree

