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Differences in the demographic characteristics of highly materialistic consumers and those whose clothing consumption practices reflect material simplicity

Mandy C.A. (11009960)

Dissertation

M. Consumer Science: Clothing Retail Management

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Verskille in die demografiese eienskappe van hoogs materiële verbruikers en die wie se kledingverbruikpraktyke materiële eenvoud reflekteer

Mandy C.A. (11009960)

Verhandeling

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Differences in the demographic characteristics of highly materialistic consumers and those whose clothing consumption practices reflect material simplicity

By

Chelsea Mandy

Dissertation submitted for the fulfilment of the requirement a Master's degree in Consumer Science: Clothing and Retail Management

in the

Department of Consumer and Food Sciences

Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences

University of Pretoria

Supervisor: Prof AC Erasmus

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My Parents,

Stuart and Karen Mandy

Thank you for your continuous encouragement and support

DECLARATION

I, Chelsea Mandy, hereby declare that the dissertation for the degree Master's in Consumer Science: Clothing Retail Management at the University of Pretoria, hereby submitted by myself, is my own work and has not previously been submitted for a degree at this, or any other university of tertiary institution and that all reference material contained within has been acknowledged.

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Chelsea Mandy

25 AUGUST 2018

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I am truly grateful for the opportunity to have done my Master's degree within two years. It has been an interesting process with many highs and lows, and I have certainly grown as a researcher and person. This has encouraged me to persue a career in research and I am excited by the possibilities. Thank you again to every individual who contributed to, and enhanced my journey, and who encouraged me to push through and persevere when times got tough.

ABSTRACT

Differences in the demographic characteristics of highly materialistic consumers and those whose clothing consumption practices reflect material simplicity

By

Chelsea Mandy

Supervisor: Prof Alet C Erasmus
Department of Consumer and Food Sciences
Degree: M Consumer Science: Clothing Retail Management

It has been suggested in past research that Materialism, where considerable importance is placed on the value and consumption of material goods, as well as Voluntary Simplicity, that refers to a desire to live simply and minimalistically, are essentially opposing consumer behavioural traits. In former research however, these constructs have always been studied individually, not on a single sample. This research aimed to identify the demographic characteristics of consumers who are more materialistically inclined, and those with a devoted materially simplistic behavioural orientation, in order to describe market segments with diverse orientations whilst discussing consequences relating to consumers' decision making and purchasing behaviour and how that could be of interest to retail in terms of a better understanding of viable target markets.

This exploratory and descriptive study implemented a survey design and used convenience and snowball sampling methods to distribute questionnires for self completion among willing respondents in Tshwane. A total of 1019 useful questionnaires were used for statistcal analysis with the support of the University of Pretoria's Statistic Department. Data analysis included descriptive statistics, EFA, t-tests, MANOVA, post hoc Bonferroni tests and paired t-tests.

This study revealed that none of the demographic segments were particularly materialistic. Findings however confirmed that there are indeed demographic differences in consumers' materialistic (although it is only moderate) inclination. Demographic differences were also confirmed with regard to consumers' materially simplistic clothing consumption behaviour, although material simplistic clothing consumtion behavior was found to be generally strong across all demographic groups. What

is noteworthy, is that all demographic groups' inclination to be materially simplistic, was significantly stronger than their inclination to be materialistic. Three of the dimensions of materialism that were identified through EFA, signified terminal values, while one dimension indicated instrumental values. With regard to the latter, gender and population differences were evident, indicating that men, and Black population groups are significantly more inclined to acquire possessions as a tool towards certain desirable outcomes (thus a stronger instrumental value). Income, although important to purchase commodities, does not seem to be useful to predict consumers' materialistic behaviour. Male consumers, Millennials and Black population groups seem significantly more prone to associate possessions with their own happiness (thus a stronger terminal value). Millennials and consumers who are well educated, possessing a diploma or degree, are significantly more inclined to rely on unique possessions to distinguish themselves from others (a terminal value). Male consumers and Black population groups are significantly more inclined to associate progress in society with the possession of certain products/ commodities (a terminal value). Male consumers are more likely to associate possessions with achievement of success than females (also a terminal value).

It was apparent in this study that, notwithstanding the demographic category, respondents were moderately materialistic. To the contrary, all the means for material simplicity, suggested relatively strong materially simplistic behavioural tendencies. Based on the overall results, consumers are more materially simplistic inclined rather than being materialistic. However, the results of the study contradicted findings of extant research, which is very important in understanding South African consumers. It was found that males, rather than females, are more materialistic, and that even lower income consumers are moderately materialistic, probably to experience a sense of success and distinctiveness. As expected from extant literature, Black population groups are significantly more materialistic. Overall, it was found that consumers are strongly materially simplistic with regards to their clothing behavioural practices: also indicating that conclusions about materialistic tendencies cannot be drawn by simply attending to a single product category such as clothing, even though it is a visually important commodity that has the potential to demonstrate all the qualities that are associated with materialism as a terminal value, i.e. happiness, distinctiveness, and success.

This study makes a valuable contribution to literature and provides useful5 information whereby retail and industry could benefit in terms of skilful targeting of viable market segments.

Key Words: materialism, voluntary simplicity, material simplicity, clothing behavioural practices, demographic differences in consumption behaviour, clothing retail, consumer behaviour

OPSOMMING

Verskille in die demografiese eienskappe van hoogs materiële verbruikers en die wie se kledingverbruikpraktyke materiële eenvoud reflekteer

Deur

Chelsea Mandy

Studieleier: Prof Alet C Erasmus
Departement Verbruikers en Voedselwetenskappe
Graad: M Verbruikerswetenskap:Kleding Kleinhandelbestuur

Navorsing dui daarop dat Materialisme, wat verwys dat 'n beduidende belangrikheid geheg word aan materiële besittings, sowel as Vrywillige Eenvoud, wat verwys na 'n ingesteldheid om eenvoudig en simplisties te leef, fundamenteel verskillende gedragseienskappe van verbruikers is. In vorige navorsing is hierdie konstrukte egter altyd individueel bestudeer en nie in terme van 'n enkele steekproef ondersoek nie. Hierdie navorsing het beoog om verbruikers wat meer materialisties en verbruikers wat materieel simplisties ingestel is te identifiseer in terme van hulle demografiese eienskappe om daarolgens marksegmente te identifiseer wat vir bemarkingsdoeleindes en die kleinhandel van waarde kan wees.

Hierdie verkennende en beskrywende studie is as 'n opname uitgevoer deur toepassing van 'n kombinasie vans gerieflikheids- en sneeubalsteekproefneming in Tshwane, Suid-Afrka. Vraelyste is deur opgeleide veldwerkers in die teikengebied versprei onder vrywillige respondente wat dit sonder toesig in hulle eie tyd voltooi het. 'n Totaal van 1019 bruikbare vraelyste was beskikbaar vir data-analise wat met die hulp van Universiteit van Pretoria se Departement Statistiek ontleed is. Data-analise het beskrywende statistiek, verkennende faktoranalise, t-toetse, MANOVA, post hoc Bonferroni– en gepaarde t-toetse toetse ingesluit.

Die studie toon dat geen van die demografiese groepe besonders materialisties was nie. Daar is wel betekenisvolle demografiese verskille gevind in verbruikers se materialistiese ingesteldheid (hoewel laasgenoemde matig is). Betekenisvolle demografiese verskille is ook gevind in terme van verbruikers se materieel simplistiese ingesteldheid, hoewel al die demografiese groeperinge statisties betekenisvol sterker materieel ingestel is wat hulle kledingverbruik betref, as wat hulle materialisties

is. Noemenswaardig, is dat alle demografiese groepe se neiging tot materieel simplistiese kedingverbruik statisties betekenisvol sterker is as om materialisties te wees. Drie van die dimensies van materialisme het op terminale waardes gedui, en een was instrumenteel van aard. Geslagsverskille en populasieverskille is gevind, spesifiek dat mans, en Swart populasiegroepe betekenisvol meer materialisties is en ingestel is om besittings aan te skaf (die "Essentiality" dimensie), wat van 'n prominente instrumentele waarde getuig. Hoewel inkomste belangrik is om aankope te kan doen, was inkomste *per se* nie 'n aanduider van verbruikers se neiging tot 'n materialisme nie. Mans, Millenniërs, en Swart populasiegroepe blyk betekenisvol meer geneig te wees om besittings te assosieer met hulle eie geluk (die "Happiness" dimensie) - wat van 'n sterker terminale waarde getuig. Millenniërs en verbruikers wat verdere opleiding het, en 'n diploma of graad verwerf het, is betekenisvol meer geneig om besittings te gebruik om die gevoel te kry dat hulle anders is as ander (terminale waarde) (die "Distinctiveness" dimensie). Mans en Swart populasiegroepe is betekenisvol meer geneig om vooruitgang van die samelewing met die besit van kommoditeite te assosieer: 'n instrumentele dimensie van materialisme. Mans is meer geneig om hulle sukses aan besittings toe te skryf as vroulike verbruikers.

Die studie toon dat, ongeag hulle demografiese eienskappe, dat verbruikers in die konteks van hierdie studie matig materialisties is. Daarteenoor is daar 'n sterk neiging om wat kledingverbruik betref, materieel simplisties te wees. Resultate toon dat verbruikers in die algemeen meer materieel simplisties (in terme van kledingverbruik) as algemeen materialisties is. Die resultate van hierdie studie kontrasteer vorige bevindinge (in ander kontekste) oor materialisme, wat baie belangrik is in terme daarvan om Suid-Afrikaanse verbruikers te verstaan. Hierdie studie toon dat mans, eerder as vroulike verbruikers materialisties is en dat selfs laer inkomste verbruikers sterker materialistiestiese neigings toon, waarskynlik as 'n vorm van onderskeiding van ander.

Na verwagting, was die Swart populasiegroepe betekenisvol meer materialisties as die ander populasiegroepe wat onderskei is. In die algemeen was verbruikers egter sterker materieel simplisties wat hulle kledingverbruik betref as wat hulle in die algemeen materialisties ingestel is, wat ook daarop dui dat daar nie veralgemenings gemaak kan word gebaseer op 'n enkele produkkategorie nie - selfs al is dit 'n produk soos kleding wat visueel opvallend is en potensieel al die kenmerke het van produkte wat met materialisme verband kan hou om uitkomste soos geluk, sukses en onderskeiding te bewerkstellig.

Hierdie studie maak 'n waardevolle bydrae tot literatuur en bied waardevolle inligting vir bemarkers en die kleinhandel wat standhoudende marksegmente wil teiken.

Sleutelwoorde: materialisme, vrywillige eenvoud, kledinggedragspraktyke, demografiese verskille in verbruik, kledingkleinhandel, verbruikersgedrag, marksegmentering

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Chapter 1

THE STUDY IN PERSPECTIVE

This chapter introduces the background to the research, presents the problem statement, aim and hypotheses and the research methodology before presenting an outline of the structure of this study

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The concepts "Materialism", which refers to an underlying personal value that is associated with a considerable regard for the consumption of material goods, and "Voluntary Simplicity", which refers to an endeavour to live a more minimalistic lifestyle, have drawn the interest of many researchers over time (McGouran & Protheroo, 2016; Pandelaere, 2016; Noguti & Bokeyar, 2014; Craig-Lees & Hill, 2002; Richins & Dawson, 1992; Belk, 1984; Leonard-Barton & Rogers, 1980; Elgin & Mitchell, 1977). When studied individually, these two concepts seem to present opposing characteristics and traits. One dimension of the Voluntary Simplicity behavioural scale that pertinently refers to consumers' buyer behaviour in terms of quantities and necessity of purchases (rather than local manufacture and environmental concern as the others dimensions do), is "material simplicity" – thus the dimension which this study was pertinently interested in. However, the link between materialism and material simplicity as part of the phenomenon Voluntary Simplicity (VS) has not yet been examined in a single study with the same sample. Simply stated, the association between materialism as a pertinent personal value and a consumer's behavioural intentions to consume goods (for example clothing/ clothing) voluntarily in a simplistic manner has not been investigated before to confirm that certain demographic groups may be more materialistic, and as a consequence, they would not demonstrate material simplistic behaviour. Although this seems a logical inference, empirical evidence to support the notion, is lacking as the investigation needs to be done with the same consumer sample. Materialism, and voluntary simplicity are presented in literature as consumer traits that are influential in terms of consumers' purchase and consumption decisions. This is of interest to retail because of its relevance in terms of consumers' underlying consumer needs and subsequent behaviour in the market place. Also, VS has drawn considerable interest across the world in recent years, while as much interest is displayed in emerging consumer groups (especially in South Africa) who wish to improve their social standing in society through ownership of visible commodities, of which clothing forms a very important part of appearance management (Bevan-Dye, Barnett & de Klerk, 2012; Mason, 2001).

Materialism refers to the underlying belief that material possessions are very important and subsequently goods are acquired and used to inter alia define one's social status and happiness in life. Richins and Dawson (1992) proposed that the primary goals of a materialist are to (1) obtain material success, to (2) acquire happiness through the accumulation of material goods, as well as to (3) attend to the essentiality of physical products. These dimensions or goals have been widely acknowledged in research: in a never-ending pursuit for "nice" things, society has found itself embracing a consumer culture where a large portion of the general population are desiring and purchasing products for non-utilitarian reasons (Richins & Dawson, 1992). It became clear that many consumers are entangled in pursuit of happiness through the accumulation of more and more possessions at the expense and exclusion of other important values (Scott, 2002). Materialistic individuals for example believe that material objects will enhance their well-being (Segev, Shoham & Gavish, 2015; Richins & Dawson, 1992), subsequently measuring their level of success by the amount of their material possessions (Richins, 2013).

In 2012, Trinh and Phau added another dimension to the existing three dimensions proposed by Richins and Dawson (1992), to acknowledge the relevance of the ever growing luxury brand market: hence "material distinctiveness" became the fourth defining characteristic of a materialist.

Its relevance is demonstrated by the fact that, since South Africa's first democratic election in 1994, there has been a major change in the dynamics and distribution of wealth in the country. With it, a dramatic increase in growth in the status brand market became evident (Bevan-Dye, Barnett & de Klerk, 2012; Schiffman, Kanuk & Wisenblit, 2010). This may be due to the rapid growth of black consumers described by TNS Research Surveys and UCT Unilever Institute of Strategic Marketing as the "Black Diamonds" (De Waal, 2008; Jones, 2007). This generational cohort seems to be a strong driver of the rapid growth in consumerism (growth in expenditure), materialism and status consumption in South Africa during the last two decades notwithstanding economic challenges worldwide (Bevan-Dye *et al.*, 2012; Jones, 2007). These consumers are characterised as being self-confident, well-educated and highly ambitious (Bevan-Dye *et al.*, 2012), many of whom have some form of tertiary qualification that increases their earning- and spending potential (Schiffman *et al.*, 2010; De Waal, 2008; Jones, 2007). A new found access to funds and resources has created a shift in core values where possessions are now used to measure status and to indicate power, and where products are viewed as of little use when they cannot be put on display for others to take notice of (Bevan-Dye *et al.*, 2012). Consumption in a conspicuous manner has thus become preferable for young consumers (Mason, 2001). One of the most conspicuous forms of material goods to purchase, is clothing, as it is always on public display (Joung, 2013; Mason, 2001). Demonstrating behaviours that are typically associated with materialistic values, generation Y, or "Millennial" consumers tend to value and purchase far more clothing than is needed, and they place a high value on so-called status brands to demonstrate their wealth and success. Based on their expenditure, "Black Diamonds" in particular, are at the forefront of materialistic consumers in South Africa (Bevan-Dye *et al.*, 2012; Jones, 2007) .

An understanding of materialism as a value that directs an individual's consumption, requires an understanding of personal values. Values are abstract motivations that are internally deeply rooted in an individual and which help form, explain and guide an individual's motivations, actions, attitudes and justifications (Tuulik, Õunapuu, Kuimet & Titov, 2016; Schwartz, 1992). Every individual's behaviour is determined by his/ her predominant personal values that can be used to explain and predict an individual's actions and reactions in certain scenarios (Tuulik *et al.*, 2016). Particularly relevant in this study, is the distinction between *instrumental-* and *terminal* values, with materialism as an instrumental value being the motivating or driving force behind certain life (end) goals i.e. how to achieve success, happiness, distinctiveness, and essentiality (Ekici, Webb, Lee, Gurel-Atay, Hegazy, Johar, Joseph, Husic & Cicic, 2014; Richins & Dawson, 1992). Instrumental values specifically refer to the value and importance that people find in material possessions *as* "simply a means to an end", for example purchasing status bearing brands as a means to enhance your status. Terminal values, on the other hand, describe the end value of possessions as the essential outcome, for example, gaining admiration and envy, admitting that it brings happiness (Scott, 2002; Csikszentmihalyi & Rochberg-Halton, 1978) and in order to acquire that, a Gucci bag may be instrumental. Due to the nature and state of modern society, the terminal dimension of materialism has seemed to surpass instrumental materialism, thus accentuating the outcome of materialistic behaviour (Tuulik *et al.,* 2016; Scott, 2002; Csikszentmihalyi & Rochberg-Halton, 1978).

Based on a values approach, Richins and Dawson (1992) explain that people who are inclined to pursue a materialistic lifestyle are far more prone to place a higher value on their actual possessions than other life goals (Ekici *et al.*, 2014; Richins & Dawson, 1992). The authors conceptualized materialism as an instrumental value, which centres around and is fuelled by three belief systems or terminal values, namely acquisition centrality, happiness, and success, where after Trinh and Phau adding a fourth dimension, namely distinctiveness (Trinh & Phau, 2012).

 A number of researchers (Ekici *et al.*, 2014) are of the opinion that Richins and Dawson (1992) have indeed misinterpreted the true meaning of instrumental and terminal values in their presentation of the core meaning of materialism. They suggest rather, that the one dimension, namely acquisition centrality (essentiality) is fundamentally, instrumental materialism by nature; while the other two dimensions, namely happiness and success fundamentally represent terminal values (Ekici *et al.,* 2014). This means that, although the same measurement scale applies, the interpretation of the outcomes should be done cautiously.

While consumerism and materialism are predominant in today's consumer culture – especially among certain market segments such as the emerging "Black Diamonds" as was explained before, and the Y-generation/ Millennials (Hofmeister & Neulinger, 2013; Kilbourne & LaForge, 2010; Jones, 2007), the so-called voluntary simplifiers have over time emerged and are rejecting a materialistic way of living (Alexander, 2011) to opt for a much simpler, minimalistic way of life (Shaw & Newholm, 2002; Leonard-

Barton & Rogers, 1980; Elgin & Mitchell, 1977). They aim to maximise control over their consumption practices and material dependency as well as the degree to which this is achieved (Leonard-Barton, 1981). These consumers believe that the way to living a fulfilled life, is through simplicity and frugality, living as minimalistic as possible (Gambrel & Cafaro, 2009), even forsaking higher income levels and distancing themselves from high levels of consumption (Walther & Sandlin, 2011).

Literature has identified five major dimensions that underscore the values associated with a voluntary simplistic way of life (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977), namely: material simplicity, self-determination, ecological awareness, human scale and personal growth. These are the primary aspects that contribute to the major areas of a simplifier's life and are generally passed down through generations by way of example and socialisation (Gabrel & Cafaro, 2010). Specifically relevant in this study, is the dimension "material simplicity" which refers to the way in which consumers spend their money, i.e. how much they purchase and when they would do so. Researchers explain that voluntary simplifiers are either motivated in their life choices as a response to environmental concerns, economic pressures, the need to take control of their consumption tendencies or as a counteraction to society's propensity to over-consume (McGouran & Protheroo, 2016; Dholakia & Levy, 1987) believing that "less is more", unlike what is true for materialists (Shama, 1985). Two of the motivations mentioned for being voluntary simplistic and which are of interest in this study, are: *economic pressures*, and *the need to take control of their consumption tendencies,* or *as a counteraction to society's propensity to over-consume* (thus being materialistic) (McGouran & Protheroo, 2016; Dholakia & Levy, 1987).

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Materialism, as an underlying personal value, refers to the belief that one's possessions define the way one lives and hence determines major personal goals in life. Literature indicates that certain population groups tend to be more materialistic, for example. Females, younger people, and middle income groups who are socially upwardly mobile (Tuulik *et al.,* 2016; Ponchio & Aranha, 2008; Jones, 2007). However, evidence of this kind has not been gathered in specifically in a South African context yet. On the other hand, a core value associated with voluntary simplicity, which has become of pertinent interest in modern society in recent years, is material simplicity (Leonard-Barton, 1981) which represents, theoretically, a rejection of materialism and consumerism (Richins & Dawson, 1992), aiming to live a simpler lifestyle. Some regard voluntary simplicity as a reaction to counteract consumerism/ excessive consumption and materialism, and aims to offset the effects of a high consumption lifestyle (Alexander, 2011).

Theoretically therefore, evidence of materialistic consumption and demonstration of material simplicity among specific consumer segments should be mutually exclusive, indicating that when a specific segment of the population is materialistic, it is highly unlikely that they would demonstrate voluntary simplistic consumption behaviour in a product category such as clothing that is socially visible. Based on extant research, materialism as well as voluntary simplicity are prevailing in modern societies, which is confusing. While Millennials, for example, are described as highly interested in commodities, there are indications that younger consumers are more concerned about the future of the planet and future generations' well-being (Pandelaere, 2016). Presently, empirical evidence that distinguishes the demographic characteristics of highly materialistic consumers and those whose clothing consumption practices are indicative of material simplicity, in a South African context, is lacking. It would be worthwhile for retailers to gain such evidence to allow a more focussed approach towards their target markets, i.e. to be aware of the profile of those who might be interested to splurge and indulge in fashion (Pandelaere, 2016; Noguti & Bokeyar, 2014; Alexander, 2011), whilst not neglecting those who are concerned about the environment and people's well-being and who subsequently have alternative needs with regard to their product decisions (O'Cass & McEwen, 2004).

1.3 JUSTIFICATION OF THE RESEARCH

The research, which is based on consumers' purchasing behaviour, is of great interest to retailers and marketers alike, as the way in which people decide what to buy and how those decisions are influenced, will impact on the kind of products that retailers put on offer, and how products are presented to consumers (Schiffman, O'Cass, Paladino & Carlson, 2013). Understanding the demographic profile of consumers with pertinent needs (for example a materialistic inclination that has consequences for types and brands of products versus those who are adamant to refrain from excessive consumption), i.e. that are based on strong internal values with associated, pertinent underlying motives in terms of their purchase decisions, would benefit retailers in terms of appropriate interaction with their customers (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2004).

The aforementioned research problem has a "*World One*" focus, formulated from the real world and everyday civilian life and issues (Mouton, 2001:137). This world is a culmination of knowledge attained through experiences and everyday learning and is comprised of the work and social environment and of family (Mouton, 2001:138). Both materialism and material simplistic behaviour as an indication of VS have not been comprehensively explored in a South African context yet in terms of a distinction of consumers' demographic characteristics which are crucial for retailers. Particularly, the two constructs have never been tested simultaneously on a single sample group that would enable a clarification of mutual exclusiveness of certain demographic characteristics. On account of this, this research aims to make a contribution to

literature in "*World Two*", scientific theory, in an attempt to fill in this gap. This world tends to draw its topics and problems from "*World One*" and aims to turn these into areas of investigation using scientific research and science itself (Mouton, 2001:137). Recognised consequences of materialism in society include greater personal debt, increased numbers of bankruptcy, and compulsive buying (Noguti & Bokeyar, 2014), which is exactly what simplifiers aim to avoid, striving to live a more simple and sustainable lifestyle (Gambrel & Cafaro, 2009).

1.4 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

Although any number of value based theoretical perspectives could have been used in this study, Schwartz Theory of Basic Values (Schwartz, 1992, 2012) was selected as the theoretical framework to distinguish the demographic characteristics of highly materialistic consumers and those whose clothing consumption practices reflect material simplicity. Schwartz's six cores assumptions associated with values and how they directly relate to both materialism and voluntary simplicity, is the main reason this study incorporates his typology and it took the researcher back to the foundation literature in using the appropriate terminology and interpretations.

Schwartz's typology of values takes a macro and sociological approach and is used to investigate and discuss consumers' purchase and consumption behaviour in the market place in a specific product category, as a manifestation of underlying personal values that have developed over time through socialisation (Schwartz, 1992; Smith & Schwartz, 1997). In using this macro perspective, the micro perspective (being materialism) can be derived. Per definition, one's personal values are associated with what one regards as most important in one's life (Schwartz, 2012) to the extent that pertinent personal values guide individuals' behaviour.

According to Kilbourne and LaForge (2010), Schwartz's value system provides a basic framework in which to examine materialism, while it also provides dimensions that are associated with simplistic behaviour. Literature has indicated that with materialism stemming from a place of self-centredness and self-obsession (Kilbourne & LaForge, 2010; Wilson, 2005), Schwartz's main dimension of "self-enhancement" would encompass materialism (Kilbourne & LaForge, 2010), whilst "self-transcendence" would be the contrary. An aim of voluntary simplifiers is to become a better version of themselves (Boujbel & D'Astous, 2012) thus "transcending" their prevailing selves.

Six primary features are associated with this particular value typology (Schwartz, 1992) as listed briefly below, namely:

- Values are beliefs that a person holds dear and allows to influence their behaviour (Hofmeister & Neulinger, 2013; Richins & Dawson, 1992).
- Values are seen as desirable goals that will instigate some form of action (Zemojtel, Piotrowsk & Clinton, 2015; Leonard-Barton, 1981).
- Values take precedence in terms of one's actions, dictating how a person will react in a certain event (Ryan & Dziurawiec, 2011; Craig-Lees & Hill, 2002).
- Values are used by individuals to set standards for themselves and others (Lertwannawit & Mandhachitara, 2012; Kilbourne & LaForge, 2010; O'Cass & McEwen, 2004; Todd & Lawson, 2002; Smith & Schwartz, 1997).
- Particularly important for this study, is that values tend to be arranged in some form of logical order of importance by individuals, with the most important value "trumping" lesser important values in times when there may be a conflict (Tuulik *et al.* 2016).
- With individuals having a number of values guiding their behaviours and actions, a certain action may have an effect on numerous values simultaneously (Goldsmith & Clark, 2012; Bevan-Dye *et al.,* 2012; Walther & Sandlin, 2011; Craig-Lees & Hill, 2002).

1.5 RESEARCH AIM AND HYPOTHESES

1.5.1 Research aim

The study aims to distinguish the demographic characteristics of consumers who have a pertinent materialistic inclination towards their purchase and consumption practices in general, and those who will refrain from excessive consumption behaviour in terms of a specific product category that is important for materialists and consumers in general, namely their clothing consumption behaviour.

1.5.2 Research hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated for the study based on extant literature:

H1:   The materialistic inclination of consumers differs in accordance with their demographic characteristics, i.e.:

H1.1 Gender:
Females are significantly more materialistic than males (Bakewell, Mitchell & Rothwell, 2006; Bakewell & Mitchell, 2004).

H1.2 Age:
Younger adults (specifically Millennials, currently younger than 40 years of age) are significantly more materialistic than older consumers (Lertwannawit & Mandhachitara, 2012; Kilbourne & LaForge, 2010).

H1.3 Income level:
Lower income consumers are significantly more materialistic than those in middle- or high household income groups (Alexander, 2011; Ponchio, 2008).

H1.4 Education level:
Education level is not a significant determining factor in a consumer's propensity towards purchasing in a materialistic manner (Olssen, 2016; Bevan-Dye *et al.*, 2012).

H1.5 Population group:
Black consumers are significantly more materialistic than other population groups (Bevan-Dye *et al.,* 2012; Jones, 2007).

H2:   There is an inverse relationship between consumers' materialistic inclination and their engagement in material simplicity with regard to their clothing consumption, i.e. demographic segments who are highly materialistic will not engage in clothing consumption practices that demonstrate material simplicity, while demographic segments whose materialistic inclination is weaker, will have a significantly stronger inclination to engage in material simplistic clothing behavioural practices. Based on H1, it is hypothesized that:

H2.1 Gender:
Males' inclination towards material simplistic clothing behaviour, is significantly stronger compared to females.

H2.2 Age:
Older adults (40 years of age and older) are significantly more materially simplistic than their younger counterpart (Millennials, <40 years) consumers.

H2.3 Income level:
Higher income consumers are significantly more materially simplistic than those in lower household income groups.

H2.4 Education level:
Higher education levels is a significant indicator of a consumer's propensity towards material simplistic clothing purchase and consumption behaviour.

H2.5 Population group:
The White population group is significantly more materially simplistic than other population groups.

1.6 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Figure 1.1 presents the framework and relevant constructs for this study. It summarises the constructs of both Materialism and Voluntary Simplicity, depicts the characteristics of Tshwane consumers that are examined, and how all of this relate to the hypotheses of this research.
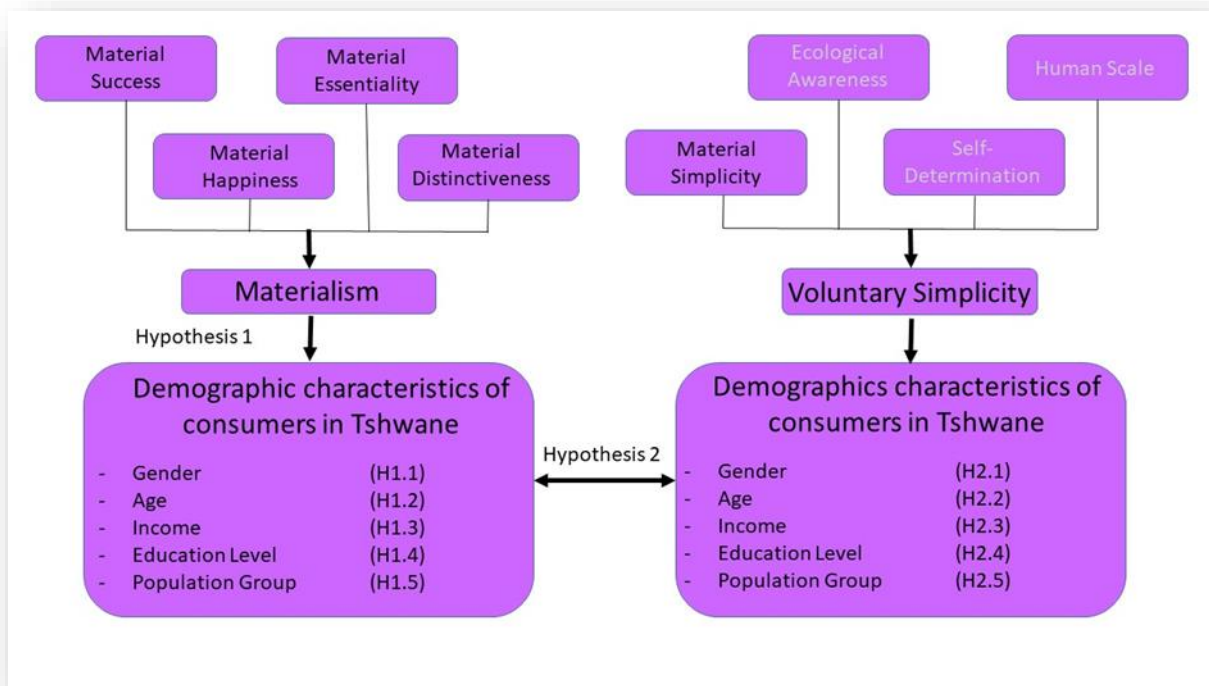
FIGURE 1.1: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Literature has indicated that that materialism comprises four major dimensions, namely: success, happiness, essentiality and distinctiveness (Trinh & Phau, 2012; Richins & Dawson, 1992), and that materialism will be influential in how consumers behave and consume products (Segev et al., 2015). A consumer's materialistic inclination will impact how they make their purchases and this might differ across different demographic groups i.e. gender, age, income group, level of education, and population group (Hypothesis 1). Similarly, voluntary simplicity is defined in terms of a number of dimensions (including material simplicity that reflects an inclination to reject excessive consumption behaviour) and might realise differently among different demographic groups as consumers' values strongly influence the way the behave and act in terms of the consumption of products. A comparison will be made of consumers in terms of their demographic characteristics, aiming to indicate that those who are strongly materialistic have a weak predisposition to consume a specific commodity, namely clothing, in a simplistic way (Hypothesis 2).

1.7 LITERATURE REVIEW

1.7.1 Introduction

In order to distinguish demographic between consumers who are strongly materialistic and those whose clothing consumption practices reflect material simplicity, it was necessary to first explore and understand the relevant constructs as defined in literature. Firstly, it should be noted that there are two main

approaches to materialism, namely materialism as a personality trait (Hofmeister & Neulinger, 2013; Güliz & Belk, 1996) or materialism as a value (Kasser & Ahuvia, 2002). This study attends to materialism as a value. The following section presents is a synopsis of the literature that is presented in more detail in Chapter 2.

1.7.2 Materialism

1.7.2.1 Definition of materialism

Materialism entails "placing significant importance on material possessions to inter alia define one's financial- and social status (Goldsmith, Flynn & Clark, 2011). For materialists, their possessions are at the centre of their lives due to a belief that material objects will bring them well-being and happiness (Segev *et al.,* 2015).

1.7.2.2 Materialism as a personality trait

Every individual has a unique personality and set of characteristics made up of their thoughts, behaviour and feelings (Roberts, 2010). Materialism and personality traits have been proven to be linked (Otero-López & Villardefrancos, 2013). Personality traits that are specifically related to materialism, are envy, non-generosity and possessiveness and are expressed by materialists in relation to material objects (Belk, 1985).

1.7.2.3 Materialism as an enduring belief or value

Materialism can also be viewed as part of a system of personal values, in which case the objects one possesses will define the way one lives and sets major personal goals (Richins & Dawson, 1992). Values determine a person's attitude and social behaviour (Sevgili & Cesur, 2014). This definition is relevant for this study.

This study approached materialism as a value in terms of the definition of Trinh and Phau (2011), that distinguished four dimensions, namely *pursuit of happiness*, *acquisition centrality*, *success defined by possessions,* and *material distinctiveness.* With objects being of the highest importance in a materialist's world, they attach a high degree of significance to each acquisition (Hofmeister & Neulinger, 2013). Success, from a materialists point of view, refers to both the quality and or quantity of their material possessions (Srikant, 2013), both contributing to their life-satisfaction (Hofmeister & Neulinger, 2013). Materialists may experience high levels of depression and anxiety if the fail to achieve their goals (Goldsmith & Clark, 2012). To overcome a feeling of despair, they are likely to purchase more goods to achieve and maintain the happiness they are seeking (Šeinauskienė, Maščinskienė & Jucaitytė, 2015).

Because materialists are said to seek recognition and social status through their possessions, this concept is linked to conspicuous consumption, where consumer satisfaction is derived from on-lookers' approval and admiration (Lynn & Harris, 1997). When consumers want to be distinctive, they would purchase

material products that convey a specific message and status about themselves within their social group (Goldsmith & Clark, 2012; Muncy & Eastman, 1998).

Based on a values approach, Richins and Dawson (1992) proposed that people who adopt a materialistic lifestyle are far more prone to place emphasis on their actual possessions than other life goals. These authors conceptualized materialism as an *instrumental value* which centres around and is fuelled by three belief systems or *terminal values*, namely *acquisition centrality, happiness,* and *success.* Trinh and Phau added a fourth dimension that was included in this study, namely *distinctiveness* (Trinh & Phau, 2012). Researchers (Ekici *et al.*, 2014) later on argued that Richins and Dawson (1992) have misinterpreted the true meaning of instrumental and terminal values, in their presentation of the core meaning of materialism. They suggest rather, that acquisition centrality (essentiality) is fundamentally, instrumental materialism by nature; while happiness and success are essentially terminal values (Ekici *et al.,* 2014). This acknowledged in the discussion of the results of this study.

1.7.2.4 Consequences of materialism in general

Recognised consequences of materialism in society include greater personal debt and increase of bankruptcy statistics on a societal level; compulsive buying, a negative impact on relationships and increased crime on a personal level (Noguti & Bokeyar, 2014). Materialism has even been linked to serious mental disorders, such as depression and paranoia (Srikant, 2013). Factors that may increase the level of materialism in society as it provides a way to communicate to others a profile that an individual wishes to portray, are poor socioeconomic backgrounds, over-protective parents who enforce conformity and compliance, and divorce (Kasser, Ryan, Zax & Sameroff, 1995).

1.7.2.5 Materialism in relation to clothing purchase decisions

With materialists wanting to consume conspicuously, the purchasing of certain clothing items is ideal as it is constantly visible to onlookers (Mason, 2001). The purchasing of designer brands, or simply a large amount of clothing, is the best way for materialists to display some of their possessions (Sangkhawasi & Johri, 2007). Materialism and clothing are directly related: materialistic consumers purchase clothing as a symbol of social status and success (Browne & Kaldenburg, 1997) and as an opportunity to display their social status (Richins, 1994).

1.7.2.6 Materialism measurement scales used in this research

Materialism has been the object of many studies over the years. Particularly popular, is Belk's Materialism Scale (1985) that addresses materialism as a personality trait, and Richins and Dawson's Material Value Scale (1992) that addresses materialism as a unique personal value. However, as markets and consumers have drastically changed over time since these scales were developed, a need for a new scale has arisen that takes into account the individuality of consumers and the growing luxury brand market (Atay & Sirgy, 2009). Trinh and Phau of Curtin University (2011) aimed to rectify this shortcoming by adapting and

adjusting Richins and Dawson's (1992) original Material Value Scale, to include four rather than three components/ dimensions, namely (*1) Material Success, (2) Material Happiness, (3) Material Essentiality,* and *(4) Material Distinctiveness.* In their efforts, the contribution of the original scale was acknowledged but a revised version was proposed. This version is used in this study.

1.7.3 Voluntary Simplicity

1.7.3.1 Definition of voluntary simplicity

Leonard-Barton and Rogers (1980) defined voluntary simplicity as "the degree to which an individual consciously chooses a way of life that is intended to maximise their control over their own lives". Leonard-Barton (1981) later on referred to voluntary simplifiers who aim to minimise their consumption and dependency, but emphasized that this lifestyle, adopted solely in response to economic constraints, cannot be considered as voluntary simplicity. Voluntary simplifiers are people who have freely chosen to live this frugal and anti-consumption lifestyle (McDonald, Oates, Young & Hwang, 2006), striving to live a life that is "outwardly simple and inwardly rich" (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977). This way of simplistic living is said to be a reaction to society's propensity to over-consume and their materialistic lifestyles (Maniates, 2002; Etzioni, 1998).

Literature identifies five major values that are at the heart of a frugal way of life (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977), namely: material simplicity, self-determination, ecological awareness, human scale and personal growth, of which only material simplicity was attended to in this study. These core values are primary in simplifiers' lives and are generally passed down through generations by example (Gambrel & Cafaro, 2009).

1.7.3.2 Types and levels of voluntary simplicity

Literature has indicated that the choice to become a voluntary simplifier must indeed be voluntary, and that the level to which an individual chooses to down-scale their lives is completely down to the individual's choice (Leonard-Barton, 1981; Elgin & Mitchell, 1977). Etzioni (1998) categorised simplifiers from being least committed (downshifters) to most committed (holistic simplifiers).

1.7.3.3 Reasons for voluntary simplicity

In most Western countries, material wealth is at an all-time high, but studies have indicated that this increase in wealth has not increased people's over-all satisfaction levels (Craig-Lees & Hill, 2002). For many, especially in Western societies, consumption seems to be the preferred and most accepted way to attempt to be happy and attain true life satisfaction (Irvine, 2006). To the contrary, an ever growing group of people have rejected this notion and are voluntarily adopting a non-materialistic way of life in an attempt to attain happiness (Craig-Lees & Hill, 2002).

1.7.3.4 Voluntary simplicity in relation to clothing purchases

Historically, clothing was used as a covering to protect one from the elements. In today's society however, clothing has become a way to displaying one's wealth and status (Etzioni, 1998). Voluntary simplifiers rejected this notion, and tend to dress down to be more functional, often wearing second-hand attire, trying to reduce clothing expenses (Zavestoski, 2002). This tendency is specifically captured in one of the dimensions of the construct (Leonard-Barton, 1981), namely "material simplicity" as discussed in section 2.3. Simplifiers renounce high fashion although not necessarily style itself; they living basic, which does not mean unstylishly (Craig-Lees & Hill, 2002; Zavestoski, 2002).

1.7.3.5 Voluntary simplicity and the market

The idea behind voluntary simplicity, is to live a life that seeks satisfaction through non-materialistic and non-commercial means (Huneke, 2005). According to Boujbel (2007), the desire to acquire or consume certain goods tends to trigger an emotional response as well as an inner cognitive response. For voluntary simplifiers, this leads to a great amount of discomfort and inner conflict as they have chosen, out of their own free will, to live a frugal lifestyle (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977). Generally, they consume in a way that respects resources and that is more environmentally friendly (McDonald *et al.,* 2006). Their consumption goals are such that they minimise their dependency and consumption practices in general (Leonard-Barton, 1981), in order to become more self-sufficient.

1.7.3.6 Voluntary simplicity scales used in this research

The very first version of the voluntary simplicity scale was developed in 1977 and contained nine items to measure, being called the "Palo Alto Study" (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977). This short scale was soon expanded to a nineteen-point scale (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977), and there-after in 1979 to an eighteen-point scale ("The State Wide Study"). This scale is known as "The 18-Item Voluntary Simplistic Scale" and distinguished five dimensions, namely: material simplicity, ecological awareness, self-determination, personal growth, and human scale (Leonard-Barton, 1981). An adaptation of this most recent scale was chosen for the purpose of this study.

1.7.4 Conclusion

Literature indicates that materialism and voluntary simplicity are phenomena that inspire different types of consumption behaviour, with materialists placing significant importance on their material possessions and the accumulation thereof (Goldsmith et al., 2011). Voluntary simplifiers, on the other hand, are material simplifiers, and aim to minimise their consumption and dependency on material goods, which contributes to their happiness (Leonard-Barton, 1981). One could hence surmise that consumers who hold strong materialistic values will differ distinctly from those whose underlying values are directed towards a more frugal way of consumption, even with regards to commodities such as clothing that are socially visible. Very

importantly, researchers caution that voluntary simplifiers may reject high fashion, but are certainly not blasé with regards to style.

1.8 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

1.8.1 Research design

This survey based, single phase study is quantitative in design using stablished measurement scales to obtain numerical values that may be analysed statistically and hypothesised (Keller & Warrack, 2000:7-16). Structured, self-administered questionnaires were used (Kowalczyk, 2015:187; Salkind, 2012:215). This research is also exploratory in kind (research is used to examine and understand a particular topic (FluidSurveys, 2014), and descriptive, hence aiming to clarify certain situations by describing characteristics of people (consumers), environments (in a specific geographic location, namely Tshwane) or objects (clothing as a product category) (Salkind, 2012:116; Zikmund & Babin, 2010:45; Leedy & Ormrod 2010:175). This cross-sectional study was conducted during May, 2016, within a set, two-week time frame, across the city of Tshwane, Gauteng, South Africa.

1.8.2 Research methodology

1.8.2.1 Population, sample and sampling

The selected area for this research study was the City of Tshwane in the Gauteng province. Tshwane was selected for practical and economic reasons, as this is the city location of the University of Pretoria where the researchers and fieldworkers were located.

Primary, raw data was collected for this study (Berndt & Petzer, 2014:31; Kumar, 2014:171). The population targeted for this study was male and female consumers aged twenty-one years or older, of all population groups, residing in the selected geographic area. All of the members of the population did not have the same probability of being chosen for the study, as fieldworkers chose sample units based on availability and proximity to themselves (Berndt & Petzer, 2014). Snowball sampling followed the initial convenience sampling, where fieldworkers obtained willing respondents with the required demographic characteristics that limited age and required a broad distribution across all income and population groups in the geographic areas allocated to them (Berndt & Petzer, 2014:174). Due to these sampling methods, the findings cannot be generalised to the whole population as they are not fully representative of the general population. Substantial effort was however made to attain the largest sample size possible to deduce more meaningful findings (Berndt & Petzer, 2014:68). Forty-three fieldworkers were assigned to selected suburbs for data collection to ensure that most of the suburbs in Tshwane were covered.

1.8.2.2 The measuring instrument

The questionnaire, which was designed for a more encompassing study that investigated underlying reasons for consumers' clothing consumption, was divided into six sections, but only sections A, D and F are relevant to this particular study, namely:

> **Section A** investigated **consumers' materialistic inclination** in general, and consisted of Trinh and Phau's four dimensional, 16-Item Materialism Scale (Trinh & Phau, 2012). A seven-point Likert-type Agreement scale was used.

> **Section B (Prestige of clothing brands)** was not relevant to this study.

> **Section C (Lifestyle)** was not relevant to this study.

> **Section D** entailed an investigation of **consumers' propensity to consume clothing in a voluntary simplistic manner**. The scale included, consisted of an adapted version of the original 18-Item Voluntary Simplicity behavioural scale developed by Dorothy Leonard-Barton (1981). Of the four dimensions included, only Material Simplicity will be looked at in this study as it provided opportunity to specifically investigate consumers' buyer behaviour in terms of quantities and frugality, which is not typical of materialists. A seven-point Likert-type Agreement scale, ranging from 1=Never, to 7=Always, was used.

> **Section E (Money allocation)** was not relevant to this study.

> **Section F** captured the **demographic information** of respondents.

Pre-testing was conducted with forty-three willing respondents to allow the researchers to identify any possible problems with regards to the questionnaires, such as wording, spelling, understand-ability and the completion time (Kumar, 2014:191) and to make the necessary corrections. During the pre-test it was noticed that many respondents struggled to complete the questionnaire as they battled to understand the scales and how to mark their answers. It was also noted that some questions were seen as repetitive or confusing. Problems were discussed and corrected.

1.8.2.3 Data collection

The data was collected by means of printed, self-administered questionnaires, which averaged around thirteen minutes to complete (Kumar, 2014). Anonymity when asking for sensitive information such as monthly household income, together with the relatively low costs involved, make this method of gathering information particularly advantageous.

The data collection process took place in a single phase over a two-week period in May 2016, and was supervised by the research coordinators. Forty-three trained fieldworkers were involved: 25 questionnaires were distributed by each fieldworker to people in designated areas of Tshwane. Respondents were able to complete the questionnaires in the privacy and comfort of which ever space they saw fit, which created a safer environment for respondents to really think about their answers. The questionnaires were retrieved

by the fieldworkers at a later date by appointment and were not pressured if they failed to be ready at the time.

The eventual sample size comprised of a total of 1075 respondents, of which 1019 were eventually considered useable for analysis. Participants were given the incentive of being entered into a lucky draw for a chance to win a R450 gift voucher for a prominent retailer by leaving their contact number on a tear-off slip on the questionnaire; this way they were able retain their anonymity. By having this information, it was possible to conduct spot checks to ensure the questionnaires were obtained in an ethical way.

1.8.2.4 Data analysis

The quantitative data that was collected in the questionnaires was coded by the trained fieldworkers before being captured by Datanet, a contracted research company. Statistical analysis was guided by the University of Pretoria's Department of Statistics. Descriptive statistics were used to analyse the data, i.e. calculating frequencies, which were then converted to percentages, means, and standard deviations. Inferential statistics included calculation of Cronbach's alpha, exploratory factor analysis, t-tests, Manova for sections A and D, also involving section F, as well as paired t-tests.

1.9 ELIMINATION OF ERROR

In order to attempt to eliminate error in any study, it is imperative to ensure the reliability, quality and viability of the study in order for the research to be meaningful and useful in terms of publication (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:336).

1.9.1 Validity issues

The validity of a study refers to how well the research instrument assesses what it was intended to measure and refers to the accuracy and credibility of the study (McCaig, 2010:35). This required an extensive review or past and present literature to establish a thorough understanding of the topic. The questionnaire was then developed and adapted based on existing and proven scales (Trinh & Phau, 2012; Leonard-Barton, 1981). A pilot test was conducted before the questionnaire was distributed (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). The fieldworkers were trained and briefed before the time. They had to recruit respondents in accordance with specific quota specifications. The respondents had the opportunity to provide their cell phone number in order to be entered into a draw to win a shopping voucher, this enabled a member of staff from the University of Pretoria to conduct spot checks by calling a number of the respondents from each fieldworkers' questionnaires to ensure their participation and validity (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010).

1.9.2 Reliability

The reliability of a study refers to how consistent and stable the measuring instrument is (Kumar, 2014:215). The initial pre-test carried out on forty-three respondents, helped to identify and remove problems in the wording of the questionnaire. Due to the fact that respondents completed the questionnaire themselves, the physical setting was in the respondents' natural environment (e.g. at home or at work), thus the respondents' mood was anticipated to be fairly neutral. Since the questionnaire was of a self-completion format, the fieldworker could not interfere with the respondents' answers. Therefore, according to the factors that affect this study, it can be judged to be highly reliable. Where possible, reliability coefficients (Cronbach's alpha) were calculated and disclosed.

1.10 ETHICS

Ethics refers to the moral principles that are widely accepted by society and used to differentiate between what is right and wrong (Cant, Gerber-Nel & Kotze, 2005:203). Ethical issues that were considered when conducting this research included the following: ethical collection of information from respondents, a cover letter explaining respondent's rights, voluntary participation, confidentiality and anonymity. Fieldworkers were not involved in the questionnaire completion process and respondents were not forced to complete questionnaires in any way.

One of the disadvantages of any questionnaire, is that the respondent may not be fully honest in providing accurate data due to fear, embarrassment, or they may simply be trying to appear clever. The fact that questionnaires were completed anonymously and that the fieldworkers did not monitor their answers on the spot, contributed to an environment where they may have felt safe enough to respond honestly. It is however possible that some respondents may not have been so diligent in completion of the questionnaire (Cant *et al.*, 2005:203). With this questionnaire being four pages long, some people may have thought that it was time consuming, or simply too long and may have influenced their willingness to complete thoroughly.

The ethics approval for this study was received in 2016 from the Ethical Committee which oversees the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences at the University of Pretoria (See Addendum C).

1.12 PRESENTATION AND STRUCTURE OF DISSERTATION

This research project will be structured into five chapters as portrayed in Figure 1.2:

1. THE STUDY IN PERSPECTIVE	• *This chapter introduces the background to the research, presents the problem statement, aim and hypotheses and the research methodology before presenting an outline of the structure of this study.*
2. LITERATURE REVIEW	• *The literature review addresses the main constructs of the study, namely, materialism and voluntary simplicity and attends to the associated consumption behaviours as a means to discuss significant demographic differences among consumers in South African context*
3. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE, CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK & RESEARCH HYPOTHESES	• *This chapter presents the theoretical perspective that was used in this study and explains how it was used to compile the conceptual framework, the research aims and hypotheses.*
4. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY	• *This chapter introduces the research design and methodology that was used in this study. It also highlights the efforts to enhance the quality of the research and attempts to address ethical concerns.*
5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	• *The results for this study are presented and discussed in accordance with the hypotheses for the study, incorporating literature. Tables and figures are used to visually present some of the results.*
6. CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY	• *This chapter presents a conclusion of the findings of the study in accordance with the hypotheses of the study, admitting certain limitations and concludes with recommendations for future research.*

FIGURE 1.2: OUTLINE OF THE DISSERTATION

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review addresses the main constructs of the study, namely, materialism and voluntary simplicity and attends to the associated consumption behaviours as a means to discuss significant demographic differences among consumers in South African context

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In order to differentiate and compare demographic differences of materialistic consumers those who are voluntary simplistic, it was firstly important to consult extant research pertaining to the relevant constructs. There are two main approaches to materialism, namely materialism as a personality trait (Hofmeister & Neulinger, 2013; Güliz & Belk, 1996) or materialism as a value (Kasser & Ahuvia, 2002). The latter is relevant in this study that focuses on the consumption behaviour of consumers based on pertinent underlying values and the possibility that significant demographic differences could be used to identify viable subsets of a population for the purpose of market segmentation.

2.2 MATERIALISM

Materialism can be defined as "placing significant importance on material possessions", where these possessions can be used to define one's financial and social status (Goldsmith, Flynn & Clark, 2011). Essentially, materialists place possessions at the centre of their lives and believe that material objects will provide them with well-being and happiness (Segev *et al,.* 2015).

Materialism is said to be the opposite of idealism. Idealism focuses on spiritual values, whereas materialism places possessions above spiritual values. Most religions adopt a negative viewpoint on materialism, saying that is immoral, striving for physical belongings rather than focusing on spiritual values. The positive perspective suggests that materialism is a good thing as it helps the individual attain pleasure and drives them to work for something. The Greek philosopher, Epicurus, recognized this perspective as he believed that pain and pleasure were the only meaningful things in life (Hedonistic perspective) (Srikant, 2013).

Materialism dates back to ancient Greece where it is said that Plato, Socrates and Pythagoras thought that the search for material objects was detrimental to the search for good. Attitudes towards materialism have however changed through the ages, particularly during the nineteenth century which saw many debates between secular and religious authorities (Kilbourne & Floyd, 1993). It was during this era that society's focus shifted towards material values as a driving force. According to Srikant (2013) materialism originates from the ancient Greek philosophy which states that "nothing exists except matter and its movement."

Following the debates of the nineteenth century and the move towards materialism, twentieth and twenty-first century societies are now recognizing that materialists typically want what they do not already own. These individuals are in a constant search for more possessions and material objects to fill their lives with and in doing so, may obstruct their enjoyment of the simpler things in life. Even when the search for possessions is successful (Pandelaere, 2016) materialists tend to place more value on extrinsic goals, such as money and possessions, as opposed to intrinsic goals such as building relationships and personal growth and are therefore, psychologically less healthy (Kasser & Ahuvia, 2002).

Over time, a number of definitions emerged of which literature has indicated two main streams or definitions most commonly adopted when looking at materialism, namely: materialism as a personality trait (Pandelaere, 2016; Otero-López & Villardefrancos, 2013; Belk 1985, 1984) and materialism as an enduring belief or value (Segev *et al.,* 2015; Scott, 2002; Richins & Dawson, 1992). Although the latter will be taken into account for this study, both definitions are contained in the literature review to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the topic of investigation and the scales that were used.

2.2.1 Materialism as a personality trait

Every individual has a unique personality and set of characteristics made up of their thoughts, behaviour and feelings (Roberts, 2010). Personality traits are continually changing and transforming as an individual experiences life. Materialism is acknowledged as a personality trait (Otero-López & Villardefrancos, 2013). Traits that are specifically related to materialism as part of one's personality, are envy, non-generosity and possessiveness. Typically, a person who places possessions at the centre of his/ her life experiences considerable fluctuation of a sense of satisfaction and dissatisfaction (Belk, 1984). Belk (1985) explains that a materialistic person expresses mood states in relation to material objects, and that these are more dominant in their personality than traits such as openness, agreeableness, neuroticism, conscientiousness and extraversion (Pandelaere, 2016).

2.2.2 Materialism as an enduring value or belief

2.2.2.1 Differences in the construction of the phenomenon

Another way to define materialism, is to view it as a system of personal values, with the objects one possesses defining the way one lives and a means to set major personal goals (Richins & Dawson, 1992). Values tend to steer people's attitude towards social behaviour and can be defined as what people are taught about how to behave in society, and what guides them to behave (Segev *et al.,* 2015; Sevgili & Cesur, 2014). This definition is used for the purpose of this study.

Values are abstract motivations, which are internally deeply rooted in an individual and which help form, explain and guide an individual's motivations, actions, attitudes and justifications (Tuulik, Õunapuu, Kuimet & Titov, 2016; Schwartz, 1992). Every individual's behaviour is determined by predominant personal values that can explain and predict an individual's actions and reactions in particular circumstances (Tuulik *et al.*, 2016). Two major value types are distinguished, namely *instrumental values* and *terminal values*, with instrumental values (for example the acquisition/ essentiality dimension of materialism) being the motivating or driving factor behind certain life goals such as success, happiness, distinctiveness, and essentiality (regarded as the terminal values) (Ekici, Webb, Lee, Gurel-Atay, Hegazy, Johar, Joseph, Husic & Cicic, 2014; Richins & Dawson, 1992). Instrumental values refer to the value *as* "simply a means to an end", for example purchasing status bearing brands to enhance your status. Terminal values, on the other hand, describe the value of possessions in terms of the essential outcome, for example that the expensive Gucci bag can be used to gain admiration and envy, admitting that it brings happiness (Scott, 2002; Csikszentmihalyi & Rochberg-Halton, 1978). Due to the nature and current state of modern society, materialism as a terminal value has seemed to surpass instrumental materialism, which means that the emphasis has shifted to the outcome (Tuulik *et al.,* 2016; Scott, 2002; Csikszentmihalyi & Rochberg-Halton, 1978).

Based on a values approach, Richins and Dawson (1992) suggested that people who tend to adopt a materialistic lifestyle are far more prone to highly value their actual possessions - more so than other life goals (Ekici *et al.*, 2014; Richins & Dawson, 1992). They conceptualized materialism as an instrumental value, which centres around and is fuelled by three belief systems or terminal values, namely *acquisition centrality, happiness,* and *success.* Trinh and Phau later on added a fourth dimension, namely, "distinctiveness" (Trinh & Phau, 2011, 2012). Others however (Ekici *et al.*, 2014), have argued that Richins and Dawson (1992) have indeed misinterpreted the true meaning of instrumental and terminal values in their presentation of the core meaning of materialism and propose that acquisition centrality (essentiality) is fundamentally, instrumental materialism by nature; while happiness and success are essentially terminal values (Ekici *et al.,* 2014). More recently, Segev (2015) states that in essence, materialism comprises of three dimensions, namely happiness, centrality and success (which all represent the terminal dimensions according to Ekici *et*

al., 2014), and that the acquisition of possessions, i.e. essentiality (instrumental value) is at the centre of materialists' lives, being essential for well-being and happiness, and to demonstrate one's success or image.

Therefore, possessions are valued and used by a materialist to express themselves, to depict who they would like to be seen as by others, as well as to build social relationships. Intrinsically, people have a need to belong, to have a sense of safety and self-worth (Segev *et al.,* 2015; Chang & Arkin, 2002). Materialistic values may be a way of coping with the difficulties of life or with societal insecurities an individual may have (Noguti & Bokeyar, 2014). Human beings are predominantly social creatures and have an innate desire to be a part of a social group. In today's society, group membership can be shown, or claimed, through a demonstration of one's possessions. Many materialists identify themselves with a particular group based on the things they own (Johnson, 2004; Micken & Roberts, 1999). Materialists' most important possessions often distinguish their personal values. For example, a person who finds achievement extremely important, would consider purchasing products that reflect occupational success; whereas a person who places more importance on family and relationships, would find objects that signify or strengthen those ties, to be more important. Values guide actions, attitudes, judgements, and comparisons of how individuals view and consume different products (Schwartz, 2012; Richins, 1994;).

2.2.2.2 Relevant dimensions of the construct

- *Acquisition centrality/ Essentiality*

This dimension is explained as an instrumental value by Ekici et al. (2014).

Materialists tend to regard possessions, and the acquisition of commodities as a very significant part of their lives believing that the ownership of certain possessions is a source of happiness, well-being, and life-satisfaction (Segev *et al*., 2015). With objects being the most important factor in a materialist's world, they attach a high degree of significance and to each acquisition and make effort to acquire possessions (Hofmeister & Neulinger, 2013).

Literature indicates a number of positive consequences of materialism, such as a higher living standards and better worker engagement, simply because workers wish to earn more to be able to spend more. On the other hand, materialism can also result in compulsive buying of the latest or updated products and brands, relationship harm because relationships become of lesser importance, debt, bankruptcy and excessive crime to support this life style (Noguti & Bokeyar, 2014).

- *Possession defined success*

This dimension is explained as a terminal value by Ekici *et al.* (2014).

Human beings are predominantly social creatures and have an innate desire to be a part of a social group. In today's society, group membership can be shown, or claimed, through a demonstration of one's possessions. Many materialists identify themselves to a particular group according to the things they own

(Micken & Roberts, 1999). Success, from a materialists point of view, refers to both the quality and or quantity of the material possessions acquired (Srikant, 2013). A person's (materialist's) acquisition of particular products may be used to demonstrate achievements (Segev *et al*., 2015), and to serve as evidence of both one's own success and that of others as a necessary part of personal well-being and life-satisfaction (Hofmeister & Neulinger, 2013).

Possessions are also used by a materialist to depict who they would like to be, as well as to build social relationships. Intrinsically, people have a need to belong, to have a sense of safety and self-worth (Chang & Arkin, 2002). It is argued that materialistic values may be a way of coping with the difficulties of life or with societal insecurities that an individual may have (Noguti & Bokeyar, 2014).

- *Acquisitions as the pursuit of happiness*

This dimension is explained as a terminal value by Ekici *et al.* (2014).

Possessions can be obtained intentionally as a means to achieve happiness (Richins, 1994). Research shows that unhappy, materialistic people tend to seek pleasure by purchasing goods and services, and, in time, begin to believe that these objects are essential to their happiness, thus a terminal value (Segev *et al*., 2015). Once a person has satisfied all of their basic needs, the pursuit of happiness becomes a driving factor, with the accumulation of possessions and wealth are even elevated beyond personal growth and development of relationships (Segev *et al*., 2015; Hofmeister & Neulinger, 2013). Many materialists have high levels of depression and anxiety (Goldsmith & Clark, 2012) and in order to maintain positive emotions, they are likely to purchase more possessions in an attempt to maintain the happiness they are seeking (Šeinauskienė, Maščinskienė & Jucaitytė, 2015) and to dissipate the anxiety and depression brought about by their spending.

- *Acquisition to achieve distinctiveness*

This dimension is explained as a terminal value by Ekici et al. (2014).

Literature indicates that materialists believe that by acquiring certain or numerous goods, they are able to stand out from the crowd or be distinctive, thus boosting their self-esteem and self-worth (Atay & Sirgy, 2009). This drives many materialists to consume conspicuously and purchase status products, not wanting to blend in with society (Goldsmith & Clark, 2012; Mason, 2001). Being distinctive brings happiness to a materialist, even if it is for a limited amount of time. When they no longer feel like they are distinct enough, unhappiness sets in again and so does the need to purchase more items in order to feel more fulfilled, and distinctive (Richins, 2013; O'Cass & McEwen, 2004).

2.2.3 Behaviours associated with materialism as a value

2.2.3.1 Status consumption

Status consumption has been proven to be related to having materialistic values, as both encompass the purchasing of material products that convey status for both the consumer and their social group (Goldsmith & Clark, 2012; Muncy & Eastman, 1998). The Management Study Guide (2008), indicates that status consumption occurs when a consumer buys a product for reasons other than their economic value. Materialistic individuals value their self-presentation and having a recognizable social identity (Segev *et al*., 2015). As such, their product satisfaction depends, to an extent, on the ability of the item to communicate a specific message to others (Fitzmaurice & Comegys, 2006).

One major motivation for materialists to acquire more possessions, is to achieve social status, getting more pleasure from acquiring or showing off their possessions, than from the benefit of using them (Fitzmaurice & Comegys, 2006). The use of material items in this regard is for personal enhancement in order to establish social relationships (Goldsmith & Clark, 2012). The higher the value placed on a specific possession, the more likely it is to portray a message of success or high status (Richins, 1994).

In the twenty-first century, the amount of possessions and money one has, indicates one's level of success (Noguti & Bokeyar, 2014). Status products are bought with the belief that they will somehow exhibit success or power (Sangkhawasi & Johri, 2007) and will make up for shortcomings in ones' life (Donnelly, Ksendzova & Howell, 2013). A person's social class or status may be elevated due to factors such as education, occupation, wealth, or a prestigious job with a high income (Sangkhawasi & Johri, 2007), which are all items that may be desired by a materialist.

Social exclusion can increase the materialistic values of people, driving them to try and acquire more money and expensive products, in an attempt to improve self- appeal and image. This is for example evident in the behaviour of so-called "Black Diamonds" in South Africa (Bevan-Dye, 2012). As a result of peer pressure, acquiring the "correct" possessions may lead to short-term acceptance within desired friendship groups (Jiang, Zhang, Ke, Hawk & Qiu, 2015). It has been found that status conveying products influence people with higher education levels, and those from higher profile institutions more easily, possible due to the greater need to belong to a particular social group. One of the marketing strategies blamed for increased status consumption, is the conveyance to consumers that particular products are symbols of status, that will help the owner to obtain a higher position in society (Sangkhawasi & Johri, 2007).

2.2.3.2 Conspicuous consumption

Consumption for social status relates to conspicuous consumption, where individuals are motivated to improve their social status or -standing by engaging in conspicuous consumption of products that convey a certain message about the individual and their surrounding others (Goldsmith & Clark, 2012).

When defining materialism from the values approach, materialists do not only gain value from their actual possessions, but also from the conspicuous consumption of the objects, and gain pleasure by displaying the object to others (Segev *et al.,* 2015). The personal self is being expressed through these possessions, and thus more value is placed on these objects when it is possible to consume the products in the public eye (Sangkhawasi & Johri, 2007; Richins, 1994). The specific item a person consumes, can even reveal the person who the individual wishes to project (Richins, 1994). Materialistic youth are for example known to pay specific attention to the product choices of celebrities, as they have an innate desire to imitate them through their own consumption of these products (Goldsmith & Clark, 2012) in order to gain the same level of societal recognition or success.

The acquisition of particular goods is seen by materialists as a significant achievement in life (Noguti & Bokeyar, 2014), despite gaps between a person's desired- and actual living standards, which leaves materialists often feeling unsatisfied with life (Segev *et al.*, 2015). The acquisition of a product may be a source of more pleasure to an individual than actually using the product (Richins, 1994). Thus, materialism can be seen as both a coping strategy and a consequence of personal insecurity (Noguti & Bokeyar, 2014). The need that people have to acquire material objects and maintain a particular appearance, increases the demand for products that can be consumed visibly, or which portrays a particular societal status (Sangkhawasi & Johri, 2007).

Literature establishes two types of consumption, namely public- and private consumption, and for the purposes of this study the focus is on the former, i.e. when the personal meaning of an object is shared across societal boundaries and is attached to objects that add to perceived personal significance when displayed in public. These particular objects form part of social communication methods that are used to convey a desired message about the individual as social and personal identity is shaped through consumption choices (Richins, 1994). Through these choices, individuals attempt to create an image they wish to portray to others (Noguti & Bokeyar, 2014) and therefore, great value may be placed on these objects. "Possessions of highly materialistic people are more likely to be consumed in the public eye, to be more expensive and have less sentimental value to the consumer" (Richins, 1994).

2.2.3.3 Affluence

Research by Richins (1994) suggests that Westernised people engage in abundant consumption for the meaning it portrays, rather than to fulfil genuine needs or wants, and that consumers of different ages seek to portray different meanings through their consumption of goods. Materialism can be seen as the desire to own more possessions or products, perceiving this to have a higher value than others might (Sangkhawasi & Johri, 2007). Shopping for, and owning goods, may be viewed as an instrument to build esteem, relationship surety, and authenticity in consumers who are unsatisfied with their lives (Segev *et al.*, 2015).

Existing research indicates that people use materialism as a coping mechanism for unfulfilled needs, with the acquisition of possessions being used in an attempt to obtain safety and security, and to solidify a sense of identity (Segev *et al.*, 2015). Segev (2015) supports this by saying that shopping and owning goods are used to meet unmet needs in those who are unsatisfied, suffering from low self-esteem, or struggling with a sense of identity or authenticity and that these forms of external stimuli are used in an attempt to receive instant gratification (Reeves, Baker & Truluck, 2012). Research further shows that the more materialistic a person is, the more likely he/ she would be to enjoy shopping (Noguti & Bokeyar, 2014; Goldsmith & Clark, 2012). When a materialistic consumer goes shopping, they may initially feel the euphoria of a need or goal being met. However, these consumers may soon regret their purchase, believing that something better, or of more value, could have been purchased, resulting in negative emotions. The individual will nevertheless feel positive about the activity of shopping, even if they are aware of the negative emotions that might follow many of their purchases (Noguti & Bokeyar, 2014). The gaining of material objects leads only to temporary mood-enhancement (Jiang *et al.*, 2015). Over consumption is prominent amongst materialistic consumers, where large portions of resources are poured into acquiring possessions (Segev *et al*., 2015).

Affluent consumption can be linked to compulsive buying, where individuals may experience anxiety when they are unable to make purchases, even those which are not necessarily needed or even wanted (Investopedia, 2016). Compulsive buyers tend to pay less attention to budgets, use credit cards more often, and think less of the long-term consequences of their spending, which can ultimately have a negative impact on their long-term financial well-being (Donnelly *et al.*, 2013). Research conducted by Donnelly (2013) revealed that materialists more often buy on credit to postpone the consequences that the purchases will have on their finances. Credit acts as a cushion, allowing for the purchase of costly, high in status items which would not be possible when using cash. Materialists tend to have a positive attitude towards debt and borrowing money and are therefore more willing to use credit, resulting in larger amounts of debt (Donnelly *et al.*, 2013).

2.2.4 Materialism in relation to clothing purchase decisions

Materialism, when considered as a part of consumer behaviour, contributes to our understanding of how, why, where, when and what consumers purchase and what motivates their decisions. This understanding is particularly relevant when considering decisions pertaining to their clothing purchase decisions. Complicating these purchasing decisions is the constant manipulation of the internal human emotions, by external factors such as media and marketing efforts (Erasmus, Boshoff & Rousseau, 2010). Richins (1994) discovered in a study, that highly materialistic people, listed their most valued possessions as those that they wear or can be seen wearing in public as opposed to those possessions used privately.

With one of the main goals of a materialist, in terms of acquisition, is to be distinctive and stand out from the crowd (Mason, 2001), clothing is the ideal opportunity and platform to achieve this as it is visible at all times. Clothing can be bought and displayed conspicuously, as every consumer is never without it, making it the simplest way to show what one owns and is able to afford (Lertwannawit & Mandhachitara, 2012). It affords he materialist the largest platform to express themselves and be distinctive in a public manner (Joung, 2013), which may put a lot of pressure on a materialistic consumer to select what to wear. A need to be accepted and admired is now coupled with a desire to be distinctive (Joung, 2013; O'Cass & McEwen, 2004).

Materialism and clothing are directly related: materialists purchase clothing as a symbol of social status and success (Browne & Kaldenburg, 1997), using clothing to express their personality and as an opportunity to display their social status (Richins, 1994). Females are generally more materialistic, are more likely to follow fashion trends and to purchase brand names in an attempt to stand out (Browne & Kaldenburg, 1997). Status consumption allows the consumer to acquire products that many people do not possess and possibly cannot afford, thus allowing them to stand out (Joung, 2013). It has been suggested that materialists are motivated to purchase such products to signal to others and to themselves that their status in society in general has risen (Eastman, Goldsmith & Flynn, 1999).

A consumer who purchases clothing, even clothing for a special occasion, may find the task extremely difficult, simply based on the pressure they feel to pick the "perfect" outfit. Generally, younger consumers have more disposable income to spend on clothes, as they do not have as many ongoing expenses as the their elder counterparts (Erasmus, Donoghu & Dobbelstein, 2014). Also, this younger generation tends to feel much more pressure to "look the part" and stand out from and be admired by their peers (Joung, 2013), which is conducive to materialism.

2.2.5 Materialism and society

2.2.5.1 Materialism in society in general

Materialism is not a novel concept. As a trend of happiness-seeking through consumption, interest in the phenomenon has gained momentum as early as the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in Europe before spreading out to other countries (Belk, 1984). With the rise of industry and a subsequent increase in the mass-production market, the desires of consumers have grown, increasing the size and frequency of their purchasing habits (Richins, 2013). This formed the ideal basis for the orientation that became known as materialism (Belk, 1984).

Relevance in society. In the social sciences, materialism is understood as "a personal value that that encompasses a concern for material items and possessions, competitiveness, and a certain emphasis on making a profit, as opposed to the well-being of one's fellow human beings" (Beutel & Marini, 1995). This definition describes an aspect of society that does not inspire a healthy and cohesive communal living environment. Richins (1994) states that research has disclosed that materialists tend to be far more self-centred than non-materialistic consumers, and would far rather use their resources on themselves to enhance their own happiness than share what they have with others, including friends and family. Materialism, being "the importance ascribed to ownership and acquisition of material goods in achieving major life goals" (Richins & Dawson, 1992) may result in a society in which its inhabitants are very self-centred and inwards focussed. Any form of 'sense of community' and neighbourly obligations are lost, and replaced with a desire to serve and improve one's self and to accumulate possessions in order to try and achieve happiness (Srikant, 2013; Belk, 1984). Materialists tend to judge their own success and success of others by both the quality and quantity of their possessions, thus creating a rather superficial form of society (Richins & Dawson, 1992).

Unfortunate negative consequences of materialism. Researchers have identified several societal- and personal problems that are associated with materialism and that are so intertwined that it is difficult to state which comes first. Materialism is said to encompass a pursuit of wealth, popularity, fame and physical attractiveness (Kasser & Ryan, 1996), and an inclination to use a large part of one's income to purchase more (Peviani & Ponchio, 2012). This may lead to greater personal debt because consumers keep on buying, indiscriminately, even compulsively; increased bankruptcy figures because overspending consumers fail to honour payments; a negative impact on relationships in smaller social circles due to stress and shame; increased crime due to the fact that overspending creates debt that later on becomes impossible to deal with; and a reduced concern about the environment and what overspending may cause (Noguti & Bokeyar, 2014). Not surprisingly then, materialism has even been linked to serious mental disorders, such as depression and paranoia (Srikant, 2013). Certain studies have suggested that materialism could lead to a decrease in environmental consciousness, where consumers only focus on acquiring the end-product, for example, having the most beautiful fur coat, without considering the ecological implications (Segev *et al*.,

2015). These consumers are likely to be more self-serving, and less likely to engage in activities that are pro-environmental (Sangkhawasi & Johri, 2007). Past research proposes that materialism has a negative impact upon the environment and its protection, since it leads to increased consumption. With growing numbers of materialists who care more about living in comfort or experiencing pleasure than the impact their purchases have upon the planet, concerns are rising about the conservation of the environment (Segev *et al.*, 2015).

Factors that may encourage materialism in the market. Poor socio economic backgrounds often create a yearning for commodities; so may over-protective parents also enforce conformity and compliance and would go to lengths to acquire certain products for their children even though they cannot afford it; divorce within a family often result in parents competing to win the favour of their children through tangible acquisitions that can be displayed visibly (Kasser, Ryan, Zax & Sameroff, 1995). Kasser and Ahuvia (2002) concluded that one of the reasons for materialistic values within individuals may be due to the attempt and failure of life quests, causing low levels of well-being. Subsequent unhappiness can be both a cause and consequence of materialism (Noguti & Bokeyar, 2014). Reduction of happiness in life, a poor sense of well-being, general dissatisfaction with life, loss of sense of community and environmental goals or concerns, may instigate a materialistic lifestyle (Segev *et al.*, 2015). A Singaporean study on business students revealed that the more materialistic an individual's values, the less vitality, self-actualisation and happiness were evident, with increased misery and anxiety (Kasser & Ahuvia, 2002). Studies hence demonstrate that materialistic individuals have an inclination to be less satisfied with their lives as a whole, with their levels and standards of living, their family situations, and have lower levels of enjoyment (Ryan & Dziurawiec, 2011). Ingratitude is also a negative emotion associated with materialism, where there is a tendency to be ungrateful for the things and relationships in one's life. These individuals tend to portray egotistical or greedy behaviour, pushing those closest to them away (Zemojtel, Piotrowski & Clinton, 2015), thus adding to the negative ethical association with materialists (Segev *et al.*, 2015).

Marketers have to understand materialism and how it relates to the consumer. The more materialism thrives in society, and the more consumer are driven to spend, the better it is for the market. Marketers therefore condone materialism in a bid to increase the wealth of the economy, although they also need to have an understanding of the negative consequences of materialism on the market that may affect them severely (Srikant, 2013).

2.2.5.2 Materialism in South Africa

Since South Africa's first democratic election in 1994, there has been a major change in the dynamics and distribution of wealth in the country, and with it, a dramatic increase in growth in the status brand market (Bevan-Dye, Barnett & de Klerk, 2012; Schiffman, Kanuk & Wisenblit, 2010). This may be due to the rapidly growing group of black consumers described by TNS Research Surveys and UCT Unilever Institute of

Strategic Marketing as the "Black Diamonds" (De Waal, 2008; Jones, 2007). This black, "Generation Y" group seems to be the main contributor to the rapid growth in consumerism, materialism and status consumption in South Africa (Bevan-Dye *et al.,* 2012; Jones, 2007). These consumers are characterised as being self-confident, well-educated and highly ambitious (Bevan-Dye *et al.,* 2012). Many have some form of tertiary qualification, which thus increases their earning potential, and with that, their spending potential (Schiffman *et al.,* 2010:76; Jones, 2007; De Waal, 2008). A new found access to funds and resources has created a shift in core values where possessions are used to measure status and influence, and is of no or little use when it cannot be put on display for others to see (Bevan-Dye *et al.,* 2012), thus consumption in a conspicuous manner is preferable (Mason, 2001). One of the most conspicuous forms of material goods to purchase is clothing, as it is always on display to others (Joung, 2013; Mason, 2001). Demonstrating behaviours linked to materialistic values, this group tends to purchase far more clothing than is needed, and tends to place a far higher value on purchasing status brands to show off their wealth. The Black Diamond market segment is indeed at the forefront of materialistic consumption in South Africa (Bevan-Dye, 2012; Jones, 2007).

2.2.6 Materialism measurement scales used in research

Over the years, two scales that have become very popular to measure materialism in research, i.e. Belk's Materialism Scale (Belk, 1985) that views materialism as a tri-component personality trait), as well as Richins and Dawson's (1992) Material Value Scale that addresses materialism as a unique set of values. These scales were acknowledged in conjunction with more recent scales to determine the scale that is most applicable for implementation in this research in a modern day South African context.

2.2.6.1 Belk's materialism scale

Russell Belk is the original founder and creator of a materialism scale that was published in 1985. His work and research involves not only materialism, but also aspects of collecting, possessing and gift-giving; it is often qualitative, from a cultural perspective, interpretative, and even visual. He particularly investigates how we, as consumers of varying cultures, relate to one another and how and why we acquire material possessions (Belk, 1984). According to Belk, materialism can be defined as "a manifestation of physical traits" (Belk, 1985) or the importance that consumers attach to material items. When materialistic levels are pertinent in consumers' lives, possessions tend to hold a very important and even the most important position in their lives and can be the source of major satisfaction as well as dissatisfaction (Belk, 1985). Belk surmises that in a consumer society, the ideas we have about ourselves are often guided and formed by what we own, the things we desire, and how we use what we have. He initially proposed that materialism possesses three characteristics, namely possessiveness, non-generosity and envy:

Possessiveness refers to the inclination to maintain and retain possession and ownership of one's material possessions and represents three dimensions: fear of losing one's possessions; a desire for greater or more control of ownership; and the tendency to retain, store and save possessions. Experiences can also be seen as potential possessions, such as collecting photographs, mementos and souvenirs.

Non-generosity refers to the disinclination to share one's possessions or to give objects away to other people, which ay encompass unwillingness to donate or lend possessions to others. Such people usually tend to have a negative attitude towards charity. To clarify the definition of envy, Belk uses Schoeks' (1966) (Hofmeister & Neulinger, 2013) definition and describes envy as an ill-will or displeasure towards another person's happiness.

Envy always refers to a fixation on the possessions of others, rather than taking into account one's own possessions.

In 1990, Belk extended his research with help of colleagues (Güliz & Belk, 1996) to include a fourth dimension, namely *tangibility* or *preservation*. Tangibility is the transformation of an experience into a material or tangible form, for example showing friends photographs or physical mementos from an adventure or an experience that others admire.

Research revealed five major issues with regard to materialism as a personality trait, namely the question whether materialism is a negative or positive trait (Belk, 1985); whether marketing tends to exacerbate or create materialism; whether materialism can essentially be seen as an egotistic trait (the possibility that people attempt to identify and define themselves through consumption); the impact of materialism on inter-personal relationships; whether materialism contributes to the maintenance, development and enhancement of a positive self-worth and identity. According to Belk (1985), is not clear whether purchasing items for yourself or others truly serves to help improve or maintain self-esteem and it is not known if the mood of a materialistic person (vs. less materialistic) would affect consumption patterns.

Although Belk's scale is one of the two leading scales in the field of materialism research, there has been much debate as to the usefulness of it in a cross-cultural and international context. Belk's materialism scale, having been developed in America, seems to have been designed specifically to analyse western culture and consumers with western thinking, and aimed to examine generational differences. A recent study published in the International Journal of Consumer Studies (Hofmeister & Neulinger, 2013) examined this aspect of Belk's scale and concluded that, across thirteen countries, the scale proved to be less than suitable in a cross-cultural context. Been in existence since the 1980s, researchers analysing Belk's scale, have had time to monitor its effectiveness throughout generational changes. Hofmeister (2013) explains that due to the low internal reliability of the scale, certain aspects of materialism were not translated well over cultural barriers and some meaning got lost. Certain aspects of materialism therefore had to omitted, resulting in a

less intricate study. Other researchers (Micken, 1995) have also identified flaws in Belk's scale. When examining this scale, one should probably consider the suggestions made by Güliz and Belk (1996), namely that perhaps different items in the scale may be more relevant or powerful in specific cultural settings, as opposed to a scale that is cross-culturally reliable. Despite the notion that some of the items in this materialism scale are completely irrelevant and hold little to no meaning in a cross-cultural study (Wallendorf & Arnould, 1988), Belk's scale nevertheless caters for a cross-generational study and the scale is developed in such a way that it can be applied effectively across a sample of even three generations (Hofmeister & Neulinger, 2013).

2.2.6.2 Richins and Dawson's Material Value Scale (MVS)

The Material Values Scale (MVS) developed by Richins and Dawson (1992) opted to examine and measure materialism as a value, assuming that materialism as a value impacts the way people structure their lives, perceive their environment, conclude decision making, as well as their buying habits (Richins & Dawson, 1992). For Richins and Dawson, materialism represents the level of importance that a consumer assigns to the acquisition and ownership of material goods and how this ownership affects their desired states and life goals. Hence, values would play a major role in guiding consumers' behaviour in the market place. Values per se, are considered to consist of beliefs that pertain to a desired end-state which guide people's/ consumers' evaluations and choices (Rokeach, 1973).

Three major characteristics are used to describe materialistic consumers from a values perspective, i.e. the use and accumulation of material possessions to judge oneself and others; the centrality of possessions in a person's life; the enduring belief that happiness and life satisfaction can be attained through the accumulation and possession of material goods (Richins & Dawson, 1992). In essence, possessions are of the upmost importance for a materialist to feel fulfilled and to be happy. These domains are summarised in terms of three constructs, namely *success, centrality* and *happiness.*

The original Material Value Scale contained eighteen items distributed among three subscales *(success; centrality; happiness)* to tap into each domain. Originally, a five-point Likert-type scale was used.

Like Belk's Materialism Scale, the MVS originated in the United States and was primarily targeted at western societies, with the primary language being English (Richins, 2004). Since this scale was developed, the consumer market and world of materialism has changed considerably, grown and adapted, thus questioning the relevance of the scale in a modern day context. Griffin, Babin and Christensen (2002), cautioned that the Richins and Dawson MVS performs very poorly in a cross-cultural context, hence they questioned the validity of the scale itself due to its age. According to Kilbourne and LaForge (2010), however, the MVS has proved itself to be relatively bias-free after extensive use. Notwithstanding, the main issue which seems to be a recurring problem in many researchers' work, is the length of the scale. Richins (2004) advised that researchers may choose to omit certain aspects and forgo certain measurements (dimensions) to shorten

the scale if necessary short length. More recent research has focussed on creating an adapted, shorter version of the MVS that is reliable (Griffin *et al.,* 2002). In 2004, Richins headed up an investigation into reducing the eighteen point MVS. The scale was developed, tested and results were compared to that of the original scale attending to internal consistency, dimensionality, response bias and construct validity. The shorter fifteen-item MVS far out-performed the eighteen-item MVS and recommendations were made that in future, this version should be used (Richins, 2004). The shorter scale had better dimensional characteristics as part of its psychometric properties, and resulted in no drop in explanatory power. Also, the shortened version meant that each domain could be weighted equally, having five items in each subscale. This simplifies data analysis and interpretation of results (Richins, 2004). The following indicates the items in the MVS, arranged by subscale:

Success

1. I admire people who own expensive homes, cars and clothes
2. Some of the most important achievements in life include acquiring material possessions
3. I don't place much emphasis on the amount of material objects people own as a sign of success*
4. The objects I own say a lot about how well I am doing in life
5. I like to own things that impress people
6. I don't pay much attention to the objects that other people own*#

Centrality

1. I usually buy only the things I need*#
2. I try to keep my life simple, as far as possessions are concerned*
3. The things I own aren't all that important to me*
4. I enjoy spending money on things that aren't practical#
5. Buying things gives me a lot of pleasure
6. I like a lot of luxury in my life
7. I put less emphasis on material things than most people I know*

Happiness

1. I have all the things I really need to enjoy life*
2. My life would be better if I owned certain things that I do not have
3. I wouldn't be any happier if I owned nicer things*
4. I'd be happier if I could afford to buy nicer things
5. It sometimes bothers me quite a bit that I can't afford to buy all the things I'd like

Note: * = reverse scoring; # = items that were removed to reduce the length of the scale

2.2.6.3 Materialism Scale of Trinh & Phau

With notable changes in markets since the development Belk's Materialism Scale (1985) and Richins and Dawson's Material Value Scale (1992), a need for a new scale became evident, specifically to take into account consumers' individuality (Atay & Sirgy, 2009). Because materialistic people are said to use their possessions to be noticed and stand out, they frequently use luxury brands to do so. No previous scale has taken this into account before (Mason, 2001). The accumulation and display of luxury brands is driven by consumers' need for social status and esteem, subsequently the scales developed decades ago are not fully equipped to deal with today's modern version of materialists (Trinh & Phau, 2011; Swami, Chamorro-Premuzic & Furnham, 2009).

Trinh and Phau of Curtin University's (2011) aimed to rectify this shortcoming by adapting and adjusting the original Richins and Dawson's (1992) MVS. A convenience sample consisting of 20 consumers, age 25-50, with higher education levels and background in business studies, were selected and asked to describe the characteristics of materialistic people in relation to luxury brand usage and behaviour. An initial list of 70 items was compiled from a combination of these findings plus the content of existing scales. Items were then screened for ambiguity and examined by experts and professionals in the field of luxury brand marketing, followed by scaling procedures, including factor and reliability testing as well as validity checks. The process produced a final list of sixteen items that were distributed among four components to represent materialism as a construct, namely: *material success; material happiness; material essentiality;* and *material distinctiveness* (Trinh & Phau, 2011). The final scale was tested by a well-known marketing agency, Taylor Nelson Sofres (TNS) in Vietnam, that confirmed the scale to be of a good standard that would produce reliable results (Trinh & Phau, 2011) providing the lack of insight into luxury brand consumption, while being suitable for cross-cultural studies. Richins and Dawson's MVS is captured in the scale of Trinh and Phau (2011) which represents a better alternative with the capacity to measure status, considering luxury goods as a factor of materialism. It is widely acknowledged that materialists seek recognition and social status through their possessions, which links the construct to conspicuous consumption, where consumer satisfaction is derived from audience and on-lookers' reactions (Lynn & Harris, 1997). The scale of Trinh and Phau (2011) provides market researchers with a new and valuable tool to study consumer behaviour, and contains the following items:

Material Success Measures **(1 = "Strongly Agree", and 7 = "Strongly Disagree")**

1. I like to own things that make people think highly of me
2. I like to own more expensive things than most people because this is a sign of success
3. The only way to let everyone know about my high status is to show it
4. I feel good when I buy expensive things. People think of me as a success

Material Happiness Measure (1 = "Strongly Agree", and 7 = "Strongly Disagree")

1. Material possessions are important because they contribute a lot to my happiness
2. When friends have things I cannot afford, it bothers me
3. Acquiring valuable things is important for my happiness
4. To me, it is important to have expensive homes, cars, clothes and other things. Having these expensive items makes me happy

Material Essentiality Measure (1 = "Strongly Agree", and 7 = "Strongly Disagree")

1. Material growth has an irresistible attraction for me
2. Material accumulation helps raise the level of civilisation
3. Growth in material consumption helps raise the level of civilisation
4. To buy and possess expensive things is very important to me

Material Distinctiveness Measure (1 = "Strongly Agree", and 7 = "Strongly Disagree")

1. I usually buy things that make me look distinctive
2. I like to own things that make people think of me as unique and different
3. I feel uncomfortable when seeing a random person wearing the same clothes as I am wearing
4. I would rather pay more to get a more distinctive item

The materialism scale of Trinh and Phau (2011) was subsequently used as measurement instrument in this research.

2.3 VOLUNTARY SIMPLICITY

The idea of living and maintaining a more simplistic lifestyle is not a new concept, with moderation and material restraint being seen throughout history and initially inspired by a number of prominent advocates such as Jesus, Buddha, Mohammed, St Francis etc. (Elgin, 1981). Historically, voluntary simplicity seems to have sprung its roots from the Puritans, known for their self-reliance and frugality and belief in "plain living and higher thinking" (Leonard-Barton, 1981). The term "Voluntary Simplicity" however, was not officially used until 1936, when Richard Gregg coined the term to describe a lifestyle that focussed on a greater balance between inner and outer growth (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977), and in turn, removing the "clutter" from one's life (Zavestoski, 2002). Leonard-Barton later went on to say that voluntary simplicity acts as a guide for one's energy and material desires, and that a level of restraint in these terms, enables one to secure greater levels of happiness and fulfilment (Leonard-Barton, 1981).

Leonard-Barton and Rogers (1980) defined voluntary simplicity as "the degree to which an individual consciously chooses a way of life which is intended to maximise their control over their own lives". A year later, Leonard-Barton (1981) added that voluntary simplifiers also aim to minimise their consumption and

dependency. Because the lifestyle of voluntary simplifiers is often adopted solely in response to economic constraints, it does not always represent true voluntary simplicity. Voluntary simplifiers are generally defined as people who have freely chosen to live a frugal and anti-consumption lifestyle (McDonald, Oates, Young & Hwang, 2006), striving to live a life that is "outwardly simple and inwardly rich" (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977). This way of simplistic living is said to be a reaction to society's propensity to over-consume and their materialistic lifestyles (Maniates, 2002; Etzioni, 1998).

Voluntary simplifiers aim to limit their expenditure in order to seek life satisfaction through non-consumption based means (Etzioni, 1998), and believe in cultivating an environment of self-reliance (Huneke, 2005) and pursuit of "the good life"(Johnson, 2004). This group of consumers question society's consumption tendencies and rather tend towards a less materialistic lifestyle that, to them, is more socially beneficial, spiritually enlightening, environmentally friendly and personally fulfilling (Johnson, 2004). This study was specifically interested in the dimension of voluntary simplicity that reflects material simplicity as explained by Etzioni (1998) to restrict the investigation to consumers' consumption behaviour (lavish versus frugal), excluding ethical consumption, care for the environment (pollution, conservation) and support for local products, which are also contained in the broader explication of VS behaviour.

The following section (2.3.1) is devoted to voluntary simplicity as a broader phenomenon that entails different dimensions that describe different approaches towards products, brands and services that have been found in research to coherently describe the construct. Although all the dimensions of the construct are not relevant to this investigation, it was decided to explain "material simplicity" in context (theoretically) of what voluntary simplicity entails, to explain that material simplicity is one of the important dimensions of the construct that specifically reflect consumers' buyer behaviour, which is non-materialistic, demonstrating lower consumption levels (Huneke, 2005).

2.3.1 Voluntary simplistic behaviour

According to Elgin and Mitchell (1977), consumption patterns of voluntary simplifiers are purposefully healthy, durable, recyclable, repairable, non-polluting and aesthetically pleasing. Over time, the number of people adopting a voluntary simplistic lifestyle has greatly increased, with individuals desperate to find their way out of a consumption obsessed mentality, which has become typical of most Western societies (Maniates, 2002). Research has indicated that roughly, 60 million people in the United States, have willingly and voluntarily reduced their working hours and thus their incomes and finally their expenditure because of new priorities on a personal level and are all happier as a result (Maniates, 2002; Schor, 1998). This group seeks life satisfaction and happiness through non-materialistic habits and lower consumption levels (Huneke, 2005). Out of their own free will, without any coercing from external sources, these consumers limit their expenditure on consumer goods and services, (Etzioni, 1998). This lifestyle is a deliberate

initiative, aiming to create a distance from the materialistic world and its possessions in an attempt to reprioritise and reorganise one's priorities (Cherrier, 2009; Etzioni, 1998).

In modern day society, consumers have begun to accept that it is acceptable to over consume without regard for the consequences. Voluntary simplifiers, however, tend to take an alternate stance, opting rather for simpler lifestyle (Rudmin & Kilbourne, 1996; Elgin, 1981). They use resources sparingly and are gravely aware of the social and environmental impact of overconsumption (Todd & Lawson, 2002).

Simplifiers modify or stop consumption as a personal choice in terms of their actual need for a certain products or services, taking into account the ethical considerations of their purchases (Barnett, Cafaro & Newholm, 2005). Literature indicates various examples of stances taken by voluntary simplifiers, for example to change transport- and laundry practices (Arens, Thorogood & Reddy, 1995); reusing or repairing broken items rather than disposing of them and replacing them (Cooper, 2005). Voluntary simplifiers generally have a desire to reconnect with nature and not to damage it and therefore considers the risk of environmental degradation, climate change and unsustainable consumption- and production practices (Beck, 1992). As far as food purchasing goes, simplifiers prefer to support local shops, and attempt to grow their own produce, becoming self-reliant (Thompson 2016).

Key themes of voluntary simplistic consumption are indicated in literature, namely, namely *reduced consumption; ethical consumption;* and *sustainable consumption.* This study is concerned with one of the characteristics of VS that refers to reduced consumption. involving activities with the purpose of limiting one's consumption habits, such as making second-hand purchases, sharing and rejecting household clutter (Bekin, Carrigan & Szmigin, 2007; Huneke, 2005). Ethical consumption involves a keen awareness and concern for the social and environmental impacts of consumption that increases a demand for environmentally friendly, and fair trade products (McDonald *et al.,* 2006). Acts such as recycling and composting is associated with sustainable consumption (Bekin *et al.,* 2007; Huneke, 2005), which may stem from ethical considerations (Shaw & Newholm, 2002).

2.3.2 The dimensions of Voluntary Simplicity

Voluntary simplicity is said to be a form of social movement that encompasses great diversity and richness stemming from the values held by those who adopt this way of life (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977). Simplifiers seem to be motivated by "substantive values and moral visions" (Grigsby, 2004; Seidman, 1994). It has also been said that voluntary simplifiers engage in moral identity work to try and establish themselves as "worthwhile" and "good" people (Grigsby, 2004). Although voluntary simplicity is a value, there is a great diversity and variance in how simplifiers adopt, express and act on the phenomenon. Literature identifies five major values or dimensions of voluntary simplicity (VS) (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977), namely: *material simplicity, self-determination, ecological awareness, human scale* and *personal growth.* These core values are primary in

the lives of simplifiers and are generally passed down through generations (Gabrel & Cafaro, 2010). The following section explains these dimensions.

2.3.2.1 Material simplicity

Material simplicity is the dimension that this study is specifically concerned about. It is a non-consumption orientation and way of life (Shama, 1985; Leonard-Barton, 1981; Elgin & Mitchell, 1977) that involves the specific act of deliberately not overconsuming and making a conscious effort to consume less (Shama, 1985). This mentality, according to Elgin and Mitchell (1977) is all about "being" and "becoming" rather than "having". In order to consume less, simplifiers generally ask themselves what they already own, how the object would add value to one's life, and whether it lead may instigate dependency (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977). The removal of excess clutter is said to decrease one's dependency on material objects and reduces reliance on the market (McGouran & Protheroo, 2016). Voluntary simplifiers also take into consideration the environment and society in general before making a purchase and consider how their purchases may impact others, "reducing frills and unnecessary luxuries and at the same time, emphasising the beauty and joy of living" (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977). This thought process is done to improve their lives by creating freedom from excess, and living a simpler, happy life. They encourage society to share its wealth and to spread it more evenly. Also important, is to become more self-reliant and self-sufficient, and to restore a sense of balance, moderation and proportion in terms of material possessions and consumption (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977). Simplifiers tend to assess their resources and to shape their wants by moving beyond basic needs to rather focus on higher order needs such as self-actualisation (Gambrel & Cafaro, 2009).

Although it is apparent that consumption patterns of voluntary simplifiers are significantly, numerically less, it does not necessarily mean that the overall cost of their consumption decreases. Simple living does not mean that the individual lives cheaply (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977). Research has shown that modern day simplifiers are generally not lacking financially and frequently fall into the middle to high earning brackets (Craig-Lees & Hill, 2002; Mitchell, 1983), thus enabling them to afford certain products such as organic textiles that may be more expensive. Simplistic and frugal consumers are often attracted to products that are durable, hand-crafted, and environmentally friendly, which all come at a higher price compared to the run-of-the-mill products (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977).

2.3.2.2 Self-determination

This value is explained by Leonard-Barton (1981) as the degree to which an individual opts for a life-style that will maximise their direct control over their daily activities and will minimise their dependency and consumption, which requires considerable self-discipline (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977). Hence, this dimension of voluntary simplistic behaviour refers to a strong desire to take control of one's life and personal destiny, not having to rely on external forces to determine one' actions, but to rather take a pro-active approach (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977). Simplifiers are conscious of the global effect of over-consumption (Johnston & Burton, 2003), and are wary of, and strive to be less dependent on larger institutions (Elgin & Mitchell,

1977). A deep respect for nature, humanity and the community inter alia motivate simplifiers to reject a consumerist lifestyle (Cherrier, 2007). Self-determination manifests in terms of a lifestyle that is less reliant on maintenance costs, instalments, and other's expectations, trying to be more self-sufficient (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977). Eventually, the level of self-determination achieved, is determined by an individual's personal awareness and willpower (Johnston & Burton, 2003).

Self-determination, from a public viewpoint, focusses on the political aspects of the market and therefore this dimension was excluded from the investigation. Privately, it attends to the actual economy and the ability of society to reduce consumption as a whole (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977). Evidence of self-determination amongst voluntary simplifiers is evident in those who have literally downscaled by moving away from the big city life and the "earn-pay-cycle" (Johnston & Burton, 2003). Known as "downshifters" these consumers realise that their way of life and consumption patterns is no longer contributing to their happiness and overall well-being and they therefor abandon their old way of life in exchange for one that is more rewarding, where they have more freedom of choice, and can grow more as a person (Alexander, 2011; Johnston & Burton, 2003).

2.3.2.3 Ecological awareness

Ecological awareness is a state of consciousness of the integral relationship and dependency between people and resources (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977), which comes from an understanding and appreciation for the environment and that human beings have a responsibility to conserve and preserve it (Thompson, 2016). Simplifiers recognise that the earth's resources are limited, and that conservation efforts are needed to prevent its exhaustion (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977). They aim to reduce pollution, reduce the strain placed on the earth and try to maintain the beauty of the world and the natural environment (Daniel, 2016; Elgin & Mitchell, 1977).

Ecological awareness is closely related and linked to environmental awareness, whereby consumers have an understanding of the consequences of one's actions on the environment (Suki, 2013), which was not relevant in terms of this investigation's overarching aim and specific objectives. Despite their individualised consumption habits, simplifiers seem to have a common "sense of community" (Friedman, Abeele & De Vos, 1993), through a sense of communion with people around them and with nature itself (Moss & Morgan, 1967). these people have a "green" awareness and prioritise reduced consumption, recycling, and a switch to more ecologically and environmentally friendly products (Suki, 2013). They support a sense of global citizenship and a willingness to share resources, living in areas with ready access to nature, have a strong social vision encourages diversity (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977).

Although many consumers, not just voluntary simplifiers, acknowledge the need for pro-environmental acts (Bly, Gwozdz & Reisch, 2013), its implementation seems to be lacking in terms of self-control and physically cutting down on excessive consumption patterns (Pepper, Jackson & Uzzell, 2009). Previous studies confirm

that people would like to be able to consume in an environmentally friendly way, but are discouraged by the high prices of environmentally friendly products (Shen, Richards & Lui, 2013). Because voluntary simplifiers are associated with frugality (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977) many people struggle to uphold the lifestyle and sticking to their values (Pepper *et al.,* 2009).

2.3.2.4 Human scale

The idea of human scale in Leonard-Barton's (1981) definition of voluntary simplicity indicates a simplifier's desire to decrease his/ her dependency on larger institutions, which they have little to no control over. Voluntary simplifiers desire to be more self-determining and to take back control of their own lives (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977). They prefer a smaller, manageable "human-sized" environment in which they can live and work and can control (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977). Voluntary simplifiers dislike larger institutions and industrialisation due to lack of individuality, and limited say in their operations, thus lack of controllability (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977). According to Schumacher (1973), "small is beautiful". They therefore support small, local businesses and have a strong sense of community (Friedman *et al.,* 1993). They are very selective of where they shop (Shaw & Newholm, 2002). Many simplifiers try to produce their own goods, and home production helps empower and re-enable them to take back some of the power from the larger companies to give it back to the "man in the street" (Szmigin, Carrigan & Bekin, 2007). This decentralised approach allows voluntary simplifiers to split industries into smaller and more manageable entities, which are easier for them to comprehend. The idea of restoring their lives back to a more basic format with a more manageable proportions, is accomplished by reduction of scale (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977). Although indisputable characteristic of true voluntary simplifiers, this investigation was not specifically concerned with where consumers shop or their sense of concern about the community.

2.3.2.5 Personal growth

In a way, the four previously mentioned dimensions of voluntary simplicity, namely material simplicity, self-determination, ecological awareness and human scale, are all tools that can be used by voluntary simplifiers to remove the obstacles between themselves and their personal growth (Cherrier, 2002; Elgin & Mitchell, 1977). Personal growth, per se, refers to an inner desire to know oneself and to develop and explore one's "inner life" (Leonard-Barton, 1981) by removing all external distractions and clutter as a means to focus on what is most important. By seeking a way out of a consumption obsessed lifestyle, and to "down shift", simplifiers free up more of their time to focus on aspects of their lives that really matter and that need more attention (Maniates, 2002). Simplifiers are generally motivated by their values and moral vision (Seidman, 1994) and tend to engage in aspects associated with moral identity (Johnson, 2004) to become better, good, and worthy individuals (Grigsby, 2004). These lifestyles based changes are all in agreement with their desire to recreate themselves (Haenfler, 2004; Moisander & Pesonen, 2002) and to develop their personal and moral identities (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977), which was not the objective of this investigation, explaining why this dimension was excluded.

It has been said that, "Life is occupied in both perpetuating itself and in surpassing itself; if all it does is maintain itself, then living is only not dying" (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977). Simplifiers adopt the mind-set that "not dying" is not enough: they aim to move forward, progress as individuals and grow, with personal growth frequently taking on a spiritual aspect (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977). They have a need to break away from the rut of society and to reclaim their ability to make their own choices about how they wish to live their lives (Sandlin, 2009). Ultimately, living as a simplifier is not just about acting differently, it's a transformation that occurs from the inside out to create a new identity through personal growth (Sandlin, 2009).

Elgin and Mitchell (1977) claim that personal growth is a very important dimension because without the compelling goals of self-exploration and personal growth, there would probably be too little motivation to adopt and maintain the voluntary simplistic way of life. Without the deep inner motivations, many simplifiers would likely not be able to deal with the implications of their chosen way of life or dissatisfaction, such as scarcity (McGouran & Protheroo, 2016; Elgin & Mitchell, 1977). Also, no one value could, by itself, sustain a person enough to maintain their simplistic lifestyle: it is the combination and inter-relationship of the five value dimensions that allow simplifiers the strength of conviction to follow through on their moral values (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977). Because this study focused on voluntary simplistic behaviour with regard to clothing consumption (a behavioural scale), the wording of the measurement scale was adapted accordingly and personal growth per se, was excluded in the measurement.

2.3.3 Types of voluntary simplifiers

Literature proclaims that the choice to become a voluntary simplifier must indeed be voluntary, and that the level to which people choose to down scale is completely down to the individual's choice (Leonard-Barton, 1981; Elgin & Mitchell, 1977). Leonard-Barton (1981) tentatively expressed a number of different motives which seemed to be expressed by simplifiers as to why they adopted this way of life: these have been confirmed by the Institute of Communication Research at Stanford University. Although this study did not aim to classify material simplistic consumers in one of these groups, a presentation of the classification serves as an understanding of underlying differences among simplifiers.

2.3.4.1 Conservers

Conservers seem to have adopted the voluntary simplistic way of life due to learnt behaviour, being exposed to this way of life in in their households, with a strict view not tolerate wastefulness due to ethical and conservationist reasons, or simply due to a lack of resources and possibly poverty. Often, conservers would have grown up in an under-developed country, having experienced poverty as a child. Conservation is seen as a way of life, within this group, portraying traits such as frugality (Boujbel & D'Astous, 2012), which in time becomes a habit because of the economic implications (Leonard-Barton, 1981). Material simplifiers

could indeed be categorised as conservers if they reject wastefulness and/ or when they have experienced lack of financial resources.

2.3.4.2 Crusaders

This group were assigned this name due to the nature of their convictions and a strong desire to see justice in society. Many simplifiers from this group come from families with a high moral and ethical code, implanting a strong sense of responsibility to society and the world they live in, rather than for an economic reason (Sandlin, 2009; Leonard-Barton, 1981). These people usually have a high conservation ethic and attempts to be environmentally friendly and try to get others to follow suit. Crusaders consider themselves to be role models in their community and try to make a difference by setting an example that others can follow (Leonard-Barton, 1981). By definition, consumers who are materially simplistic would not necessarily be crusaders.

2.3.4.3 Conformists

Conformists' reasons for adopting a voluntary simplistic lifestyle are slightly less defined and apparent than the other two groups. They pick and choose which aspects of the lifestyle they would like to conform to, based on what is more convenient to them and what suits their lifestyles (Leonard-Barton, 1981). Some members of this group adhere to the lifestyle due to peer pressure, trying to mirror and fit in with what their neighbours and social groups are doing and whatever they consider acceptable. Some are even driven by guilt over having more material wealth than others (Leonard-Barton, 1981). This guilt leads to a constant negotiation of feelings, actions and values, where the need to have something greatly conflicts with their decision not to consume (Sandlin, 2009). This group seems to be fussier in their decision to live a simpler life and tend to conform to the situation and community they find themselves in (Leonard-Barton, 1981). Possible feelings of guilt due to wealth and due to the influence of peer pressure on lifestyle, indicate that material simplifiers could indeed be classified as conformists.

2.3.4 Degrees of voluntary simplicity

Literature presents a number of ways and methods for measuring and categorising the different levels of voluntary simplicity (McDonald *et al.,* 2006; Huneke, 2005; Elgin & Mitchell, 1977; Etzioni, 1998). A number of categories, variations and levels are proposed. For the purpose of this study, Elgin and Mitchell's (1977) and Etzioni's (1998) scales were used due to their former success in research.

2.3.4.1 Elgin and Mitchell's Degrees of Voluntary Simplicity (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977)

The authors propose four degrees four voluntary simplicity:

- *Full Voluntary Simplicity*, which is the strongest type of voluntary simplicity. These consumers are whole-heartedly committed to this form of lifestyle. They live simplistically and are constantly exercising their values and managing their consumption levels.

- *Partial Voluntary Simplicity*, represent the group which is about twice the size of the full voluntary simplifiers: these "partialists" act on, and adhere to some of the basic values held by true voluntary simplifiers. This group generally consists of idle class, middle aged, white people, who live in urban areas.

- *Sympathisers Towards Voluntary Simplicity* is a group that understands the reasoning behind a voluntary simplistic lifestyle and acknowledge the benefits, but due personal and lifestyle reasons they do not support the cause fully.

- *Unaware, Indifferent or Opposed to Voluntary Simplicity*, represents a that makes up about half of the population, consisting of all income groups, even some who live below the poverty line and are unable or completely disinclined to buy into a voluntary simplistic lifestyle. On the completely opposite end of the income spectrum, are the very wealthy consumers who are far too attached to their physical possessions and lifestyles to ever make sacrifices to adopt a more basic lifestyle.

Therefore, the majority of the population is unaware, indifferent or opposed to voluntary simplicity as a cause, while the sympathisers and partial simplifiers make up the second, and third largest segments of the population respectively. T

The study's specific interest in material simplifiers can further be motivated by acknowledgement in literature that voluntary simplistic consumers may indeed differ in their devotion to being VS (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977). They could be "partialists" who act on, and adhere to some of the basic values held by true voluntary simplifiers and that there are demographic differences, in that this group generally consists of idle class, middle aged, and white people, who live in urban areas. They could be "sympathisers" in that they understand the reasoning behind a voluntary simplistic lifestyle and acknowledge the benefits, but due personal and lifestyle reasons they do not support the cause fully, for example only being materially simplistic.

2.3.4.2 Etzioni's Scale of Voluntary Simplicity Intensity (Etzioni, 1998)
The author distinguishes three categories of simplifiers, namely:

- *Downshifters*, who are moderate simplifiers, who do not fully want to commit to a simplistic lifestyle. They will give up certain consumer goods and practices, but still maintain a majority of their old ways and lifestyle. Many of this group's old possessions are replaced with new, more environmentally friendly and sustainable goods that symbolise their new way of life, often of a conspicuous nature (Bekin, Carrigan & Szmigin, 2005). Some argue that downshifters may actually be a contradiction to a voluntary simplistic way of life (Taylor-Gooby, 1998).

- *Strong Simplifiers* are far more committed to a simple lifestyle that *downshifters*. They generally start out with well-paying jobs and are willing to sacrifice this security and the associated way of life

to conform to a voluntary simplistic lifestyle. They aim to adopt and practice low-consumption as best they can. These consumers are generally motivated to reduce their working hours to spend more time on aspects of their life that will bring them greater joy and satisfaction (Etzioni, 1998; Elgin & Mitchell, 1977).

- *Holistic Simplifiers* have a strong intention to live a simpler life and devote their entire life and will change their entire lifestyle to achieve this goal. This is similar to the *strong simplifiers* of Elgin and Mitchell (1977) in terms of cutting back on work and related responsibilities except that in this group, many are prepared to pack up their entire lives and move to less-affluent, even rural areas in their pursuit of simplicity (Etzioni, 1998).

2.3.5 Behaviours associated with voluntary simplicity

In most Western countries, material wealth is at an all-time high, but studies have indicated that this increase in wealth has not necessarily increased people's over-all satisfaction levels (Craig-Less & Hill, 2002). Happiness is something that most humans strive for, and will usually do whatever it takes in this pursuit (Veenhoven, 2010). For many, especially in Western societies, consumption seems to be the preferred and most accepted way to attempt to be happy and attain true life satisfaction (Irvine, 2006). Despite this, an ever growing group of people have rejected this notion and are voluntarily adopting a non-materialistic way of life. Their ever growing dissatisfaction with society's methods for attaining happiness has paved the way for a voluntary simplistic way of life (Craig-Lees & Hill, 2002). This could merely be achieved by consuming less, without considering ethical- or environmental issues.

Literature indicates multiple reasons as to why voluntary simplifiers adopt this way of life (Craig-Lees & Hill, 2002; Leonard-Barton, 1981; Elgin & Mitchell, 1977) of which the following seem the most pertinent:

2.3.5.1 Personal

On a personal level, people want what is best for themselves and what will, in the long run, actually make them happy, bring them a sense of fulfilment and life satisfaction (Irvine, 2006). Many consumers seem to be locked in a "work and spend" cycle, which has been said to distract from what is truly important in life (Kasser & Kanner, 2003; Schor, 1993). Often, there is little free time to pursue activities that will develop and grow them on a personal level, and this is what simpler life style can rectify. Richard Gregg describes a simple life as "an ordering and guiding of our energy and desires, a partial restraint in some directions in order to secure a greater abundance of life in other directions" (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977). Consumers who live more simplistically, are better able to balance their work, family, social and personal lives (Irvine, 2006). The main aim is to foster an environment in which it is easier for individuals to pursue true happiness (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977): many people simply want to escape the rat race of society and then a voluntary simplistic lifestyle is highly enticing (Cherrier, 2002).

2.3.5.2 Social

Social reasons for adopting a voluntary simplistic lifestyle, imply a need for more leisurely interactions with people who mean something to the individual. In this modern age, a high consumption lifestyle seems to detract from community engagement, with more time focussed on accumulation of wealth, status and goods, rather than spending time with people who can add substance to one's life (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977). By decreasing working hours more free time is created to spend with family and friends (Gambrel & Cafaro, 2009) and to fulfil one's neighbourly or civic duties. "Simplicity can help one develop social unions that enrich one's life; by fostering contentment with one's status and possessions and reducing levels of dissatisfaction. Simplicity can help minimise social tension and can build up social capital" (Gambrel & Cafaro, 2009).

2.3.5.3 Humanistic

In a world where extreme poverty exists amongst enormous wealth, a switch to a more simplistic lifestyle can be viewed as a response to this imbalance (Gambrel & Cafaro, 2009). Simplifiers resist consumption as a statement to not share in consumption patterns that cannot be shared by all. In a world where resources are scare, simplifiers are determined to only take their share to ensure that there are resources left over for others and for future generations (Barnett *et al.,* 2005). "Live simply so that others may simply live", is a famous quote made by Gandhi, and is indeed the policy adopted by voluntary simplifiers (Cherrier, 2002).

2.3.5.4 Ecological

It is a widely known that consumption impacts the ecosystem and that the reduction of consumption will have a positive effect on the environment. This is a motivating factor to voluntary simplifiers as they wish to get closer to nature, rather than to deplete or destroy it (Barnett *et al.,* 2005; Elgin & Mitchell, 1977). In the long run, simple living may not just be a desire, but an actual necessity in order to sustain the planet, especially in more developed countries where over-consumption has become the norm (Boujbel & D'Astous, 2012).

2.3.6 Voluntary simplicity in relation to clothing purchases

Historically, clothing was used as a form of bodily protection against the elements. Nowadays, however, clothing is highly important to displaying one's wealth and status (Etzioni, 1998). Voluntary simplifiers reject this notion, and are returning to their roots, dressing down to more functional, often second-hand attire, believing that clothing should be acquired at minimal expense (Zavestoski, 2002). Simplifiers renounce high fashion but not necessarily style itself; they live basically, which does not mean living unstylishly (Craig-Lees & Hill, 2002; Zavestoski, 2002).

In terms of making a clothing purchase for a special occasion, voluntary simplifiers would find it incredibly difficult to find an outfit that would both be suitable for the function and would satisfy their values.

Simplifiers exhibit planned buying behaviour, and anything unexpected or seen as wasteful or uncomfortable may simply be avoided (Craig-Lees & Hill, 2002; Etzioni, 1998). They prefer clothing that they could get long-term usage out of, and that is comfortable and convenient (Zavestoski, 2002). Simplifiers are willing to make second-hand clothing purchases or will make their own clothes to save themselves from an unnecessary and uncomfortable shopping experience (Nelson, Rademacher & Paek, 2007).

2.3.7 Voluntary simplicity and society

The idea behind voluntary consumption, is to live a life that seeks satisfaction through non-materialistic and non-commercial means. This is usually accomplished my minimising their consumption practices (Huneke, 2005). According to Boujbel (2007), the desire to acquire or consume certain goods tends to trigger an emotional response as well as an inner cognitive response. These emotions are intensified when the consumer actually takes the time to fully consider making a purchase. For voluntary simplifiers, this leads to a great amount of discomfort and inner conflict because they have chosen, out of their own free will, to live a frugal lifestyle (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977) and to consume in a way that is lighter on resources and more environmentally friendly, which may be difficult to achieve (McDonald *et al.,* 2006). Their consumption goals are such that they minimise their dependency and consumption practices in such a way that they are more self-sufficient (Leonard-Barton, 1981). These non-consumption practices seem to be associated with consumer well-being and satisfaction (Etzioni, 1998). However, a withdrawal from market interaction may have a negative impact on the economy, which relies on increased monetary input to flourish (Iyer & Muncy, 2009).

In a society where consumption and materialistic practices are viewed as the norm in the pursuit of happiness (Irvine, 2006), and materialism is a common trait (Belk, 1985) and indeed a common value (Richins & Dawson, 1992), a large group of consumers are beginning to question and reject these notions (Boujel & D'Astous, 2012). This group of consumers are determined to distance themselves from this way of thinking and consuming, in order to find a deeper meaning to life (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977). Etzioni (1998) suggests that voluntary simplifiers tend to significantly decrease their spending on consumer goods and services, to derive fulfilment and meaning from non-materialistic acts. Simplifiers strive to be able to define themselves as "good people" (Grigsby, 2004), and their lowered consumption practices can be seen as a consideration for the environment and for society, and a want to share and preserve (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977). This is an engagement in "moral identity work" (Johnson, 2004), depicting the simplifiers as "better" and "more ethical" consumers, living a more fulfilling and rewarding life than the average consumer. This reduction of consumption may also have economic implications and may lead to a way of saving money (Sandlin, 2009).

Voluntary simplifiers exhibit a weaker focus on material wealth and are more prone to changing and reducing their consumption patterns (Craig-Lees & Hill, 2002). Individual consumers have little to no control over the market. With simplifiers wanting to increase their control over uncontrollable situations and institutions, it is clear why they would gradually withdraw from the market and minimise their consumption (Brooks, 2003; Leonard-Barton, 1981). They will avoid making impulse purchases, avoid clutter, and rather mend broken goods and recycle than to replace (Huneke, 2005). Theoretically, consumption should be less enjoyable for simplifiers, thus they would avoid shops in general, unless absolutely necessary. Lower expenditure should thus reduce personal debt amongst simplifiers (Brooks, 2003).

In order for the market to try and attract this group, they need to take into account voluntary simplifiers' values, needs and wants. Many simplifiers strive to live in the most environmentally friendly way as possible (Leonard-Barton, 1981), opting for organic foods and better quality, longer lasting products that can possibly be recycled (Sandlin, 2009). So by offering a range of eco-friendly goods, certain stores may attract this very rare and scarce business. This group also makes a point to purchase products that are durable, healthy, functional, aesthetically pleasing, repairable, and non-polluting (Sandlin, 2009; Elgin & Mitchell, 1977). Elgin and Mitchell (1977) actually formulated a list of possible business ideas and ventures that could be considered to cater for the average voluntary simplifier, for example: leisure activities focussed and angled towards country living; environmentally friendly and recyclable toys and games for children; inexpensive "flexible" and eco-friendly housing; traveling car parts services and repairs; and healthier, more "natural" and organic food options.

Another a rather controversial stance in terms of the voluntary simplicity market interaction, is proposing that, in terms of either time or money, it constitutes luxury consumption (Arnould, 2007). This way of thinking claims that the notion of voluntary simplicity representing an escape from the market is impossible. This view is supported by a number of other researchers who also question any individual's ability to simply "opt out" of consumption practices, and in turn, the market itself (Arnould, 2007; Kozinets, 2002). This way of thinking leaves the option that the market does indeed have access to voluntary simplifiers, if they target them in the appropriate manner.

2.3.8 Voluntary simplicity scales used in research

2.3.8.1 Leonard-Barton's Voluntary Simplicity Scale (1981)

In terms of voluntary simplicity, one major scale has frequently been used in research. The scale was developed by combining the common behaviours displayed by simple-livers with those suggested in literature, in order to measure consumers' general tendency towards a voluntary simplistic lifestyle (Leonard-Barton, 1981). This behavioural scale was used and adapted for this study to measure voluntary simplifiers' clothing consumptions behaviours, i.e. to be product specific.

The very first version of the voluntary simplicity scale was developed in 1977, contained nine items, and was called the "Palo Alto Study" (Leonard-Barton, 1981). It aimed to measure energy consumption amongst homeowners in Springs, California. This scale was soon deemed too short and was expanded to a nineteen-point scale by Elgin and Mitchell in that very same year (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977) based on findings gathered in a questionnaire distributed in The Co-Evolution Quarterly (Leonard-Barton, 1981; Elgin & Mitchell, 1977). This questionnaire aimed to delve more deeply into simplifiers' lives and to explore their reasoning behind their lifestyle choices (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977). Over 423 responses to the questionnaire, and around 200 letters were written and received for Elgin and Mitchell to extract information from for the revised voluntary simplicity scale. These responses provided numerous accounts and examples of simplistic behaviour that corresponded with the original dimensions proposed by Elgin and Mitchell (1977), namely: *material simplicity, ecological awareness, self-determination, personal growth, and human scale* (Leonard-Barton, 1981; Elgin & Mitchell, 1977).

This revised nineteen-point scale was finally put into practice in 1979 and was known as the "Three Country Study". It aimed to study 215 respondents and their motives and attitudes behind their certain purchase decisions regarding residential solar equipment. This was a mixed method study combining questionnaires and in-home interviews (Leonard-Barton, 1981). Finally, the scale was reduced to an eighteen-item scale in 1979 (The State-wide Study), and is the most recent version of the voluntary simplicity scale. The measure was changed to a five-point Likert-type scale for sixteen scale items and was administered to 812 home-owners, residing in California (Leonard-Barton, 1981). This scale is known as "The 18-Item Voluntary Simplistic Scale and appeared as follows:

Scale Items (Leonard-Barton, 1981) [*the original nine items]

1. Make gifts instead of buying
2. *Ride a bicycle for exercise or recreation
3. Recycle newspapers used at home
4. Recycle glass jars/bottles used at home
5. *Recycle cans used at home
6. Family member or friend changes the oil in the family car
7. *Have gotten instruction in skills to increase self-reliance e.g. Carpentry, car repairs, plumbing
8. *Intentionally eat meatless main meals
9. *Buy clothing at a second-hand store
10. Buy major items of furniture or clothing at a garage sale
11. *Make furniture or clothing for the family
12. *Have exchanged goods or services with others in lieu of monetary payment e.g. Repair equipment in exchange for other skilled work
13. Have a compost pile
14. *Contribute to ecologically-oriented organisations
15. Belong to a cooperative
16. Grow the vegetables the family consumes in the summer
17. Ride a bicycle as transportation to work
18. *Ride a bicycle to run errands that are within a near distance

In both of the revised scales, the original nine items were retained and were tested on four different populations in order to ascertain the accuracy and reliability of the scale (Leonard-Barton, 1981). The latest version of the scale was adapted for a research project that this study benefitted from in terms of focussing on a specific dimension of the scale, i.e. the material simplistic behavioural tendencies of clothing consumers in Tshwane, South Africa.

2.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter broadly describes the varying approaches and definitions of materialism and voluntary simplicity, incorporating relevant literature to fully understand the concepts.

After a thorough examination of both materialism and voluntary simplicity, it is evident that they are indeed very different in terms of their purchase and consumption behaviour and many characteristics and behavioural tendencies seem opposing and contradicting of one another. Literature is united on the point that voluntary simplicity is a reaction to materialism and over-consumption practices (Irvine 2006; Larsen 1993; Leonard-Barton, 1981; Elgin & Mitchell, 1977), but there has been no empirical research investigating the demographic differences between highly materialistic consumers (consumers who are inclined to consume lavishly) and those are materially simplistic (consumers who consume frugally), with respect to a conspicuous product category such as clothing. With materialists placing significant importance on their material possessions and the accumulation thereof (Goldsmith et al., 2011), and material simplifiers aiming to minimise their consumption and dependency on material goods as reflected in the dimension "material simplicity", proposed by Leonard-Barton (1981), one could surmise that the underlying values that drive these consumers, differ. It is not clear however, how the demographic characteristics of these two distinctly different groups, differ. This research project aims to provide empirical evidence of the kind, focusing on consumers in Tshwane, South Africa.

Chapter 3

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE, CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK & RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The following chapter presents the theoretical perspective that was used in this study and explains how it was used to compile the conceptual framework, the research aims and hypotheses

3.1 JUSTIFICATION OF THE THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

Although any number of value based theoretical perspectives could have been used in this study, Schwartz Theory of Basic Values (Schwartz, 2012, 1992) was preferred as the theoretical framework to guide an investigation of the demographic characteristics of highly materialistic consumers and those whose clothing consumption practices reflect material simplicity. Schwartz's six cores assumptions associated with values and how they directly relate to both materialism and voluntary simplicity, is the main reason why this study incorporated his typology.

Schwartz's typology of values takes a macro-, sociological approach. In this study, it is used to investigate and discuss consumers' purchase and consumption behaviour in the market place in a specific product category, as a manifestation of underlying personal values that have developed over time through socialisation (Smith & Schwartz, 1997; Schwartz, 1992). In using this macro perspective, the micro perspectives (being materialism) can be derived. Per definition, one's personal values are associated with what one regards as most important in one's life (Schwartz, 2012) to the extent that pertinent personal values guide, and can be used to explain one's behaviour.

3.1.1 Introduction

Values have played a large role in research. Across a number of disciplines, vales have been useful to characterise societies, cultural groups, as well as individuals, and are used as indicators to track change and social developments over time (Schwartz, 2012). Values assist in explaining what motivates individuals in terms of their attitudes and behaviours (Schwartz, 2012; Bilsky *et al.*, 2011).

According to Kilbourne and LaForge (2010), Schwartz's value system provides a basic framework in which to examine materialism. Literature has indicated that with materialism stemming from a place of self-

centredness and self-obsession (Kilbourne & LaForge, 2010; Wilson, 2005), Schwartz's main dimension of "self-enhancement" would encompass materialism (Kilbourne & LaForge 2010), whilst "self-transcendence" would be its opposite. An aim of voluntary simplifiers is to become a better version of themselves (Boujbel & D'Astous, 2012) thus "transcending" their previous selves, which is contrary to materialism.

3.1.2 Core assumptions that are relevant in terms of materialism and voluntary simplicity

According to Schwartz (2012), the motivation or goal behind the value that is expressed by an individual, is what truly differentiates and distinguishes one from another. The core assumptions that are associated with Schwartz's value theory (1992), are presented subsequently to fully comprehend the relevance of this value typology in this study:

- **Values are beliefs that a person holds dear and influences an individual's behaviour.** When an action is guided by a specific value, such as materialism, certain feelings are prevalent and become involved, giving meaning to the action.

  Application:

  When a materialistic person makes a purchase, he/ she tends to experience a level of happiness and satisfaction that can only be maintained by a continuous purchasing pattern (Hofmeister & Neulinger, 2013; Richins & Dawson, 1992). On the other hand, material simplifiers tend to find fulfilment and life satisfaction in their rejection of consumerism and materialism, abstaining from a predominant consumerist lifestyle (Leonard-Barton, 1981). Both groups' purchasing decisions are led by their values and when activated, either positive or negative feelings become involved.

- **Values are seen as goals, set by a person in terms of what is desirable** and lead to some form of movement and action. A person will take certain steps and actions in order to achieve the goals that they value.

  Application:

  As a materialist, a consumer's main goal would be to acquire certain possessions that can be used to raise the individual's status in his/ her own mind as well as in the mind of their peers (Ryan & Dziurawiec, 2011). In order for this to happen, the actions of consuming and purchasing must occur. Even voluntary simplifiers must take some form of action to achieve their goals in avoiding consumerism and materialism: either by proactively avoiding it all together or by making more ecologically and environmentally friendly choices, i.e. recycling, purchasing second hand goods, becoming self-sufficient; and/or purchasing eco-friendly products (Leonard-Barton, 1981).

- **Values take over and dictate how a person will react in a certain event or in certain situations and scenarios.**

Application:

With materialists' objectives being to consume and to accumulate possessions (Richins & Dawson, 1992), and voluntary simplifiers wanting to abstain from such behaviours (Shaw & Newholm, 2002), when confronted with a certain same situation, each group would be likely to respond in an contradictory way without giving it much thought. When walking through a shopping mall of a market, each groups' values guide their actions: where materialists will be actively looking around and seeking to make a purchase that will enhance their happiness and status (O'Cass & McEwen, 2004), simplifiers are likely to ignore and avoid promotional messages, opting to simply achieve the purpose that they came for (Maniates, 2002).

- **Values are used by individuals to set standards for themselves and others**, allowing certain criteria to be formed and attempting to fulfil/ meet those criteria. When one holds a certain value in high regard, a person would tend to hold him/ herself and others to account in accordance with the associated implications of the decisions (Kilbourne & LaForge, 2010; Todd & Lawson, 2002; Smith & Schwartz, 1997).

Application:

Materialists base their self-worth, happiness and status on the quantity and quality of the possessions they own, and use this measure to judge others (Lertwannawit & Mandhachitara, 2012; O'Cass & McEwen, 2004). Using possessions as the standard of measurement of their worth as well as the worth of others (Sangkhawasi & Johri, 2007). On the other hand, voluntary simplifiers may find it hard not to judge people who buy into the consumerism lifestyle (Craig-Lees & Hill, 2002). With simplifiers valuing self-restraint, they may use this as the standard to judge others who may have little to no self-restraint with regard to consumption practices (Huneke, 2005; Leonard-Barton & Rogers, 1980).

- **Values tend to be arranged in some form of logical order of importance by individuals**, with the most important value "trumping" less important values in times when there may be a conflict.

Application:

If materialism or voluntary simplicity is the most important value in that person's life, it will always take precedence over their other values. For example, going shopping may take preference over spending time with friends, or staying at home and not spending money may trump going out for a family gathering at a restaurant.

- **With individuals having a number of values guiding their behaviours and actions, a particular action may have an effect on numerous values simultaneously**.

Application:

A materialist purchasing the latest pair or Versace sunglasses might express her individuality and satisfy her need for recognition and admiration (Bevan-Dye, 2012; Goldsmith & Clark, 2012). Whilst a voluntary simplifier may pass down clothing items which they no longer use to friends or family, thus satisfying a desire to recycle, reuse and being more environmentally conscious (Walther & Sandlin, 2011; Craig-Lees & Hill, 2002)

Numerous studies that involved as many as eighty-two countries and highly diverse samples, have been conducted across the world to test the accuracy and validity of Schwartz's model. These studies acknowledged numerous demographic aspects (Bilsky, Janik & Schwartz, 2011; Schwartz, 2006). The ten macro values of Schwartz (2012) encompass the most basic and motivationally distinct values that are held by society across different cultures, ages and gender groups (Schwartz, 2012). From these, micro values can be derived. Some of the values complement one another, while others are conflicting, this is a structure that flows between and across cultures, suggesting an organisation of human values that is universal (Schwartz, 2012, 2006; Bilsky *et al.*, 2011). Although the nature of these values seems to be universal there is still a difference in how groups organise and rank the importance of certain values. The values hierarchy of individuals and groups tends to differ (Schwartz, 2006).

Schwartz's (1994) value system, more commonly called Schwartz Theory of Basic Values or Schwartz's Value Inventory (SVI), is centred around a circular model encompassing ten major or macro values. Each of these ten values seem to stem from one of four major dimensions, namely: openness to change, self-transcendence, self-enhancement and conservation (Schwartz, 1992). Figure 3.1 is a graphical representation of the four principal value dimensions and their underlying values.

The reason why the values are depicted in a circular arrangement, is to emphasize the motivational continuum of values in general. Values on opposite sides of the circle are completely opposing, while those next to one another are complementary, or similar. The further the values are from one another on the circle, the more unrelated they are (Schwartz, 1992). Materialism would fall under the dimension of self-enhancement (Kilbourne & LaForge, 2010), while voluntary simplicity is associated with the dimension, self-transcendence. These dimensions are on opposite sides of the circle, which suggests a clash between the two.

FIGURE 3.1: SCHWARTZ'S THEORY OF BASIC HUMAN VALUES (SCHWARTZ, 1992)

3.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework for this study is presented in Figure 3.2. Previous literature has indicated a number of differences between materialists and voluntary simplifiers and opposing characteristics in terms of underlying value related motivations and demographics (gender, age, income, education level, population group) and how this would impact their consumption behaviour (Segev *et al.*, 2015; Boujbel & D'Astous, 2012). Both materialism and voluntary simplicity have been examined extensively in research but

never together in a single study using a single sample that allows a comparison of their characteristics in a single survey performed under the same circumstances (Richins & Dawson, 1992; Belk, 1985; Leonard-Barton & Rogers, 1980; Elgin & Mitchell, 1977).

As per definition, materialism as a value tends to guide consumers' behaviour and decision making processes. Materialism is expected to be prevalent within the population of Tshwane in varying degrees across different demographic groups, with literature suggesting variations within (Schwartz, 2012; Smith & Schwartz, 1997) (Hypothesis 1). With *success, happiness, essentiality* and *distinctiveness* being the primary driving forces/ dimensions of materialism as a value (Trinh & Phau, 2012; Richins & Dawson, 1992), these dimensions will impact and shape how certain consumer groups or individuals in Tshwane make their consumption decisions. In the same way, a number of dimensions are used to describe voluntary simplicity (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977), of which only material simplicity as a direct indicator of material consumption which is a prominent characteristic of materialism as an instrumental value, will be focussed on, and this too will realise differently among different consumer segments.

Literature suggests that materialists and voluntary simplifiers have opposing and inverse characteristics (Peviani & Ponchio, 2012; Pepper *et al.,* 2009), that proposes that if a consumer is materialistic, it is unlikely that the individual will exude voluntary simplistic behavioural characteristics. This study hence compares the characteristics of materialistic consumers and voluntary simplifiers (Hypothesis 2) to discriminate demographic segments with pertinent underlying values that would culminate in terms of distinctly different behaviours in the market place that would be of interest to retailers in terms of market segmentation.

Figure 3.2 presents the conceptual framework and relevant constructs for this study, summarising the constructs of the two prominent constructs, namely Materialism and Voluntary Simplicity in terms of the relevant dimensions that are examined, and how the hypotheses for this research were structured.
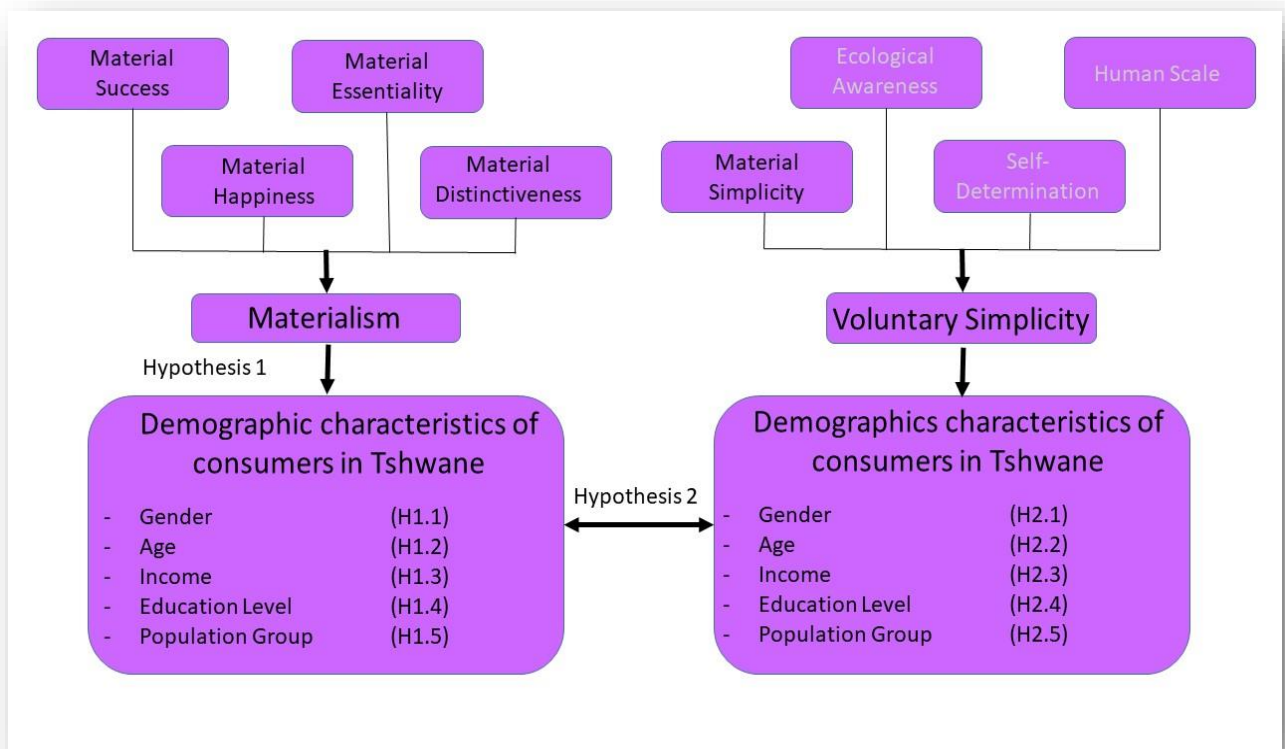
FIGURE 3.2: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Literature describes materialism in terms of different dimensions, namely: *success, happiness, essentiality* and *distinctiveness* (Trinh & Phau, 2012; Richins & Dawson, 1992) that are all relevant in different ways to explain the behaviour of materialists (Segev *et al.,* 2015*)*. Consumers' level of materialism will impact on how they make their purchases and this is expected to differ across different demographic groups (for example gender, age, income group, level of education, and population group), which represents Hypothesis 1. Similarly, voluntary simplicity is comprised of a number of constructs, of which *material simplicity* was singled out in this study as it is the dimension that addresses consumers' propensity to purchase. Again, a distinction will be made among the different demographics groups where after a comparison is done of those consumers who are materialistically inclined and simplistic consumers who are materially simplistic (Hypothesis 2).

3.3 RESEARCH AIM AND HYPOTHESES

3.3.1 Research aim

The study aims to distinguish the demographic characteristics of consumers who have a pertinent materialistic inclination towards their purchase and consumption practices in general, and those who will refrain from excessive consumption behaviour in terms of a specific product category that is important for materialists and consumers in general, namely their clothing consumption behaviour.

3.3.2 Research hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated for the study based on extant literature:

H1: The materialistic inclination of consumers differs in accordance with their demographic characteristics, i.e.:

H1.1 Gender:
Females are significantly more materialistic than males (Bakewell, Mitchell & Rothwell, 2006; Bakewell & Mitchell, 2004).

H1.2 Age:
Younger adults (specifically Millennials, currently younger than 40 years of age) are significantly more materialistic than older consumers (Lertwannawit & Mandhachitara, 2012; Kilbourne & LaForge, 2010).

H1.3 Income level:
Lower income consumers are significantly more materialistic than those in middle or high household income groups (Alexander, 2011; Ponchio, 2008).

H1.4 Education level:
Education level is not a significant determining factor in a consumer's propensity towards purchasing in a materialistic manner (Olssen, 2016; Bevan-Dye et al., 2012).

H1.5 Population group:
Black consumers are significantly more materialistic than other population groups (Bevan-Dye et al., 2012; Jones, 2007).

H2:   There is an inverse relationship between consumers' materialistic inclination and their engagement in material simplicity with regard to their clothing consumption, i.e. demographic segments who are highly materialistic will not engage in clothing consumption practices that demonstrate material simplicity, while demographic segments whose materialistic inclination is weaker, will have a significantly stronger inclination to engage in material simplistic clothing behavioural practices. Based on H1, it is hypothesized that:

H2.1 Gender:
Males' inclination towards material simplistic clothing behaviour, is significantly stronger compared to females.

H2.2 Age:
Older adults (40 years of age and older) are significantly more materially simplistic than their younger counterpart (Millennials, <40 years) consumers.

H2.3 Income level:
Higher income consumers are significantly more materially simplistic than those in lower household income groups.

H2.4 Education level:
Higher education levels is a significant indicator of a consumer's propensity towards material simplistic clothing purchase and consumption behaviour.

H2.5 Population group:
The White population group is significantly more materially simplistic than other population groups.

3.4 SUMMARY

Schwartz's Theory of Basic Values (2012, 1992) was used as the theoretical perspective for this study as the typology outlines six core assumptions which are relevant in terms of an explanation of the behaviour of materialists as well as voluntary simplifiers that are materially simplistic. The dimensions of both materialism (*success, happiness, essentiality* and *distinctiveness*) and the relevant dimension of voluntary simplicity that relates to consumers' purchasing behaviour of a specific product category (i.e. material simplicity) are taken into consideration to distinguish demographic groups in Tshwane that are devoted to these distinctly different behavioural practices.

Based on the definitions of both constructs in literature (i.e. materialism and voluntary simplicity) it is apparent that these underlying values will induce opposing behavioural characteristics in the market place, which this study aims to verify with regard to a specific product category. This study hence aims to distinguish the demographic characteristics of consumers who have a pertinent materialistic inclination towards their purchase and consumption practices and those who are materially simplistic are driven to acquire clothing in a voluntary simplistic manner.

The conceptual framework is used as a visual representation of the outline for this study and how that relates to the hypotheses.

Chapter 4

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter introduces the research design and methodology that was used in this study. It also highlights the efforts to enhance the quality of the research and attempts to address ethical concerns.

4.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

This study is quantitative in nature, and used numerical measurement scales to obtain quantifiable data that could be analysed statistically (Keller & Warrack, 2000:7-16). The study was single phased and survey based using structured, self-administered questionnaires (Kowalczyk, 2015:187; Salkind, 2012:215). This study is also exploratory, i.e. research used to examine and understand a particular topic but does not necessarily aim to draw generalizable conclusions (FluidSurveys, 2014). The study is also of a descriptive nature, hence aims to clarify certain situations by describing the characteristics of consumers with particular behavioural characteristics (Salkind, 2012:116; Leedy & Ormrod 2010:175; Zikmund & Babin, 2010:45). This cross-sectional study was conducted during May, 2016, within a set, two-week time frame, across the city of Tshwane, Gauteng, South Africa.

Quantitative studies are specific, have a logical structure, are usually tested for validity and reliability (Kumar, 2014:132). The researcher for this type of study, has restricted input and involvement during the actual process of collecting the data to prevent bias (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:336-345; Zikmund & Babin, 2010:45). The quantitative approach used in this study has been proven to be successful in other similar studies (Koubaa, 2008; Kinra, 2006).

Survey-based research involves the collection of information from one or more groups of people by means of pointed questions, and then recording and documenting their responses. This study made use of self-administered questionnaires to attain the needed information. The main goal of a survey was to gain knowledge about a specific population by means of analysis of a smaller sample group of that population (Salkind, 2012:270; Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:185).

Exploratory research is used to examine and understand a particular topic but does not aim to draw generalizable conclusions (FluidSurveys, 2014). Exploratory research is the first step to gain insight into a topic (Zikmund & Babin, 2010:45).

Descriptive research normally follows exploratory research and aims to describe certain situations for example the characteristics of people (which was the aim of this study), environments or objects (Zikmund & Babin, 2010:45). It also aims to establish the new research within a certain subject context (Fouche & De Vos, 2009:471) - in this instance an urban population in South Africa as part of an emerging economy. Accuracy in quantitative, descriptive research is extremely important (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:336-345; Zikmund & Babin, 2010:45) and can either be measured longitudinally, i.e. continually over a certain time frame, or cross-sectional, i.e. measured all at once (as was done in this study) (Cant *et al.*, 2005:203-226). In this study, a calculated sample of the general population of Tshwane participated once, and at a specific point in time (within a two-week time frame in May, 2016, and this can therefore be classified as a cross-sectional study.

4.2 METHODOLOGY

This study employed quantitative methods for data collection, using structured questionnaires that were distributed by trained fieldworkers to designated areas in a particular geographical area.

4.2.1 Sample and sampling

The population targeted for this study comprised of male and female consumers aged twenty-one years or older, of all population groups, residing in the metropolitan of Tshwane, Gauteng, in South Africa. All of the members of the population did not have the same probability of being chosen for the study, as fieldworkers chose sample units based on availability and proximity to themselves due to time and financial restrictions (Berndt & Petzer, 2014). Snowball sampling followed the initial convenience sampling, where fieldworkers obtained willing respondents with specific demographic characteristics (Berndt & Petzer, 2014:174). Due to these sampling methods, the findings cannot be generalised to the whole population as they are not fully representative of the general population.

Substantial effort was however made to attain the largest sample size possible in order to deduce more meaningful findings (Berndt & Petzer, 2014:68). Primary, raw data was collected for this study since appropriate information did not yet exist. (Berndt & Petzer, 2014:31; Kumar, 2014:171). Respondents were recruited from different economic and social backgrounds by recruiting respondents across the city. To further ensure a broad representation, about half needed to be non-white and male, with inclusion of diverse age groups. The focus was on more experienced consumers, as it was anticipated that they would have a more established purchasing patterns that this research could tap into. Fieldworkers were allocated

certain suburbs across the city for data collection to ensure that most of the suburbs in the metropolitan of Tshwane that comprises of a broad socio-economic spectrum, were covered.

Forty-three trained fieldworkers were involved: all were fourth year students in Consumer Science, who distributed a total of 1 025 questionnaires to residents across Tshwane, targeting willing adults of 21 years of age and older. A certain degree of literacy was needed for respondents to complete these questionnaires independently, which resulted in eliminating a portion of the population (Leman, 2010:116). Fieldworkers were each given between 20 and 30 questionnaires to distribute in specific geographic areas across the city and were not allowed to interfere during respondents' completion of the task. The aim was to involve a diverse population in which not more than half the respondents had to be White and the other had to be a combination of the other population groups. Also, not more than half of the respondents had to be female, all the while trying to maintain a good age distribution from 21 years upwards. This was done in an effort to recruit a sample which more or less concurred with the profile of the region of Tshwane at large. In total, 1019 useable questionnaires were retrieved to be coded and analysed.

Figure 4.1 is a visual representation of the population being targeted, the sampling units and elements, and the final sample size drawn from the population to be examined in this study.
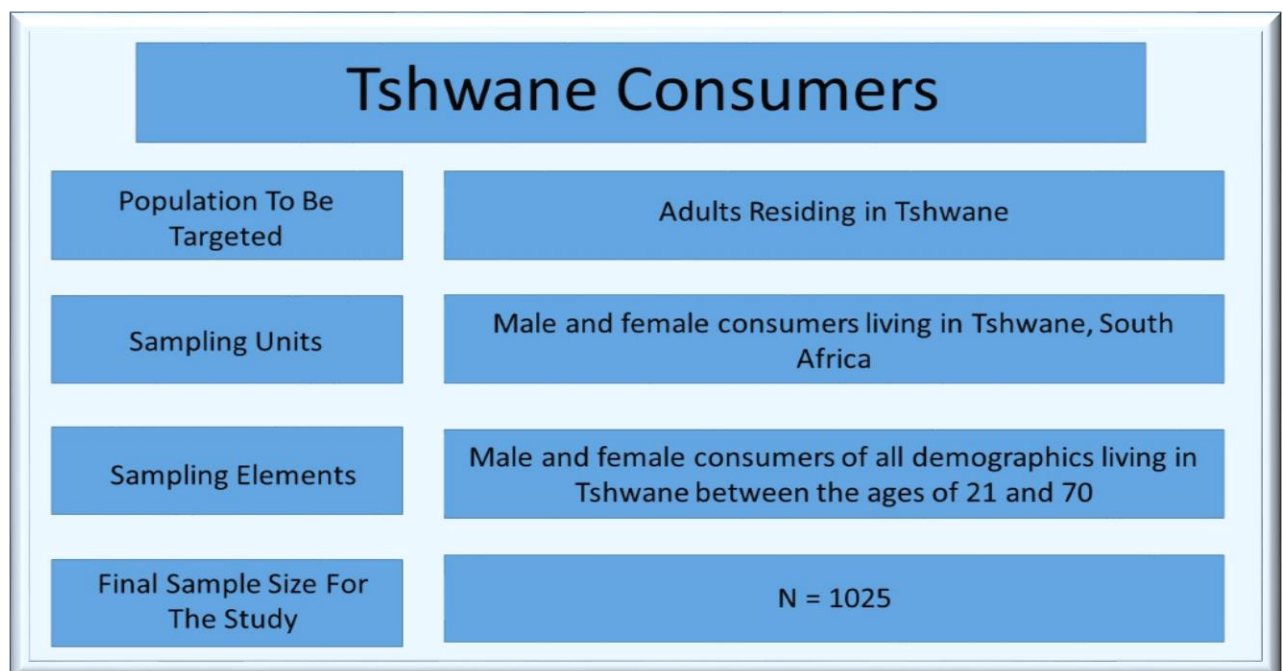
FIGURE 4.1: POPULATION TARGETED, SAMPLE UNITS, SAMPLING ELEMENTS, FINAL SAMPLE SIZE FOR THE STUDY

4.2.2   Measuring instrument

The data was collected by means of printed, self-administered questionnaires (see Addendum A), that was only available in English, and which averaged around thirteen minutes to complete. Anonymity when asking

for sensitive information such as monthly household income, together with the relatively low costs involved, make this method of gathering information particularly advantageous (Kumar, 2014).

The questionnaire was pre-tested by 43 willing respondents to identify problems that could be corrected before it was finally printed and distributed. Questions were designed to be easy-to-understand, as the questionnaire was intended for self-completion (Kumar, 2014:178). The questionnaire is divided into sections A to F, but only sections A, D and F are relevant to this particular study. The other sections addressed other behavioural characteristics of consumers, such as status consumption that are not relevant to this research report. Seven-point Likert-type scales were used in sections A and D.

Section A of the questionnaire presented Trinh and Phau's 16-Item Materialism Scale, measuring four dimensions of materialism; namely *success, happiness, essentiality distinctiveness* (Trinh & Phau, 2012). The Trinh and Phau scale aimed to adapt Richins and Dawson's (1992) scale by modernising it to incorporate the ever growing luxury brand market. The scale, although having been tested and used extensively (Trinh & Phau, 2012, 2011; Atay & Sirgy, 2009; DeVellis, 2003), has not yet been used in a South African context. The 16 items in the scale were shuffled in Section A so that respondents could not easily associate certain items with one another.

Section B was not relevant to this study.

Section C was not relevant to this study.

Section D presented an adapted version of the original Behavioural 18-Item Voluntary Simplicity Scale developed by Dorothy Leonard-Barton (1981), measuring the four major constructs of voluntary simplicity, namely: *material simplicity, ecological awareness, self-determination and human scale*, of which only the one dimension, *material simplicity* was of interest in this study. The wording of the original scale was rephrased to reflect on clothing purchases and not products in general. A seven-point Likert-type Agreement scale, ranging from 1=Never, to 7=Always, was used.

Section E was not relevant to this study.

Section F captured the sample demographic characteristics of the sample.

4.2.3   Data Collection

The data collection process took place in a single phase after completion of the pre-test.

Pre-testing was conducted with forty-three willing respondents to allow the researchers to identify any possible problems such as wording, spelling, understand-ability and the completion time of the questionnaires (Kumar, 2014:191). During the pre-test it was noticed that some respondents battled to understand the scales and how to mark their answers, and therefore examples were included with the

instructions. It was also noted that some questions were seen as repetitive or confusing. Problems were discussed and corrected where possible trying not to tamper with the established scales.

The data was collected over a two-week period in May 2016, was supervised by the research coordinators, and carried out by forty-three trained fieldworkers. Between 20 and 30 completed questionnaires were expected per fieldworker in designated areas of Tshwane to ensure that respondents across the socio-economic spectrum would be included. The questionnaires were to be self-administered, with the fieldworkers distributing the questionnaires to willing respondents and allowing them to complete them in their own time. Respondents were able to complete the questionnaires in the privacy and comfort of which ever space they saw fit, thus removing the pressure of a fieldworker standing nearby. This created a safer environment for respondents to contemplate their answers and to be as honest as possible. The questionnaires were retrieved by the fieldworkers at a later date per appointment. In cases where a respondent failed to complete the questionnaire or was no longer willing to participate, they were thanked and not bothered by the fieldworker again.

A total of 1075 questionnaires was retrieved. After checking of the questionnaires, only 1019 fully completed questionnaires were considered useable. Respondents were given the incentive of entering into a lucky draw for a chance to win a R450 gift voucher that could be spent at a prominent retailer by leaving their contact number without disclosing their names, on a tear-off slip that was part of the questionnaire. By having this information, it was possible to conduct spot checks by phoning respondents and asking a few questions about the questionnaire without requiring their identities, to ensure that the questionnaires were completed and obtained in an ethical way. A number of phone numbers were drawn and the respondents were called to confirm their participation in the study. Where there was doubt, all the questionnaires of the relevant fieldworker were withdrawn: the names of fieldworkers were on the tear off slip. Withdrawal of thirty questionnaires formed part of the fifty mentioned before, that were considered not useful for inclusion in the data set.

4.2.4   Data Analysis

The questionnaires were coded by the trained fieldworkers and checked before being delivered to, and then captured by Datanet, an official research company. Data analysis was done with the assistance of the University of Pretoria's Department of Statistics. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the data, namely frequencies, which were then converted to percentages, means and standard deviations. Inferential statistics included the calculation of Exploratory Factor Analysis to distinguish relevant factors/ dimensions for materialism as well as voluntary simplicity; the calculation of Cronbach's Alphas where relevant; the explained percentage variance for the factorial dimensions; t-tests as well as Manova. As non-probability

sampling was used for the purpose of this study, the findings cannot be generalised on account of the sample not being fully representative of the general population (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:213).

The operationalisation of constructs is presented in Table 4.1).

4.3 OPERATIONALISATION

TABLE 4.1: OPERATIONALISATION OF CONSTRUCTS

Research Aim & Hypotheses		Descriptors	Indicators	Measures	Scales and Measures
Aim	**Hypotheses**	Materialism	Success	V1.1, v1.8, v1.11, v1.15	Materialism Scale developed by Trinh and Phau (2011)
To distinguish the demographic characteristics of consumers who have a pertinent materialistic inclination towards their purchase and consumption practices in general, and those who will not engage in excessive consumption behaviour in terms of a specific product category that is important for materialists and consumers in general, namely their clothing consumption behaviour.	**H1:** **The materialistic inclination of consumers differs in accordance with their demographic characteristics, i.e.:** H1.1 Gender: Females are significantly more materialistic than men H1.2 Age: Younger adults (specifically millennials, that are below 40 years of age) are significantly more materialistic than older consumers H1.3 Income level: Middle income consumers are significantly more materialistic than those with low- or high household incomes H1.4 Education level: Education level will not be a significant determining factor in a consumer's propensity towards purchasing in a materialistic manner H1.5 Population group: Black consumers are significantly more materialistic than other population groups		Happiness	V1.2, v1.3, v 1.9, v1.16	- EFA - Means - Std Dev - Cr. Alpha - % Variables Explained - Tables and Graphs - Manova - t-tests
			Essentiality	V1.4, v1.5, v1.6, 1.10	
			Distinctiveness	V1.7, v1.12, v1.13, v1.14	
	H2: **There is an inverse relationship between consumers' materialistic inclination, and their engagement in material simplicity with regard to their clothing consumption**, i.e. consumer segments who are highly materialistic (see H1) will not engage in clothing consumption practices that demonstrate material simplicity. H2.1 Gender differences H2.2 Age differences H2.3 Income level differences H2.4 Education level differences H2.5 Population group differences	Voluntary Simplicity	Material Simplicity	V4.1, v4.7, v4.9, v4.14, v4.20	Voluntary Simplicity Scale adapted from Leonard-Barton's scale (1981)" - Cronbach Alpha for the factor - Means - Std Dev - Manova - t-tests - Paired t-tests - Tables and Graphs

4.4 QUALITY OF RESEARCH

It is imperative to ensure the quality of the study by attending to the reliability, and validity of the study to produce meaningful results that would be useful in terms of publication. The quality of the study is attended to throughout the research process starting with the review of existing literature, attending to the research design and methodology, proper execution of the research, and meticulous data analysis. Validity establishes how well the research instrument measures what it was meant to measure. Reliability shows how consistent and stable the measuring instrument is and both of these aspects are essential in enhancing the quality of the study (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:336).

4.4.1 The Importance of the research design and methodology

It is important to assess the various aspects of the research design methodology in advance. For example, limited time and finances can have a significant effect on research, as less resources are limiting to the study, such as recruiting a smaller sample or limiting the area where data is collected. This study combined convenience sampling and snowball sampling methods to gather data, as these were considered simpler, convenient, less time consuming and more cost effective in terms of the purpose of the study that formed part of a prescribed module that had to be completed by fourth year students within a specific time frame (Cant *et al.*, 2005:203). The main limiting factor of this form of sampling is non-probability (everyone in the population does not stand an equal chance of being selected), which means that the results cannot be generalised to the population as it is not fully representative. (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010; Zikmund & Babin, 2010:45,336). The disadvantages associated with convenient sampling can partly be overcome by recruiting a larger sample. In this study, a sample size exceeding 1000 was envisaged to overcome this limitation and to have sufficient data for statistical analysis and meaningful, publishable conclusions.

The use of self-administered questionnaires has numerous advantages and disadvantages. One of the advantages is that the risk of the fieldworker interfering in the results is minimal as the respondent cannot be manipulated by them if they are not present (Cant *et al.*, 2005:204). One of the disadvantages of any questionnaire, not only self-administered ones, is that the respondent may not be fully honest in providing accurate data due to fear, embarrassment, or they may simply be trying to appear clever. The fact that people do not need to provide their names on the questionnaires and that the fieldworkers did not monitor their answers on the spot, contributed to an environment where they may have felt confident enough to respond honestly. On the other hand, without being monitored, respondents may not have been so diligent in completion of the questionnaire (Cant *et al.*, 2005:203). With this questionnaire being four pages long, some

people may have thought that it was time consuming, or simply too long and may have influenced their willingness to complete thoroughly.

Quantitative research methods were used in this study, which is to the advantage of the fieldworkers and analysts, as the information is easier to record and interpret. Adding an element of qualitative research may have enhanced the research process but would have required more time and resources which were not available (Kumar, 2014:201). Due to the time and financial constraints, the study had to be cross-sectional, as this method examines groups of people at a specific point in time. There was not enough time to extend the data collection process. This method's main disadvantage is that it does not have the ability to track and compare changes that occur over the course of time and thus lacks a comparability factor (Salkind, 2012:318).

4.4.2 Validity issues

The validity of a study refers to how well the research instrument assesses what it was intended to measure and refers to the accuracy and credibility of the study (McCaig, 2010:35). There are various types of validity in research; face and content validity, concurrent and predictive validity and construct validity. This study will focus on predictive, and construct validity, where predictive validity demonstrates how well a research instrument can predict a result and construct validity measures the quality of the research instrument or scale (Kumar, 2014:215; Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:336). For predictive validity to be high, it needs to be evaluated in conjunction with construct validity (Rossiter, 2008). The questionnaire was pre-tested to eliminate problems and mainly used Likert-type scales which were easy to complete.

Every effort was made in this study to eliminate the chance of error in the process and results. An extensive review or past and present literature was conducted to establish a thorough understanding of the topic, to ensure that the constructs were well chosen, properly defined and operationalised. The questionnaire was then developed and adapted based on existing and proven scales (Trinh & Phau, 2012; Leonard-Barton, 1981). A pre-test was conducted to check for any spelling or wording errors, ambiguity, or mistakes in general, which were then corrected before the questionnaire was distributed throughout Tshwane (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). The fieldworkers were trained and briefed before they were sent out to distribute the questionnaires, with the instruction to not interfere with the respondents unless asked a direct question. The fieldworkers had to approach people of all age groups, population groups and both genders in accordance with a quota that was calculated beforehand in order to attain a more evenly distributed sample that would more or less coincide with the population of Tshwane. The respondents had the opportunity to provide their cell phone number in order to be entered into a draw to win a shopping voucher. This enabled a member of staff from the University of Pretoria to conduct spot checks by calling a number of the respondents from each fieldworkers' bundle of questionnaires to ensure that questionnaires were completed honestly (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010).

4.4.3 Reliability

The reliability of a study refers to how consistent and stable the measuring instrument is. The higher the level of consistency and stability a study is, the more reliable it is (Kumar, 2014:215). A study has a high level of reliability when an investigation measures the same aspect multiple times and reaches the same outcome (Salkind, 2012:115). Some of the factors which may influence the reliability of a study, are the wording of a questionnaire, the physical setting in which it is taken, the respondent's mood, the interviewer's mood, the nature of interaction (this pertains to a sit down interview and the interaction between the interviewer and interviewee) and the regression effect of the instrument (when respondents answer questions which are similar in a questionnaire, they may feel that they answered too harshly in the first question and then change their attitude in the next question which can affect reliability) (Kumar, 2014:216). The initial pre-test helped to identify and remove any ambiguity in the wording of the questionnaire used in this study. Due to the fact that respondents completed the questionnaire themselves, the physical setting was in the respondents' natural environment (e.g. at home or at work), thus the respondents' mood was relaxed and neutral. The mood of the interviewer and the nature of regression are not applicable to the reliability of this study. However, since the questionnaire was self-completed, the fieldworker could not interfere influence the respondents' answers. Therefore, according to the factors that may affect this study, it can be judged to be highly reliable.

4.5 ETHICS

Ethics refers to the moral principles that are widely accepted by society and used to differentiate between what is seen as right and wrong (Cant *et al.,* 2005:203). Stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination, such as racism or sexism, are generally to be avoided in a questionnaire and were specifically avoided in this study (Walliman, 2005:207). Various ethical considered when conducting the research included the following:

Collecting information: A questionnaire should not ask the respondent irrelevant questions that would waste their time, as this is regarded as disrespectful (Kumar, 2014:284-285). It was therefore ensured that all questions in the questionnaire designed for this study are relevant. The cover letter informed respondents of the approximate time required for completion of the questionnaire, and that the results would be used for academic research (Smith, 2010:44-45). The fieldworkers were also not allowed to interfere or assist with respondent's answers, unless asked a direct question about the actual mechanics and interpretation of the questionnaire itself.

Seeking informed consent: The respondent should consent to filling in the questionnaire and information should not be collected without the respondent's knowledge (Kumar, 2014:285). All questionnaires completed in this

study were done so with the written consent of the respondents. Answering the questionnaire was voluntary and respondents were not forced to complete if they wished to withdraw (Salkind, 2012:85-89)

Providing incentives: Providing incentives to complete the questionnaire may be seen as unethical. However, if the incentive is provided as a gift to the respondent after they have completed the questionnaire, it is seen as a token of appreciation and is therefore regarded as ethical (Kumar, 2014:285). Answering the questionnaire in this study gave the respondents the opportunity to enter into a competition to win a voucher, which was optional. The lucky draw was done after the study was completed, and is therefore considered ethical.

Maintaining confidentiality: The interviewer had to maintain confidentiality regarding information that was collected to respect the source (Kumar, 2014:286). In this study the respondent's identity remains anonymous and in this regard the questionnaire can be seen to be ethical.

Ethical approval for the conduction of the study was obtained from UP NAS Ethics Committee before the data collection commenced. Affirmation of approval is provided in Addendum C.

4.6 SUMMARY

A total of 1050 self-completed questionnaires were collected from respondents across Tshwane by 43 trained fieldworkers, of which 1019 questionnaires were approved and deemed useable after spot-checks were conducted. The sample comprised of men and women of all population groups, aged 21 years and older. The measuring instrument for this study comprised of four sections. The first two presented seven-point Likert-type scales, whereby Section A presented the materialism investigation (Trinh and Phau's Materialism Scale), and section D an adapted version of Leonard Barton's Voluntary Simplicity Scale, of which only one dimension was of interest as indicated in Table 4.1. Section F attained the respondent's demographic details. The other sections were not relevant to this research report and focussed on values in general, as well as status consumption (See Addendum B).

Convenience sampling, followed by snowball sampling was used to collect quantitative data, which was then analysed with the assistance of a qualified statistician. Care was taken to ensure the quality of the study, inter alia by conducting spot checks after the questionnaires were received from the fieldworkers, and by checking

the coding of the questionnaires before data capturing and data analysis which also included reliability testing. This study can therefore be said to be ethical, valid and reliable.

Chapter 5

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results for this study are presented and discussed in accordance with the hypotheses for the study, incorporating literature. Tables and figures are used to visually present some of the results.

5.1 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE

The target population for this explorative study was South African male and female consumers, of all population groups, residing in Tshwane, Gauteng, who were twenty-one years or older at the time of the study. Therefore, the pre-requisites to participate in this study, was geographic location and age, and the premise that respondents had to be able to read the questionnaire and complete it independently.

The data collection process produced a total of 1019 useful questionnaires through the convenience sampling method that is explained in detail in Chapter 4. Although effort was made to purposefully target consumers with specific profiles to present the profile of the Tshwane population as closely as possible, the eventual sample was not fully representative. Therefore, a generalization of the outcomes of the study in terms of the entire population is unfortunately not possible. Sub sets of the sample were nevertheless large enough to merit statistical analysis and to gain some insight about demographic groups, namely: gender, age, income level, level of education, and population group that could spur future research. The profile of the sample is graphically displayed in Figure 5.1 and is discussed in the subsequent sections.
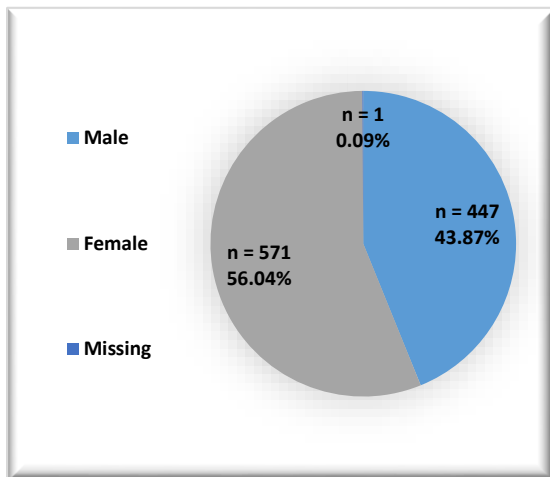
FIG 5.1 A: GENDER OF THE RESPONDENTS
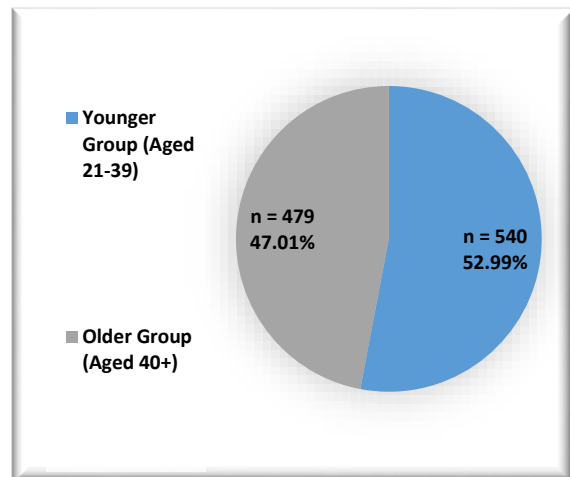
FIG 5.1 B: AGE OF THE RESPONDENTS
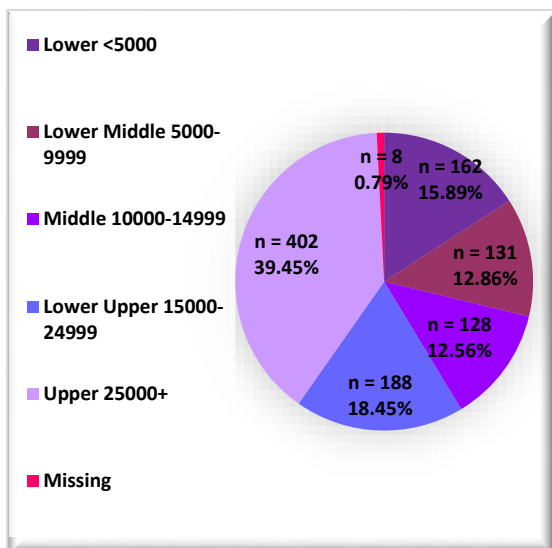
FIG 5.1C: RESPONDENTS' MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME (ZAR)
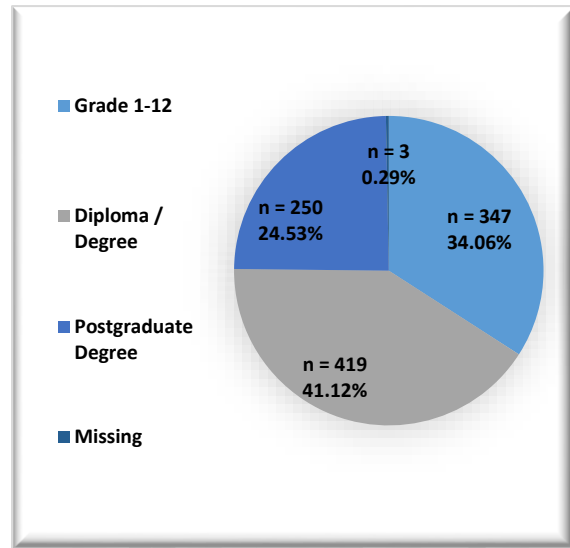
FIG 5.1D: RESPONDENTS' EDUCATION LEVEL
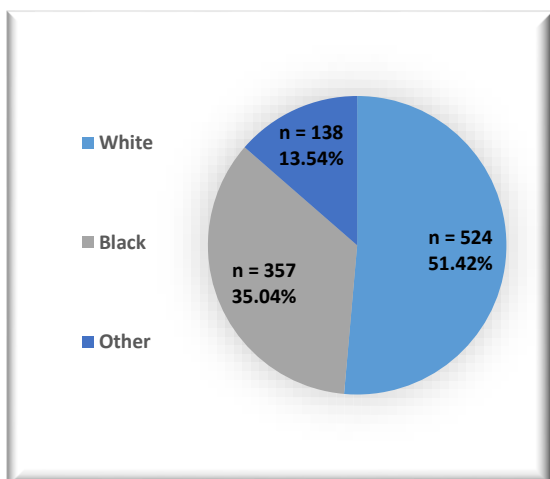
FIG 5.1 E: POPULATION DISTRIBUTION

FIGURE 5.1: DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERSTICS OF THE SAMPLE (N=1019)

5.1.1 Gender

Fieldworkers were instructed to try to recruit an equal number of male and female respondents but because participation was voluntary, it was difficult to obtain an equal gender representation as was envisaged. The slight domination of females in the sample (56.04%/ n=571, compared to 43.87%/ n=447 males) was not surprising, as this is often the case in convenient samples. Due to the sample size, the representation of males was large enough for statistical comparisons. The gender distribution in the final sample is visually presented in Figure 5.1a.

According to the last census taken in Tshwane in 2016, the demographic representation is 49.75% males and 50.25% females (City of Tshwane Municipality, 2016), indicating that the data collected for this research is not fully representative of the population at large, but is acceptable to deduce useful findings.

5.1.2 Age

As the opportunities to be exposed to different retail environments and experiences would certainly differ among varying age groups (Goldsmith *et al.,* 2011), the fieldworkers were instructed to gather information from respondents of diverse age groups, older than twenty-one years, whilst trying to include diversity in terms of gender and population groups across different geographic areas in Tshwane. Thereby, the sample would also involve respondents from diverse socio-economic backgrounds. Eventually, the youngest respondents in this study were aged twenty-one and the oldest seventy-eight years, with the average age of the sample being forty years. For the purpose of this study, two main age categories were distinguished for data analysis, namely: younger consumers (Millennials), who were aged up to thirty-nine years at the time, and those aged forty years and older. The age distribution is presented in Figure 5.1b.

On face value, younger consumers (n=540/ 52.99%) were well represented, and so were the more mature, experienced consumers with established purchasing patterns and preferences (n=479/ 47.01%). The younger age category represents the Millennials who, according to literature, have distinct preferences in product categories such as clothing (Pandelaere, 2016; Bevan-Dye *et al.,* 2012; Jones, 2007).

5.1.3 Monthly household income

Monthly household income affects the purchasing patterns and spending power of households in terms of the rand value spent on certain product categories. For the purpose of this study, five monthly income categories were established based on Tshwane population data (City of Tshwane, 2011), namely lower income

households (<R5 000); lower middle income (R5 000-R9 999); upper middle- (R10 000-R14 999); lower upper-(R15 000-R24 999), and upper income households (>R25 000). The visual presentation in Figure 5.1c reflects the income distribution of the sample.

The average household income in Tshwane is R4 775 per month (City of Tshwane Municipality, 2016). Although the largest represented income bracket of the sample (>R25 000) is predominant (n=402/ 39.45%) the sample size is still large enough to enable satisfactory inferences about the lower income groups. Overall, the sample included a sizable representation of consumers with an above average spending power (considering the average income of the geographic area).

5.1.4 Education level

For the purpose of data analysis, education levels were distinguished into three categories, namely secondary schooling up to matric (grade 12); possession of a matric school certificate plus a diploma or degree; and having a postgraduate qualification. As shown in Figure 5.1d, the sample included 34.06% (n=347) of respondents in the lowest level of education category. Slightly more than two thirds of the respondents in the sample possessed some form of post-secondary school qualification (diploma/ degree: 41.12%; post graduate qualification: 24.53%), which could explain the larger representation in the higher income levels as depicted in Figure 1c. Due to higher levels of education, which is usually associated with holding a higher paying job, it was assumed that the sample's consumer experience would be above average (Olssen, 2016).

5.1.5 Population groups

This study aimed to include a good representation of all major population groups residing in Tshwane. The final sample however consisted predominantly of Whites (51.42%) and Blacks (35.04%), and it was decided to merge the underrepresented Indian, Coloured, Asian and other categories as an umbrella group titled "Other" (13.54%). In the city of Tshwane, 73.17% of the residents are Black (City of Tshwane Municipality, 2016). With the use of convenient sampling, the population representation for this study is not a true reflection of the composition of Tshwane. However, the Black and White population groups were respectively large enough as shown in Figure 5.1e, to merit statistical analysis of their consumer behaviour.

5.2 RESULTS

The results and findings for this study are arranged and discussed in accordance with the research hypotheses that were formulated in terms of the aim of the study. Firstly, the materialistic inclination of the respondents in the sample was examined, distinguishing demographic differences. Secondly, the sample's inclination towards material simplicity as an element of voluntary simplistic behaviour which specifically reflects on

consumers' purchasing behaviour, was examined, also distinguishing demographic differences. The results are then compared to determine whether one consumer trait, namely *Materialism*, can be used to predict another, namely the *Material Simplicity* as an element of *Voluntary Simplicity*, with regard to consumers' clothing consumption behaviour.

5.2.1 Consumers' materialistic inclination

5.2.1.1 Confirmation of the dimensions of the selected Materialism Scale (Trinh & Phau, 2012)

Consumers' materialistic inclination was investigated by means of the scale of Trinh and Pau (2012) – a value based scale - that was presented in Section A of the questionnaire (see Addendum B). On account of the scale never having been used and explicated in a South African context, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted first to identify the dimensions of the scale as well as the items relating to each factor. The Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) was used to perform Principal Axis Factoring, using an Oblimin rotation with Kaiser Normalisation. Factor loadings, equal to or greater than 0.50 were considered acceptable for inclusion (Yong & Pearce, 2013; Williams, Brown & Pearce, 2012). The EFA procedure produced a four factor extraction. Although a few of the items aligned with different factors compared to where they were assigned to in the original scale, the four factors largely concurred with the original four factor scale of the authors (Trinh and Phau, 2012) that were labelled: *Material Success; Material Happiness; Material Essentiality;* and *Material Distinctiveness*.

Table 5.1 presents the four factors that were distinguished through EFA in this study. Based on the findings and content of the factors, they were labelled:

      Factor 1: Material Happiness and Relevance

      Factor 2: Material Distinctiveness

      Factor 3: Material Essentiality

      Factor 4: Material Success

Items re-aligned as follows:

- Two items from Material *Essentiality*, and one from *Material Success* as indicated below, moved to *Material Happiness.* Thus the factor was renamed "*Material Happiness and Relevance*". The items that diverted to different factors, are:

  Material growth has an irresistible attraction for me
  To buy and possess expensive/ luxury things is very important for me
  I like to own things that impress people

- One item moved from Material *Happiness* to *Success*, namely:

  When friends have things I cannot afford, it bothers me

- The four items for Material *Distinctiveness* remained unchanged.

With this said, the four factors still made sense in terms of the original scale. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficients (α>0.79) indicated a sufficient and significant level of internal consistency within the four factors to pursue further analyses.

The means for the four factors presented in Table 5.1, varied from M=2.91 to 3.91, which were merely average considering the interpretation of a seven increment scale that the researcher decided on beforehand in terms of the interpretation of means in this study, namely:

M >6 ≤ 7	Very strong/ high materialistic inclination
M >4 ≤ 6	Strong/ high materialistic inclination
M >3 ≤ 4	Moderate/ average materialistic inclination
M >2 ≤ 3	Weak/ low materialistic inclination
M >0 ≤ 1	Very weak materialistic inclination

According to the standard deviations (>SD=1.5) that were calculated for the four factor means, there seemed to be substantial fluctuation within each factor, supporting a notion of the existence of possible demographic differences within the sample. On face value, *Material Distinctiveness* (M=3.91) was the dimension with the strongest impact on the overall materialistic inclination score, although it was still only moderately strong. *Material Success* exerted the weakest influence (M<3) on the overall materialistic inclination score.

The percentage of variance explained in the data (62.08 %), was acceptable (Williams *et al.,* 2010). The outcome of the EFA are revealed in Table 5.1.

TABLE 5.1: THE DIMENSIONS OF MATERIALISM CONCLUDED THROUGH EFA

Statement	Factors			
	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
Obtaining valuable things is important for my happiness	**0.840**	0.497	0.554	-0.372
To buy and possess expensive/ luxurious things is very important to me	**0.802**	0.533	0.531	-0.648
Material growth (increase in money and possessions) has an irresistible attraction for me	**0.800**	0.467	0.499	-0.445
Material possessions are important because they contribute a lot to my happiness	**0.794**	0.439	0.505	-0.471
To me, it is important to own expensive things such as an expensive home, car, clothes and other things because it makes me happy	**0.765**	0.527	0.545	-0.652
I like to own things that impress people	**0.631**	0.531	0.450	-0.549
I usually buy things that make me look distinctive/ unique/ different	0.463	**0.826**	0.355	-0.294
I like to own things that make people think that I am unique/ different	0.487	**0.723**	0.404	-0.400
I am prepared to pay more to get a more distinctive/ unique item	0.425	**0.721**	0.378	-0.488
I feel uncomfortable when someone else in public is wearing the same clothes that I am	0.290	**0.528**	0.312	-0.364
Growth (increase) in material consumption (consumption of goods) helps to raise the level of civilization	0.484	0.384	**0.884**	-0.334
Material accumulation (increase in material possessions) helps raise the level of civilization	0.535	0.404	**0.810**	-0.359
I feel good when I buy expensive things because people think of me as successful	0.662	0.621	0.505	**-0.850**
I like to own expensive things because people see that as a sign of success	0.702	0.598	0.567	**-0.738**
The only way to let people know about my high status is to show it through the way that I live and/or goods that I own and consume	0.638	0.565	0.601	**-0.717**
When friends have things I cannot afford, it bothers me	0.465	0.427	0.399	**-0.591**
Mean	**3.53**	**3.91**	**3.74**	**2.91**
SD	1.57	1.56	1.69	1.54
% Variance explained (Total: 62.08 %)	48.61	5.81	4.51	3.15
Cronbach Alpha	0.90	0.79	0.83	0.87

It should be noted that the study aimed to identify highly materialistic consumers in terms of their demographic characteristics within the sample and to juxtapose their general materialistic tendency with their inclination towards material simplicity in a specific product category, expecting that the one (highly materialistic) would contradict the other (weak materialistic inclination). Based on the operationalisation of the overall means (presented on page 74, and repeated in 5.2.2), the means calculated for the different dimensions of materialism suggest *moderate materialism* (M >3 ≤ 4) and even a *below average materialistic inclination* for dimension 4, Material success (M >2 ≤ 3). Because the study anticipated/ hypothesized opposing/ contrasting scores for materialism and material simplicity, i.e. that those who are generally highly materialistic would have a weak inclination towards material simplicity when purchasing clothing, the initial results suggested that a weaker tendency towards materialism might eventually produce a strong tendency towards material simplicity as the two constructs/ phenomena are theoretically not attuned.

5.2.2 Demographic differences in consumers' materialistic inclination (Hypothesis 1)

The study hypothesised that consumers' materialistic inclination differs in accordance with their demographic characteristics. Possible demographic differences were therefore explored by means of t-tests (for gender and age that distinguished two categories each) and Manova (for household income, education level and population group). Results are displayed in Tables 5.2 to 5.6, highlighting statistically significant differences ($p \leq 0.05$).

The following interpretation of the means apply for TABLE 5.2 – 5.8:

M >6 ≤ 7:	Very strong/ high materialistic inclination
M >4 ≤ 6:	Strong/ high materialistic inclination
M >3 ≤ 4:	Moderate/ average materialistic inclination
M >2 ≤ 3:	Weak/ low materialistic inclination
M >0 ≤ 1:	Very weak materialistic inclination

5.2.2.1 Gender differences

Gender differences investigated by means of t-tests are presented in Table 5.2.

TABLE 5.2: GENDER DIFFERENCES IN CONSUMERS' MATERIALISTIC INCLINATION

	Factor	Category	N	Mean	SD	Sig.
GENDER	**F1: Material Happiness & Relevance**	Male	447	3.78	1.58	**0.00**
		Female	571	3.34	1.53	
		Total	1018	3.53	1.57	
	F2: Material Distinctiveness	Male	447	3.96	1.56	0.39
		Female	571	3.87	1.55	
		Total	1018	3.91	1.56	
	F3: Material Essentiality	Male	447	3.86	1.66	**0.04**
		Female	571	3.64	1.70	
		Total	1018	3.74	1.69	
	F4: Material Success	Male	447	3.11	1.57	**0.00**
		Female	571	2.76	1.50	
		Total	1018	2.91	1.54	

The study proposed (H1.1) that females are significantly more materialistic than men. T-tests were subsequently conducted to analyse the data. Results indicate that, for every dimension of the materialism scale, men were more materialistic than women. Figures summarised in Table 5.2 further reveal that the means for males were statistically significantly higher ($p < 0.05$), thus men have a significantly stronger materialistic inclination than females for three of the four dimensions, namely:

- **Material Happiness & Relevance** (p=0.00): Men seem significantly more inclined to consider valuable things as a means to acquire happiness (a terminal outcome), thus highly regarding the possession of expensive/ luxurious things, including certain durables such as a home, car, and clothes as important. Although significantly more materialistic, the mean (M=3.78) nevertheless still indicate that men are moderately materialistic and not highly materialistic with respect to this particular dimension of the construct.

- **Material Essentiality** (p=0.04): Again, males (M=3.86) seem significantly more inclined than females (M=3.64) to regard the growth of civilisation as a determinant of mankind's material consumption, and that an increase in people's consumption of goods facilitates (are thus instrumental) to raise the level of civilization. This logic is nevertheless still only moderately strong.

- **Material Success** (p=0.00): Results indicate that men are significantly more inclined to associate a person's success and status with possessions, even more so when the possessions are expensive; also being bothered by the idea that friends own things that they do not. Although men seem significantly more materialistic in terms of this dimension of materialism, the mean (M=3.11) only indicates a moderate predisposition towards this kind of materialistic behaviour. Considering the maximum mean (M=7), results indicate that females (M=2.76) regard possessions of minor importance (weak) in terms of their sense of success (a terminal value).

The finding that men are more strongly directed towards materialistic consumption behaviour, is an indication of the significant switch that has happened in recent times, with men becoming far more interested in their image, looks and appearance (He, Kukar-Kinney & Ridgway, 2018; Bakewell & Mitchell, 2006) and a stronger trend to adopt and favour a more materialistic lifestyle and related consumer decisions (He *et al.,* 2018; Bakewell *et al.*, 2006; Bakewell & Mitchell, 2004).

The only dimension of materialism where males and females did not differ significantly (p>0.05), was for *Material Distinctiveness* (Males: M=3.96; Females: M=3.87). Although the overall mean for this dimension was the highest, thus exerting the strongest influence on the overall materialism score, it is nevertheless only moderately strong, suggesting a moderately strong inclination towards a preference for, and purchasing things that will make a person look distinctive/ unique, and feeling uncomfortable when other people own things that they do not. Results are presented visually in Figure 5.2.

Based on the results, hypothesis H1.1 that proposes that females are significantly more materialistic than males, is not supported.
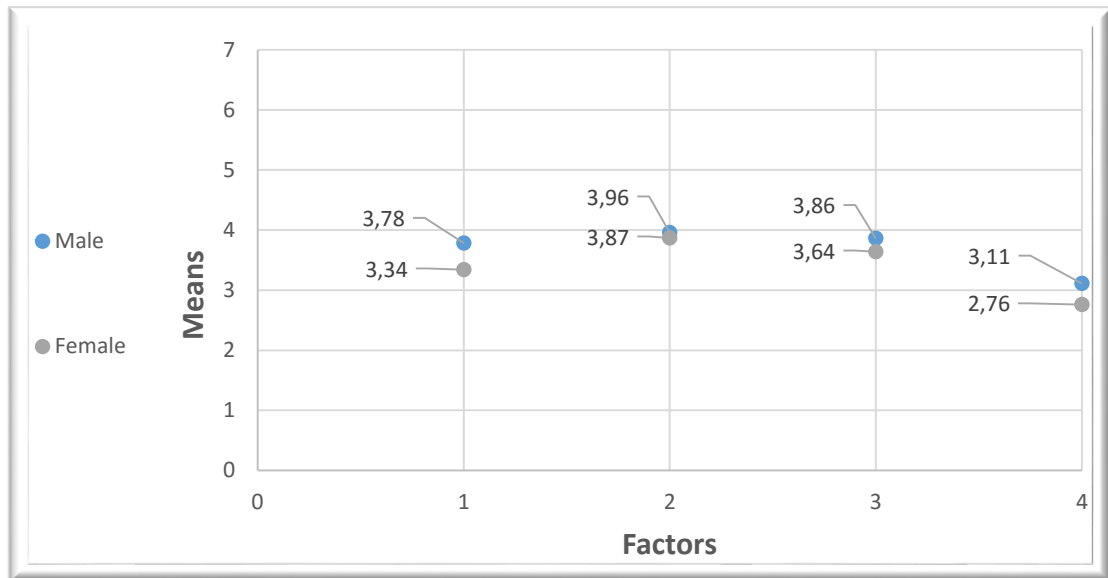
FIGURE 5.2: GENDER DIFFERENCES

Factor 1 – Material Happiness & Relevance   *Factor 2 – Material Distinctiveness*
Factor 3 - Material Essentiality   *Factor 4 – Material Success*

5.2.2.2 Age differences

Age differences are presented visually in Table 5.3.

TABLE 5.3: AGE DIFFERENCES IN CONSUMERS' MATERIALISTIC INCLINATION

	Factor	Category	N	Mean	SD	Sig.
AGE	**F1: Material Happiness & Relevance**	< 40 Years	540	3.70	1.54	**0.00**
		≥ 40 Years	479	3.34	1.59	
		Total	1019	3.53	1.57	
	F2: Material Distinctiveness	< 40 Years	540	4.11	1.56	**0.00**
		≥ 40 Years	479	3.67	1.52	
		Total	1019	3.91	1.56	
	F3: Material Essentiality	< 40 Years	540	3.70	1.67	0.41
		≥ 40 Years	479	3.78	1.71	
		Total	1019	3.74	1.69	
	F4: Material Success	< 40 Years	540	2.95	1.55	0.40
		≥ 40 Years	479	2.87	1.53	
		Total	1019	2.91	1.54	

The study proposed (H1.2) that younger adults, specifically the Millennials who are younger than 40 years of age, are more materialistic than their older counterparts. Therefore, the sample was distinguished in terms of two age groups. T-tests were performed to distinguish possible significant differences, and the results are summarised in Table 5.3. Significant differences ($p<0.05$) are evident between the younger and older

consumers for two of the dimensions of Materialism, both referring to terminal values, namely for F1: *Material Happiness & Relevance* (p=0.00), as well as for F2: *Material Distinctiveness* (p=0.00). In both instances, a significantly stronger materialistic inclination was evident amongst the younger age group (Millennials). For *Material Happiness and Relevance* (F1), the means for both age cohorts indicated a moderate materialistic inclination (M<4). With regard to *Material Distinctiveness* (F2), Millennials (M=4.11) were not only significantly more materialistic compared to the older age cohort (M=3.67; p=0.00), they also admitted a strong materialistic inclination (M>4), compared to older consumers who are only moderately materialistic (M>3<4).

Age differences for two dimensions of Materialism, namely *Material Essentiality* and *Material Success* were not significantly different (p>0.05). Therefore, age is not an indication of consumers' regard for possessions as an indication of their success, or their perception of the ownership of possessions as an indication of the welfare of society. Particularly interesting, is that the means for both age groups were relatively low in terms of possessions as an indication of success (M<3), indicating that age is not a noteworthy predictor of consumers' regard for material possessions as a sign of success.

Results suggest that age can be used as an indication of consumers' materialistic inclination with regard to only two dimensions of materialism, namely *Material Happiness and Relevance* (F1) and *Material Distinctiveness* (F2), in which case the materialistic inclination of the Millennial cohort is significantly stronger. Age can however not be used to predict a predisposition to regard the ownership of specific goods as *Material* Essentiality (F3) or an indication of *Material* Success (F4).

Therefore, H1.2, that proposes that younger adults, specifically Millennials (currently younger than 40 years), are significantly more materialistic than their older counterparts, is only partially supported.

5.2.2.3 Household income differences

As indicated in Table 5.4, there were no significant differences (p>0.05), among any of the level of income categories within any of the four dimensions of Materialism.

TABLE 5.4: INCOME DIFFERENCES IN CONSUMERS' MATERIALISTIC INCLINATION

	Factor	Category	n	Mean	SD	Sig.
INCOME LEVEL	**F1: Material Happiness & Relevance**	< R1000	293	3.67	1.58	0.38
		R1000 -R14999	128	3.45	1.62	
		R15000 - R24999	188	3.40	1.49	
		>R25000	402	3.51	1.59	
		Total	1011	3.53	1.58	
	F2: Material Distinctiveness	< R1000	293	4.01	1.54	0.93
		R1000 -R14999	128	3.95	1.61	
		R15000 - R24999	188	3.77	1.57	
		>R25000	402	3.87	1.55	
		Total	1011	3.90	1.56	
	F3: Material Essentiality	< R1000	293	3.77	1.74	0.77
		R1000 -R14999	128	3.64	1.66	
		R15000 - R24999	188	3.72	1.65	
		>R25000	402	3.77	1.69	
		Total	1011	3.74	1.69	
	F4: Material Success	< R1000	293	3.00	1.51	0.28
		R1000 -R14999	128	2.83	1.58	
		R15000 - R24999	188	2.80	1.44	
		>R25000	402	2.93	1.60	
		Total	1011	2.91	1.54	

Income level indisputably indicates the available financial resources in a household that could be spent to further a materialistic inclination. However, literature suggests that lower income consumers are more inclined to be materialistic because they generally wish to improve their position and social standing in society (Alexander, 2011); thus this study hypothesized that lower income households would be more materialistic than households with a higher income. Interesting results came to the fore in this study. Out of the four proposed income brackets, the lowest income category (earning <R10 000 monthly) is the most materialistic with regard to three of the four dimensions of materialism. *Material Essentiality* (F3) is the only dimension of materialism where the materialistic inclination of the lowest- (<R10 000) and the highest income groups (>R25000: M=3.77) were equal. Means across the four dimensions of materialism indicate a moderately strong materialistic inclination, save for the lowest income group, who could be classified as being strongly materialistic (M=4.01) in terms of *Material Distinctiveness*. The weakest materialistic inclination (M=2.80 - 2.93) was confirmed for *Material Success* (F4) across all income groups notwithstanding a moderate inclination of the lowest income group (M=3.00). However, differences among the different income groups merely indicate tendencies as differences were not statistically significant (p>0.05).

The findings of this study hence could not unequivocally support the hypothesis (H1.3) that lower income households are significantly more materialistic than middle or higher income households.

5.2.2.4 Education level differences

Results are summarised in Table 5.5.

TABLE 5.5: EDUCATION LEVEL DIFFERENCES IN CONSUMERS' MATERIALISTIC INCLINATION

	Factor	Category	n	Mean	SD	Sig.
EDUCATION LEVEL	**F1: Material Happiness & Relevance**	Grade 12	347	3.57	1.63	0.08
		Diploma/ Degree	419	3.61	1.56	
		Post-Graduate	250	3.34	1.50	
		Total	1016	3.53	1.57	
	F2: Material Distinctiveness	Grade 12	347	3.71	1.52	**0.00**
		Diploma/ Degree	419	4.10	1.56	
		Post-Graduate	250	3.86	1.59	
		Total	1016	3.91	1.56	
	F3: Material Essentiality	Grade 12	347	3.67	1.76	0.55
		Diploma/ Degree	419	3.80	1.66	
		Post-Graduate	250	3.72	1.63	
		Total	1016	3.74	1.69	
	F4: Material Success	Grade 12	347	2.94	1.51	0.19
		Diploma/ Degree	419	2.97	1.60	
		Post-Graduate	250	2.76	1.47	
		Total	1016	2.91	1.54	

Evidence of significant differences among level of education categories were distinguished for only one of the dimensions of materialism, namely *Material Distinctiveness*, which required a post hoc investigation to specify the nature of the differences (see Table 5.6).

TABLE 5.6: POST HOC BONFERRONI TEST: EDUCATION LEVEL

Factor	(I) Highest education level: Three groups	(J) Highest education level: Three groups	Mean difference (I-J)	Sig.	95% Confidence level	
					Lower Bound	Higher Bound
F2: Material Distinctiveness	Grade 1 - 12	Diploma or degree	-0.38	0.00	-0.65	-0.11
		Post graduate	-0.14	0.81	-0.45	0.17
	Diploma / degree	Grade 1 to 12	0.38	0.00	0.11	0.65
		Post graduate	0.24	0.17	-0.06	0.54
	Post graduate	Grade 1 to 12	0.14	0.81	-0.17	0.45
		Diploma or degree	-0.24	0.17	-0.54	0.06

Based on extant literature, the study (H1.4) proposed that education level is not a determining factor in a consumer's materialistic inclination. This study distinguished three level of education categories, namely: a

secondary school certificate up to matric (grade 12); a diploma or degree; and a post graduate qualification. Table 5.5 indicates significant differences in different level of education groups' materialistic inclination for one of the four dimensions, namely *Material Distinctiveness* (p=0.000). The post hoc Bonferroni test (see Table 5.6) subsequently indicated that consumers who have completed a diploma or degree after their secondary schooling and those who possess a post graduate qualification, do not differ significantly in terms of their consideration of *Material Distinctiveness*. However, consumers who possess a degree or diploma, are significantly more materialistic than lower educated consumers with regard to *Material Distinctiveness* (p<0.05), thus significantly more concerned about acquiring possessions, including clothing, that would distinguish them from others as unique (M>4.0). Fairly large standard deviations for the respective means of the different level of education categories suggest considerable fluctuation (SD>1.5) that may deserve further investigation.

Therefore, H1.4 that proposed that education level is not a significant determining factor in a consumer's materialistic inclination, is only partially supported, because significant differences among different level of education groups were confirmed for one of the four dimensions of materialism, namely Material Distinctiveness.

Results indicate that consumers with a post-secondary school diploma or Bachelor's degree, are significantly more materialistic in terms of evidence of material distinctiveness compared to lower educated consumers. Although not statistically significant, consumers with a post graduate qualification are also more materialistic than those with a diploma or Bachelor's degree, suggesting that a materialistic inclination, specifically *Material Distinctiveness*, is more common amongst those with higher education levels. Higher educated consumers would therefore probably be the ideal market for retailers to target with durable products, significant brands and visually significant commodities.

5.2.2.4 Population differences

The study proposed (H1.5) that consumers in the Black population group are more materialistic than any of the other population groups. For the purpose of this investigation, three population categories were distinguished for this study as explained earlier (see 5.2). A MANOVA was firstly conducted to ascertain if any significant differences existed among the different population groups (p<0.05). Results summarised in Table 5.7 indicate statistically significant differences within three of the four dimensions of Materialism, namely, *Happiness & Relevance* (p=0.00)*, Distinctiveness* (p=0.01)*, and Essentiality* (p=0.01). A post hoc Bonferroni test, of which the results are summarised in Table 5.7, was then conducted to specify the significant differences.

TABLE 5.7: POPULATION LEVEL DIFFERENCES IN CONSUMERS' MATERIALISTIC INCLINATION

	Factor	Category	n	Mean	SD	Sig.
POPULATION GROUP	F1: Material Happiness & Relevance	White	524	3.37	1.50	0.00
		Black	357	3.81	1.62	
		Other	138	3.41	1.63	
		Total	1019	3.53	1.57	
	F2: Material Distinctiveness	White	524	3.77	1.47	0.01
		Black	357	4.11	1.62	
		Other	138	3.90	1.66	
		Total	1019	3.91	1.56	
	F3: Material Essentiality	White	524	3.72	1.63	0.01
		Black	357	3.90	1.75	
		Other	138	3.38	1.68	
		Total	1019	3.74	1.69	
	F4: Material Success	White	524	2.86	1.46	0.50
		Black	357	2.99	1.63	
		Other	138	2.91	1.62	
		Total	1019	2.91	1.54	

TABLE 5.8: POST HOC BONFERRONI TEST (POPULATION GROUP DIFFERENCES)

Factor	(I) Population Groups Recoded	(J) Population Groups Recoded	Mean difference (I-J)	Sig.	95% Confidence level Lower Bound	Higher Bound
F1: Happiness & Relevance	White	Black	-0.44	0.00	-0.70	-0.18
		Other	-0.05	1.00	-0.41	0.31
	Black	White	0.44	0.00	0.18	0.70
		Other	0.39	0.04	0.02	0.77
	Other	White	0.05	1.00	-0.31	0.40
		Black	-0.39	0.04	-0.77	-0.02
F2: Distinctiveness	White	Black	-0.33	0.01	-0.59	-0.08
		Other	-0.13	1.00	-0.48	0.23
	Black	White	0.33	0.01	0.08	0.59
		Other	0.21	0.56	-0.17	0.58
	Other	White	0.13	1.00	-0.23	0.48
		Black	-0.21	0.56	-0.58	0.17
F3: Essentiality	White	Black	-0.18	0.36	-0.46	0.10
		Other	0.34	0.10	-0.04	0.73
	Black	White	0.18	0.36	-0.10	0.46
		Other	0.52	0.01	0.12	0.92
	Other	White	-0.34	0.10	-0.73	0.04
		Black	-0.52	0.01	-0.92	-0.12

Results presented in Table 5.7 indicate that across all population groups, consumers' materialistic inclination is generally stronger with respect to the *Materialistic Distinctiveness* (Overall Mean: 3.91) compared to the

other dimensions. Furthermore, results indicate that Blacks' materialistic inclination M=4.11) is not only significantly stronger (p<0.05) for this dimension compared to Whites and Other population groups, but that their inclination is strong, while the other population groups' regard to be distinctly different with respect to the possessions they acquire, are moderately strong (M>3<4). This finding suggests that Blacks would be considerably more concerned about the type of products and brands that they purchase to distinguish themselves from others.

The means for *Happiness and Relevance* as well as *Essentiality* indicated a moderate materialistic inclination across all population groups (M>3<4), although Blacks seem significantly more materialistic with respect to both dimensions.

Population group does not seem to be an indication of consumers' consideration of possessions as an indication of *Material Success:* consumers' inclination to regard possessions as a signifier of material success, is weak (M>2<3) across all population groups. Therefore, none of the population groups apparently regard possessions as a notable token of a person's progress in life.

Therefore, H1.5, which proposes that consumers belonging to the Black population groups are significantly more materialistic than those in the other population groups, is supported: Black consumers are more materialistic with respect to all the dimensions that are used to define materialism as a value, although it is only significantly higher (p<0.05) for three of the four dimensions of the construct.

5.2.2.6 Summary of demographic differences

Figure 5.3 visually presents the OVERALL materialism score for all the different demographic groups to provide an overview of the results. Although certain population groups seem more materialistic concerning certain dimensions of materialism, the overall materialism scores reflect a moderate inclination towards materialistic consumption behaviour. Contrary to the expectation when designing this research, this study could not identify demographic groups that are particularly materialistic.
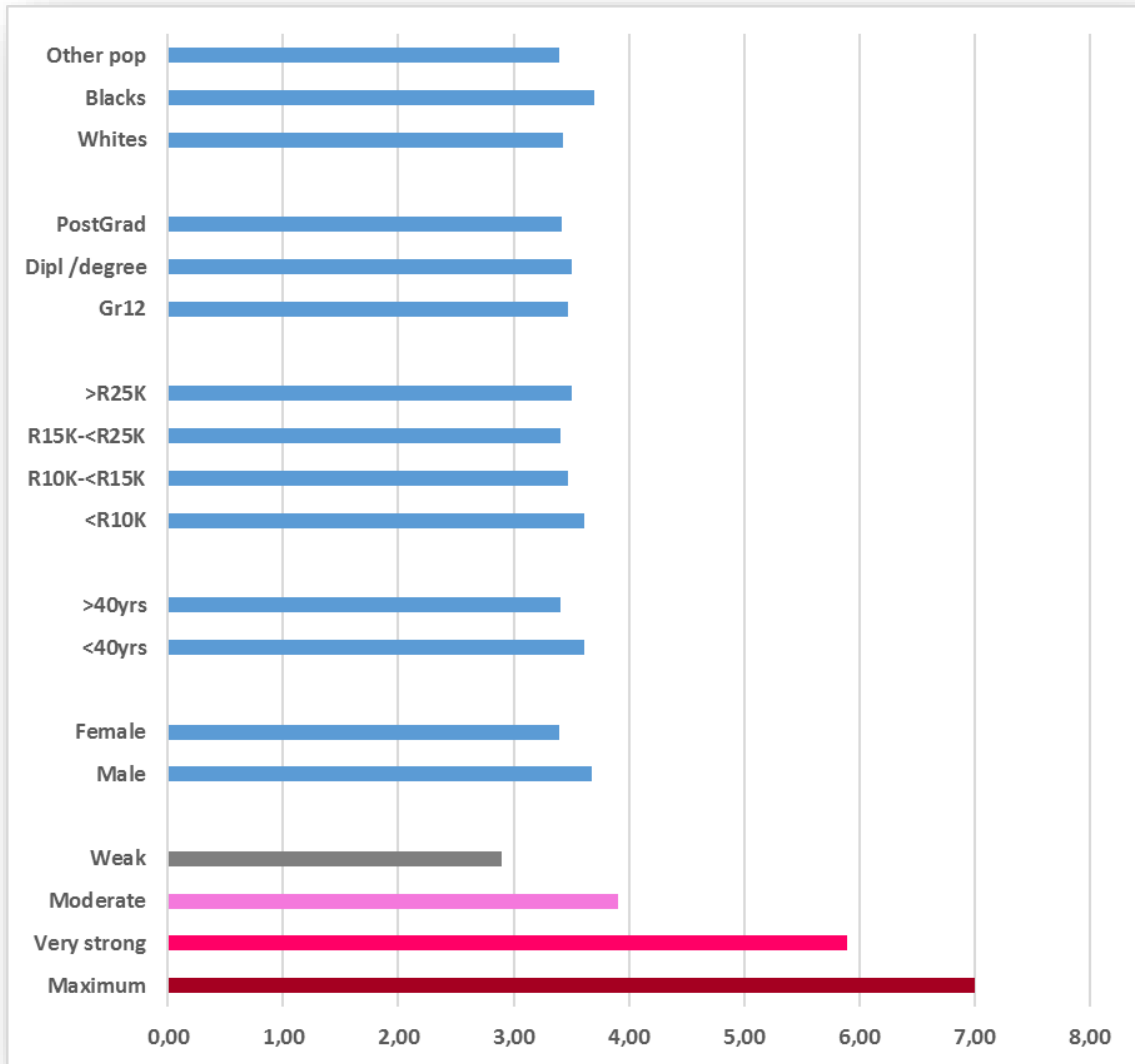
FIGURE 5.3: OVERALL MEANS FOR THE DIFFERENT DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS FOR MATERIALISM

Based on the average means that are presented in Figure 5.3, consumers are generally moderately materialistic, irrespective of a further categorisation into demographic categories that attempted to distinguish significant differences within gender, age, level of education, income or population groups. However, a scrutiny of consumers' materialistic inclination in terms of the four dimensions of materialism, which is summarised in Table 5.9, revealed that:

- **Men** are significantly more materialistic compared to women in terms of dimensions of materialism that have consequences for their happiness (referring to materialism as a terminal value), their regard of the importance of possessions to reflect progress, as well as their perception of success and achievement in life.

- **Millennials** are significantly more dependent on possessions to indicate their success and happiness, as well as to distinguish themselves from others compared to older consumers (all referring to materialism as a terminal value).

- **Income level** apparently has no significant influence in terms of consumers' materialistic inclination (thus instrumental or terminal), which means that the phenomenon is universal and that a particular income level (which influences a person's spending power), is not a determinant of one's materialistic inclination.

- **Level of education** indicates a propensity towards materialism in the sense that consumers who possess a diploma or degree are significantly more materialistic with regard to issues related to *Material Distinctiveness* (a terminal outcome) compared to those who have only completed a secondary schooling qualification. Possession of a diploma or degree is therefore associated with an underlying desire to distinguish yourself through specific possessions, particularly products that are admired by others, which would include the latest pair of shoes, a flashy handbag, or simply designer clothing items.

- **Black population groups** are significantly more concerned about possessions to ascertain their personal happiness, to distinguish themselves, and the belief that possessions indicate progress, and advancement in life (thus terminal and instrumental dimensions of materialism).

In summary, the results indicate that:

- **Men, Millennials** and **Blacks** are significantly more prone to associate possessions with their own happiness, a terminal outcome of materialism.

- **Millennials** and consumers who are **well educated, possessing a diploma or degree**, are significantly more inclined to rely on unique possessions to distinguish themselves from others, thus materialism as a terminal outcome of materialism.

- **Men** and consumers in the **Black population group** are significantly more inclined to argue that progress is associated with the possession of certain products/ commodities, which signifies materialism as an instrumental value.

- **Men** are more likely to associate possessions with success than females (a terminal outcome of materialism). Because the same could not be confirmed for any sub category within any of the other demographic categories, it seems as if this characteristic is strongly associated with men rather than another demographic characteristic.

TABLE 5.9: SUMMARY OF DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES THAT ARE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT

Demographic Category	Material Happiness & Relevance	Material Distinctiveness	Material Essentiality	Material Success
Gender: Males are significantly more materialistic with regard to three of the four dimensions of materialism compared to females.	√		√	√
Age: Millennials are significantly more materialistic with regard to two of the four dimensions of materialism compared to consumers of 40 years and older.	√	√		
Income level: Income differences do not influence consumers' materialistic inclination significantly (p<0.05), irrespective of the dimension of materialism.				
Level of education: Consumers who possess a diploma or degree, are significantly more materialistic with regard to the Distinctiveness dimension, indicating considerable concern about possession of objects that would distinguish them from others and that would indicate status.		√		
Population group: Blacks are significantly more materialistic in terms of three of the four dimensions of materialism, excluding the *Success* dimension.	√	√	√	

5.2.3 Respondents' inclination towards material simplicity (Hypothesis 2)

Material simplicity refers to a non-consumption orientated way of life and is said to be one of the core values associated with voluntary simplicity (Shama, 1985; Leonard-Barton, 1981; Elgin & Mitchell, 1977). This involves the specific act of deliberately not overconsuming and making a conscious effort to consume less or as little as possible (Shama, 1985). This was measured using an adapted version of the original 18-Item Voluntary Simplicity behavioural scale developed by Dorothy Leonard-Barton (1981), that included the four major constructs/ dimensions of voluntary simplicity, namely: material simplicity, ecological awareness, self-determination and human scale in the questionnaire, which was part of a larger investigation. Only Material Simplicity was looked at in this study as this dimension specifically investigates purchasing behaviour, which this study focussed on. The reliability statistics performed for this specific factor that contained five items (namely V4.1; V4.7; V4.9; V4.14; V4.20), produced the following case processing summary:

Items	Mean	Std. Dev
V4.1: I buy good quality clothes so that I can wear them longer	5.54	1.39
V4.7: I look after my clothes so that they last longer	6.02	1.33
V4.9: When going to a special occasion, I would wear something I already have rather than buying a new outfit	4.80	1.71
V4.14: I wear my clothes for more than one season	6.06	1.35
V4.20: I make a conscious effort to only buy clothes that I really need	5.30	1.63
Cronbach Alpha	**0.64**	

Based on the limited number of items in the scale, the Cronbach's Alpha (0.64) was accepted as indicating reasonable internal consistency of the scale, meriting further analyses. The Cronbach's Alpha values for the other three dimensions of the scale that were excluded in this investigation, were: 0.72; 0.60 and 0.87 respectively.

Table 5.10 – 5.14 depicts the results of respondents' inclination towards material simplicity per their demographic characteristics, showing the respective means, standard deviations and levels of significance. Categories where significant differences were found (p<0.05), are highlighted in the table. The means were interpreted as follows in order to classify and quantify the groups in terms of their material simplicity.

The following interpretation of the means apply for TABLE 5.10 – 5.14:

M >6 ≤ 7:	**Very strong/ high material simplistic inclination**
M >4 ≤ 6:	**Strong/ high material simplistic inclination**
M >3 ≤ 4:	**Moderate/ average material simplistic inclination**
M >2 ≤ 3:	**Weak/ low material simplistic inclination**
M >0 ≤ 1:	**Very weak material simplistic inclination**

5.2.3.1 Gender differences

A t-test indicated that males are significantly more materially simplistic (M=5.62; p=0.03) compared to females, who thus seem significantly less inclined to consume sparingly (M=5.49) than their male counterparts. Both males and females can be descried as strongly simplistic materially.

TABLE 5.11: MATERIAL SIMPLICITY OF RESPONDENTS IN TERMS OF GENDER

Category	Dimensions	n	Mean	SD	Sig.
GENDER	Male	447	**5.62**	0.98	0.03
	Female	571	**5.49**	0.88	
	Total	1018	**5.54**	0.93	

Therefore, although males and females are both inclined to be strongly materially simplistic, H2.1 is supported based on evidence that males' inclination towards material simplistic clothing behaviour, is significantly stronger compared to females.

5.2.3.2. Age differences

A t-test was conducted to distinguish possible significant differences between the two age groups (<40 years; $\geq$40 years), which revealed (see Table 5.11) that the older consumers (40 years and older) have a significantly stronger ($p=0.00$) inclination towards material simplicity (M=5.66) compared to the younger age cohort (M=5.44), who are nevertheless also strongly materially simplistic.

Therefore, H2.2 is supported with regard to clothing purchase and consumption behaviour, i.e.:
older adults (40 years of age and older) are significantly more materially simplistic than their younger counterpart (Millennials, <40 years) consumers.

TABLE 5.11: MATERIAL SIMPLICITY OF RESPONDENTS IN TERMS OF AGE

Category	Dimensions	n	Mean	SD	Sig.
AGE	< 40 Years	540	5.44	0.96	**0.00**
	≥ 40 Years	479	5.67	0.87	
	Total	1019	5.55	0.93	

5.2.3.3. Monthly household income differences

Manova was conducted to identify possible significant differences among the four income groups. Means for the different income groups were very similar, indicating high levels of material simplicity which did not differ significantly among the different household income groups ($p>0.05$). Therefore, level of income cannot be used to predict consumers' inclination to consume more frugally. Despite higher income consumers having more to spend, they are apparently not more wasteful. Results are presented in Table 5.12.

TABLE 5.12: MATERIAL SIMPLICITY OF RESPONDENTS IN TERMS OF INCOME

Category	Dimensions	n	Mean	SD	Sig.
INCOME LEVEL	< R1000	293	5.58	0.95	0.66
	R1000 -R14999	128	5.51	1.01	
	R15000 - R24999	188	5.60	0.87	
	R25000 +	402	5.52	0.91	
	Total	1011	5.55	0.93	

The study concludes that H2.3, that proposes that higher income consumers are significantly more materially simplistic than those in lower household income groups is not supported.

5.2.3.4 Education level differences

Literature indicates that more educated consumers tend to be more voluntary simplistic (Olssen, 2016; Sandlin, 2009), but (as indicated in Table 5.13), the same could not be confirmed in this study. Differences among the different level of education groups were not statistically significant (p>0.05) and therefore, higher levels of education do not necessarily indicate lower levels of wasteful consumption (or vice versa). To the contrary, results indicate that across all levels of education, consumers' materialistic inclination is fairly strong (M>5).

H2.4, that proposes that higher education levels is a significant indicator of a consumer's propensity towards material simplistic clothing purchase and consumption behaviour is not supported.

TABLE 5.13: MATERIAL SIMPLICITY OF RESPONDENTS IN TERMS OF EDUCATION LEVEL

Category	Dimensions	n	Mean	SD	Sig.
EDUCATION LEVEL	Grade 12	347	5.59	0.91	**0.17**
	Diploma/ Degree	419	5.48	0.96	
	Post-Graduate	250	5.60	0.87	
	Total	1016	5.55	0.92	

5.2.3.5 Population group differences

Following the Manova test that was conducted on the three different population groups, it became evident that differences among the population groups that were specified in this study, were not statistically significant (p=0.61). Furthermore, as is evident in Table 5.14, all population groups can be classified as strongly materially simplistic (M=5.53 to 5.62) and did not differ distinctly from one another.

Therefore, H2.5 that proposes that the White population group is significantly more materially simplistic than other population groups is not supported.

TABLE 5.14: MATERIAL SIMPLICITY OF RESPONDENTS IN TERMS OF POPULATION GROUP

Category	Dimensions	n	Mean	SD	Sig.
POPULATION GROUP	White	524	5.53	0.82	**0.61**
	Black	357	5.54	1.07	
	Other	138	5.62	0.91	
	Total	1019	5.55	0.93	

Results for the Hypothesis 2 is summarised in Table 5.15.

TABLE 5.15: SUMMARY OF HYPOTHESES THAT PROPOSED SIGNIFICANT DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES FOR MATERIAL SIMPLICITY WITH REGARD TO CLOTHING CONSUMPTION BEHAVIOUR

Demographic Category	Hypothesis
Gender: Males' inclination towards materially simplistic clothing behaviour, is significantly stronger compared to females.	√
Age: Older adults (40 years of age and older) are significantly more materially simplistic than their younger counterpart (Millennials, <40 years) consumers.	√
Income level: Higher income consumers are significantly more materially simplistic than those in lower household income groups.	X
Level of education: Higher education levels is a significant indicator of a consumer's propensity towards materially simplistic clothing purchase and consumption behaviour.	X
Population group: The White population group is significantly more materially simplistic than other population groups.	X

5.3.4 A comparison of respondents' materialistic inclination and their inclination towards material simplistic behaviour

This section compares respondents' inclination to be materialistic and their inclination towards material simplistic behaviour based on the means that were calculated for the specific dimension of the VS scale across the different demographic categories. The study proposed (H2) that if a particular group is high in materialism, they would not be materially simplistic as these behavioural traits are based on consumers' underlying values, that are, by definition, opposing and contrasting. The results for the materialism and material simplicity investigation are summarised in Table 5.15, specifying demographic categories and their respective means. Figure 5.4 presents the results visually.

The following served as the tool for interpretation, and columns are coloured accordingly:

M >6 ≤ 7	Very strong/ high material simplistic inclination Very strong/ high materialistic inclination
M >4 ≤ 6	Strong/ high material simplistic inclination Strong/ high materialistic inclination
M >3 ≤ 4	Moderate/ average material simplistic inclination Moderate/ average materialistic inclination
M >2 ≤ 3	Weak/ low material simplistic inclination Weak/ low materialistic inclination
M >0 ≤ 1	Very weak material simplistic inclination Very weak materialistic inclination

TABLE 5.15: DEMOGRAPHIC COMPARISON OF CONSUMERS' INCLINATION TO BE MATERIALISTIC AND TO DEMONSTRATE MATERIALLY SIMPLISTIC CLOTHING BEHAVIOURAL PRACTICES

| DEMOGRAPHIC CATEGORY		DIMENSION	MEAN: MATERIALISM	MEAN: MATERIAL SIMPLICITY
GENDER		Male	3.67	5.62
		Female	3.36	5.49
AGE		<40 Years	3.61	5.44
		≥40 Years	3.36	5.66
INCOME		<R10000	3.61	5.57
		R10000 - R14999	3.48	5.52
		R15000 - R24999	3.41	5.60
		>R25000	3.51	5.52
EDUCATION LEVEL		Up to Grade 12	3.46	5.59
		Diploma/ Degree	3.60	5.48
		Post Graduate	3.37	5.60
POPULATION GROUP		White	3.39	5.58
		Black	3.69	5.58
		Other	3.40	5.61
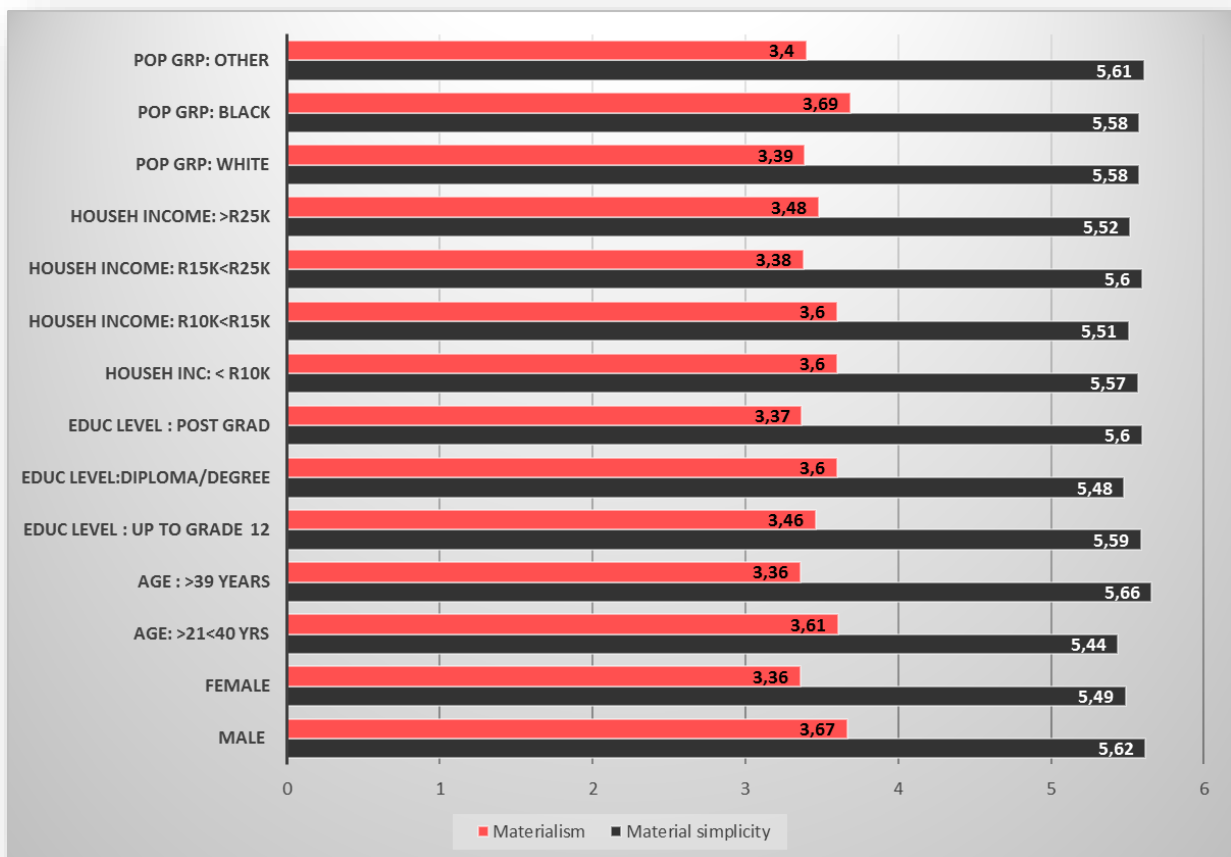
FIGURE 5.4: COMPARISON OF CONSUMERS' INCLINATION TO BE MATERIALISTIC AND TO BE MATERIALLY SIMPLISTIC

Table 5.15 presents the overall means for the different demographic groups' materialistic inclination and their tendency towards material simplicity. Paired t-tests were performed to compare the means calculated for Questionnaire, Section D, Factor 1 (Material simplicity, items V4.1; V4.7; V4.9; V4.14; V4.20) and the overall mean of Section A across the dimensions for the construct Materialism to reflect general materialistic inclination, per demographic subsets of the data. Results for the paired sample statistics are presented in Table 5.16.

TABLE 5.16: PAIRED SAMPLES STATISTICS FOR THE TWO CONSTRUCTS

Demographic Category	Construct	Mean	N	SD	Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)
Gender differences: Male	Material simplicity	5.62	447	.98	-.287	<0.001
	Materialism Overall mean	3.67	447	1.34		
Gender differences: Female	Material simplicity	5.49	571	.88	-.159	<0.001
	Materialism Overall mean	3.36	571	1.33		
Age difference: >21<40 yrs	Material simplicity	5.44	540	.96	-.199	<0.001
	Materialism Overall mean	3.61	540	1.32		
Age difference: : >39 years	Material simplicity	5.66	479	.87	-.201	<0.001
	Materialism Overall mean	3.36	479	1.35		
Education level differences: Up to Grade 12	Material simplicity	5.59	347	.91	-.072	<0.001
	Materialism Overall mean	3.46	347	1.36		
Education level differences: Diploma/degree	Material simplicity	5.48	419	.96	-.274	<0.001
	Materialism Overall mean	3.60	419	1.36		
Education level differences: Post graduate degree	Material simplicity	5.60	250	.86	-.280	<0.001
	Materialism Overall mean	3.37	250	1.27		
Household income differences: < R10K	Material simplicity	5.57	293	.94	.020	<0.001
	Materialism Overall mean	3.60	293	1.35		
Household income differences: R10K<R15K	Material simplicity	5.51	128	1.01	-.209	<0.001
	Materialism Overall mean	3.45	128	1.38		
Household income differences: R15K<R25K	Material simplicity	5.60	188	.87	-.262	<0.001
	Materialism Overall mean	3.38	188	1.28		
Household income differences: >R25K	Material simplicity	5.52	402	.90	-.360	<0.001
	Materialism Overall mean	3.48	402	1.35		
Population grp differences: White	Material simplicity	5.53	524	.81	-.301	<0.001
	Materialism Overall mean	3.39	524	1.27		
Population grp differences: Black	Material simplicity	5.53	357	1.06	-.106	<0.001
	Materialism Overall mean	3.69	357	1.39		
Population grp differences: Other	Material simplicity	5.61	138	.91	-.247	<0.001
	Materialism Overall mean	3.40	138	1.40		

It is clear that, notwithstanding the demographic category, respondents were moderately materialistic. Contrary to the expectation when designing the research, none of the demographic groups were highly materialistic. As was hypothesized, however, the means for materialism contrasted that for material simplicity

significantly (p<0.05). While a strong materialistic tendency could not be confirmed for any of the demographic categories, evidence of strong material simplistic behavioural tendencies was confirmed. The results of the two investigations do however confirm the notion expressed in hypothesis (H2) that a consumer who is highly materialistic, will not be a strongly materially simplistic and visa versa, that consumers who are less materialistic (as was found in this study), would by significantly more materially simplistic.

This study therefore provides empirical evidence that notwithstanding the demographic characteristic of consumers, consumers are significantly more materially simplistic (concerning their clothing behaviour) than being materialistic.

5.3.5 SUMMARY

The research concludes that none of the consumer (demographic) segments were highly materialistic. However, the research could derive the conclusion that for all the consumer groups, their material simplistic inclination in terms of clothing purchase- and consumption behaviour, significantly exceeds their general inclination to be materialistic.

Noteworthy, is that demographic differences exist in terms of consumers' materialistic inclination (although it is generally moderate) as well as their material simplistic tendency (which is strong). Table 5.17 summarises the results in terms of the specific hypotheses.

TABLE 5.17: SUMMARY OF RESEARCH HYPOTHESES AND RESULTS

	Hypotheses	Findings (Section in the document)	Results
1	*The materialistic inclination of consumers differs in accordance with their demographic characteristics*	**5.2.2**	
1.1	*Males are significantly more materialistic than females*	5.2.2.1	NOT SUPPORTED
1.2	*Younger adults (specifically millennials, that are below 40 years of age) are more materialistic than older consumers*	5.2.2.2	PARTIALLY SUPPORTED
1.3	*Middle income consumers are more materialistic than those with low- or high household incomes*	5.2.2.3	PARTIALLY SUPPORTED
1.4	*Education level will not be a determining factor in a consumer's propensity towards purchasing in a materialistic manner*	**5.2.2.4**	PARTIALLY SUPPORTED
1.5	*Black consumers are more materialistic than other population groups*	**5.2.2.5**	SUPPORTED
2	*There is an inverse relationship between consumers' materialistic inclination, and their engagement in material simplicity with regard to their clothing consumption, i.e. proposing that consumer segments who are highly materialistic (H1.1 - H1.5) will not engage in clothing consumption practices that demonstrate material simplicity*		
2.1	*Males' inclination towards material simplistic clothing behaviour, is significantly stronger compared to females*	5.2.3.1	SUPPORTED
2.2	*Older adults (40 years of age and older) are significantly more materially simplistic than their younger counterpart (Millennials, <40 years) consumers*	5.2.3.2	SUPPORTED
2.3	*Higher income consumers are significantly more materially simplistic than those in lower household income groups*	5.2.3.3	NOT SUPPORTED
2.4	*Higher education level is a significant indicator of a consumer's propensity towards material simplistic clothing purchase and consumption behaviour*	5.2.3.4	NOT SUPPORTED
2.5	*The White population group is significantly more materially simplistic than other population groups*	5.2.3.5	NOT SUPPORTED

Chapter 6

CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY

This chapter presents a conclusion of the findings of the study in accordance with the hypotheses of the study, admitting certain limitations and concludes with recommendations for future research.

6.1 INTRODUCTION

After a summary of the findings, the study is evaluated to admit certain challenges and limitations that were experienced, and which should be acknowledged in terms of recommendations that are made for future research as well as the practical implementation of the findings.

6.2 REFLECTING ON THE HYPOTHESES

Using Trinh and Phau's (2012) 16-Item Materialism Scale that distinguished four dimensions for Materialism as a value-based construct, respondents ranked their answers on a 7 point Likert-type scale. Because the scale has not been used in a South African context before, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted to ascertain the dimensions of the scale as well as their relevance through calculation of the relevant Cronbach's Alpha coefficients. A satisfactory outcome enabled further descriptive analyses that were useful to describe the strength of the dimensions of the scale of which some had implications for materialism as an instrumental value (*acquisition utility*), while other dimensions signalled materialism as a terminal value (*acquisition to achieve success, happiness and distinctiveness*) per the distinction made by Ekici et al. (2014). Following exploratory factor analysis, the four final factors that were distinguished (see 5.2.1.1) and used for further analysis and interpretation in this study, were eventually all of a terminal nature and were labelled: *Happiness & Relevance, Distinctiveness, Essentiality, and Success* respectively judged by the description of Ekici and co researchers (2014).

6.2.1 Differences in different demographic groups' materialistic inclination (Hypothesis 1)

The study firstly hypothesized that there would be significant differences (p<0.05) in the materialistic inclination within certain demographic segments of the population of Tshwane (which served as an example of an urban population in South Africa). Based on evidence that demographic characteristics such as gender (Bakewell & Mitchell, 2006; Goldsmith *et al.,* 2011), age (Lertwannawit & Mandhachitara, 2012), income levels (Alexander 2011), and population group (Bevan-Dye, 2012) will influence consumers' materialistic tendencies and that level of education would not be a determining/ influencing factor (Olssen, 2016) hypotheses were formulated for this study, specifically hypothesizing that:

H1.1 Gender: Females are significantly more materialistic than males.
H1.2 Age: Younger adults (specifically Millennials, currently younger than 40 years of age) are significantly
more materialistic than older consumers.
H1.3 Income level: Lower income consumers are significantly more materialistic than those in middle- or high
household income groups.
H1.4 Education level: Education level is not a significant determining factor in a consumer's propensity
towards purchasing in a materialistic manner.
H1.5 Population group: Black consumers are significantly more materialistic than other population groups.

Results indicated that the findings of studies that were conducted in other contexts, mostly First World contexts - even studies that were conducted fairly recently (Olssen, 2016; Bevan-Dye, 2012; Lertwannawit & Mandhachitara, 2012) can not necessarily be used to deduce consumers' consumption behaviour in a South African context. This under scores the value of this research.

- With respect to **gender**, it was hypothesized that females are significantly more materialistic than males based on evidence gained from prior research (Hypothesis 1.1). The findings of this study could however not support the hypothesis for any of the four dimensions of materialism that were identified in this study. Rather, this study indicates that males are significantly more materialistic than females (p<0.05) in terms of three of the four dimensions of materialism, *Material Happiness and Relevance; Material Success* (both values that are terminal in kind), *Material Essentiality* (an instrumental value), although also slightly more materialistic with regard to the fourth dimension, namely *Material Distinctiveness* (a terminal value). Men's significantly higher regard for *Material Happiness and Relevance* signifies that men are more likely to consider the outcome of acquiring valuable things (as a terminal outcome) to experience happiness. For men, the possession of expensive, luxurious things, including certain durables such as a home, car and clothes are hence important to be happy even though the mean (M=3.78) indicates a moderately- rather than a very strong materialistic inclination. Similarly, males are significantly more inclined (yet moderately strong) to regard the growth of civilisation (*Material Essentiality*) as a determinant of mankind's material consumption, which would spur their consumption of certain goods such as luxury brands, conspicuous commodities, items that

are not necessarily essential to possess to facilitate growth of civilisation. Not surprisingly then, men are significantly more inclined (although also moderately strong) to associate their success in life and their status with material possessions, particularly with regard to expensive commodities, thus being bothered by the idea that friends own things that they do not. Considering the maximum mean score (M=7), females (M=2.76) regard possessions of minor importance (weak) in terms of their sense of success (a terminal value).

The finding that men's values are more strongly directed towards materialistic consumption behaviour, is an indication of a significant switch in recent times, with ample evidence that men have become more interested in their image and appearance, which is fertile ground for a tendency to adopt and favour a more materialistic lifestyle.

The only dimension of materialism where males and females' underlying reasons for consumption of material goods did not differ significantly, was for *Material Distinctiveness.* This dimension of the construct was scored the highest, indicating its pertinent influence on the overall materialism score for both men and women, also indicating that this is the dimension that exerts the strongest influence on females' acquisition of goods as a materialistic predisposition. In reality, this means that both males and females have a fairly strong inclination towards, and preference for things that will make them look distinctive and unique, indicating that they might become disgruntled if significant others own things that they do not. Inevitably, this would be more true for visually conspicuous commodities, houses, cars, furniture, and clothing.

- With respect to **age**, the hypothesis that younger adults, specifically Millennials (consumers who are currently younger than 40 years of age), are significantly more materialistic than older consumers (Hypothesis 1.2) is only partially supported. In this study, significant differences (p<0.05) could only be confirmed for two of the dimensions of materialism: the younger age cohort was found to be significantly more materialistic with regard to the dimensions *Material Happiness and Relevance*, as well as for *Material Distinctiveness* (values that are respectively terminal and instrumental in kind). While happiness as an outcome associated with material possessions was moderately relevant irrespective of age, the younger age cohort was significantly more inclined to value possessions as a tool to sense the feel of happiness. The younger age cohort also strongly associated ownership of material goods with *Material Distinctiveness* thus the anticipated feeling of being superior compared to others. Therefore, Millennials are not only significantly more materialistic compared to the older age cohort, their responses indicated admission of having a strong inclination to acquire certain commodities to experience and to showcase that they are distinctly different (socially more important) to others. This is only moderately true for older consumers. Age does not seem to influence

consumers' acquisition of goods in terms of two of the dimensions of materialism, namely, *Material Essentiality* (Instrumental) and *Material Success* (Terminal). Therefore, age is not an indication of consumers' regard for possessions as an indication of their success, or their perception of the ownership of possessions as an indication of the welfare of society. Particularly interesting therefore, is that age cannot be used as an indicator of possessions as an indication of success. Therefore, although possessions are considered relevant by younger consumers to distinguish themselves from others (*Material Distinctiveness*), age is not a noteworthy predictor of consumers' regard for material possessions to signify their own success. Overall, and based on the calculated means that were used as evidence, this study confirms that the younger generational group is more materialistic than older consumers across three of the dimensions of the construct (see Table 5.3), although only two dimensions are significantly stronger and more relevant among younger consumers. Differences in consumers' regard for ownership of commodities as an indication of *Material Essentiality* whereby it is believed that possessions reflect progress of society, were negligibly small. Hence, in conclusion, for marketers and retail who are adamant to promote and sell commodities, especially expensive and wanted brands, it would generally be more viable to target younger consumers.

- *With regard to **income differences** (Hypothesis 1.3),* where it was hypothesized that *l*ower income consumers are more materialistic than middle- and high income groups, the hypothesis was not supported by evidence in this research. Rather, differences between lower and higher income groups were not statistically significant (p>0.05). Yet, without exception, the lower income group, aged 40 years and younger at the time (n=293) was found to be more materialistic with respect to every one of the four dimensions of the construct. This might suggest a tendency for lower income consumers to use possessions to obtain a sense of happiness, to experience and show off success, and distinctiveness. Although income level indisputably indicates the available financial resources in a household that could be spent to further a materialistic inclination**,** this study found that income level does not distinguish the level of attention that consumers would devote to the acquisition of goods in order to achieve the terminal outcomes that are associated with materialism. As indicated in Table 5.4, the dimension of materialism where the lowest income group admitted the strongest materialistic inclination, was for *Material Distinctiveness*, suggesting that even lower income consumers would purchase goods intentionally to distinguish themselves from others (a sign of upward mobility) notwithstanding limited financial resources. Although the acquisition of commodities to distinguish yourself was true across all income groups, this tendency might have more repercussions for households with limited resources in terms of how they allocate their available resources.

- With respect to **level of education differences** (Hypothesis 1.4), where it was hypothesized that consumers' education level is not a significant determinant of a consumer's propensity towards a materialistic demeanour, the results of this study could not support the hypothesis. It was found that higher educated respondents were significantly more materialistically inclined across all four dimensions. Also, as was found for income level, *Material Distinctiveness* seemed the main driver in terms of consumers' materialistic inclination, followed by *Material Essentiality*. *Material Success* as an outcome of a materialistic predisposition was the least relevant. Probably, success is an inner directed achievement that is showcased through objects that are distinctive and hence *Material Distinctiveness* is stronger compared to the other dimensions of the construct across all income groups. Contrary to extant research, this research found significant differences between higher educated respondents who possess a diploma/degree, and lower educated consumers who have not progresses further than secondary schooling, in terms of *Material Distinctiveness.*

- With respect to **population differences (Hypothesis 1.5)**, the hypothesis that Black population groups are significantly more materialistic compared to the other population categories (Whites and "Others"), was supported (see Table 5.7). Evidence was gained that Black population groups are more materialistic across all four dimensions of the construct, and significantly so in terms of three of the dimensions, namely *Material Happiness and Relevance*, *Material Distinctiveness*, and *Material Essentiality*. To the contrary, respondents belonging to the white population group, exhibited the lowest levels of materialism with respect to every dimension except for essentiality, where those forming part of the so-called "other" population group indicated the weakest predisposition to be materialistic. These differences may be ascribed to the upward mobility of Black population groups in South Africa after the new socio-political dispensation in 1994, that motivated Blacks to erase an asset deficit which clearly instigates materialistic values and related consumption behaviour.

In summary: This study found demographic consumers' characteristics are relevant in discussions concerning materialistic tendencies although it should be emphasized that such tendencies are context specific as findings of this research are often contradicting prior research. Specifically, males seem to be significantly more materialistic (which contradicts extant research that indicates that females are more materialistically inclined); age only seems to be significant in terms of two of the dimensions of materialism, namely *Happiness and Relevance,* as well as *Distinctiveness,* that represent instrumental as well as terminal dimensions of materialism, where younger consumers are significantly more materialistic. Contrary to prior research, income level is not a significant indicator of consumers' materialistic tendencies although the lowest income level group was more inclined to acquire possessions to distinguish themselves from others, which may signify/ confirm upward mobility as a strong underlying driver of consumers' behaviour to sense a feeling that they

have achieved something in life. Also contrary to prior research, is the finding that education level could indeed be used to predict consumers' materialistic tendencies: in this study, higher educated consumers seem more materialistically inclined. True to expectations, Black population groups are more materialistically inclined.

The results of this study indicate how important it is to acknowledge the context in which research has been done as existing research findings are not necessarily relevant across different contexts.

6.2.2 An inverse relationship between consumers' materialistic inclination and their engagement in material simplicity with regard to their clothing consumption (Hypothesis 2)

The second hypothesis for this study was based on previous research and past literature, which indicate that the behavioural patterns of a materialist and those of a voluntary simplifier are essentially contradictory (McGouran & Protheroo, 2016; Segev *et al.,* 2015; Srikant, 2013; Boujbel & D'Astous, 2012), and that the values that drive both groups are dissimilar (McGouran & Protheroo, 2016; Sevgili & Cesur, 2014; Hofmeister & Neulinger, 2013).

In this study, respondents' voluntary simplistic levels were ranked on a seven point Likert-type scale contained as part of an adapted version of the original Behavioural 18-Item Voluntary Simplicity Scale originally developed by Dorothy Leonard-Barton (1981). Of the four constructs of voluntary simplicity, that were measured in the questionnaire as part of a larger study (namely *Material Simplicity, Ecological Awareness, Self-Determination, Human Scale)*, only one dimension, namely *Material Simplicity* was relevant in this study in terms of the specific objective of the investigation. Particularly, this dimension attended to consumers' inclination to behave in a materially simplistic way with regard to their clothing consumption decisions that were apt to investigate behaviour that contradicts materialists behaviour in the market place. Items related to the single factor were subjected to a reliability investigation, and the Cronbach alpha (>0.64) confirmed sufficient internal consistency to merit inferences drawn from further data analysis in this explorative study.

The materialistic levels of the respondents, in terms of their four dimensions as discussed in the previous sections, were hence compared side by side in the subsequent section with respondents' inclination to be *materially simplistic* in order to accept or disprove the hypotheses. The results are summarised in Figure 5.4 as an overview.

- With respect to **gender** differences (Hypothesis 2.1), it was hypothesized that males' clothing consumption behaviour would be significantly more materially simplistic following the initial hypothesis (H1.1) that females are significantly more materialistic. As a starting point, this study confirmed that males and females are both significantly more materially simplistic than materialistic (Table 5.16). Men were indeed found to possess a significantly stronger materially simplistic

inclination, which supports the hypothesis (H2.1). Although men were also found to be significantly more materialistic than females (which was contrary to the expectation), it should be noted that their materialistic inclination is merely *moderately strong* and that their tendency to be materially simplistic significantly exceeds their materialistic inclination. This suggests that they would probably be interested in the "right" possessions to reflect their success, to distinguish themselves and be happy, but then care for their clothing to retain it for longer and intentionally purchase products that are more timeless and luxurious such as renowned, admired brand names.

- Concerning age differences (Hypothesis 2.2), the hypothesis that that the older generation would exhibit significantly higher levels of material simplicity with regard to their clothing consumption behaviour compared to the younger adults (Millennials), is supported (p<0.05). This finding has serious implications for the socialisation of future generations considering that young consumers are the parents of the future who generally set the example of how things are/ need to be done. It is particularly important to know that younger consumers apparently consume to enhance their happiness and distinctiveness, which are important terminal values, and that wasteful practices (the more serious level of materialistic consumption) could be detrimental in terms of the education of future generations. For retail and marketers, however, this is an indication of where they should invest their efforts if they wish to contribute towards sustainable practices on a corporate level.

- Concerning **income level differences** (Hypothesis 2.3), the hypothesis that lower income consumers would be less materially simplistic with regard to their clothing consumption behaviour, because it was expected that they would attempt to splurge more to upgrade their social standing, is not supported. Furthermore, differences in material simplistic behavioural tendencies (see Table 5.12) of different income levels with regard to clothing practices are not statistically significantly (p>0.05). Therefore, the expected finding that lower income levels would be less materially simplistic, is not supported. This emphasizes the relevance of terminal values in terms of consumers' well-being: consumers might attempt to enhance their happiness, distinctiveness and sense of success notwithstanding their financial resources. Ways whereby this is achieved, could be investigated further.

- Concerning **education level differences** (Hypothesis 2.4), this study hypothesized that higher education levels is a significant indicator of a consumer's propensity towards material simplistic clothing purchase and consumption behaviour, which was not supported by the findings of this

- Concerning **population group differences** (Hypothesis 2.5), this study proposed that White population group would be significantly more materially simplistic than Black- and Other population groups. Table 5.14 shows that population differences with regard to consumers' material simplistic clothing consumption behaviour are not statistically significant (p>0.05). While Blacks were found to be significantly more materialistic, their material simplicity equals that of their White counterparts, which is contrary to expected outcome. Again, it could be that Blacks are more materialistic in terms of what and how much they buy, but that they are even more cautious in terms of what they buy to ensure that they can optimise their purchases in displaying their success, increasing their happiness and distinguishing them from others that not necessarily wish to be identified with. Future research can contribute in terms of an explanation of this rather contradictory outcome.

In conclusion: The finding of this study that certain demographic groups in a South African context are more materialistically inclined (a terminal value that drives their behaviour towards an experience of happiness, distinctiveness and success), does not necessarily indicate that they would be more materially simplistic with regard to their clothing consumption behaviour although it seems logical from the definition of the constructs as presented in literature. Firstly, one has to acknowledge the different dimensions of materialism to fully comprehend the outcome and its effect on a consumer's overall materialistic inclination. Also, materialism as an underlying value that directs consumers' consumption behaviour, is not only exhibited through one's clothing consumption practices (that was investigated in this study) even though clothing is a visual, highly relevant commodity that seems highly relevant when discussing materialism *per se*.

6.3 THE RESEARCH IN RETROSPECT

In terms of any research project, it is always important to reflect on the process, ensuring that the hypotheses were either supported or not in a scientific way, that all processes were followed through correctly and ethically, and that findings are valid, reliable and accurate.

The first step taken for this study was to do an in depth review of recent literature relating to the research topic and converting that information into a comprehensive literature review that acknowledged all the authors who had produced valuable findings that could be used to further this research. This was done to gain a thorough understanding of the topic to formulate informed, researchable aims and hypotheses, and to structure the conceptual framework as well as the questionnaire.

As part of a more extensive study, the questionnaire used, consisted of six sections labelled "A" to "F", with only three sections being relevant to this research report, namely Section A, measuring the Materialism levels; Section D, measuring the levels of Voluntary Simplicity; and Section F, the demographics section. An existing scale was used to measure consumers' materialistic inclination (Section A) and factor analysis was conducted to identify the dimensions of the construct, also calculating the reliability coefficient for the different dimensions of the scale to merit further analysis and interpretation. The eventual dimensions of the scale were labelled for further interpretation in the context of this study. An adapted version of an existing scale (a behavioural scale adapted to reflect on clothing consumption practices specifically, rather than products in general) was used to measure the consumers' materially simplistic inclination as a dimension of voluntary simplicity. Therefore, only one of the four factors of the scale, namely Material Simplicity, was relevant in this investigation, which limited the findings and their application. The Cronbach's Alphas were calculated for the four dimensions to ensure that the reliability of the single factor's content was worthy to conduct further analysis and to draw inferences about consumers' behaviour. Before the official data collection process took place, a pre-test was conducted to time the completion of the questionnaire, and to verify the readability and understandability of the questionnaire. Minor changes were made in terms of wording and punctuation, before the questionnaire was distributed by trained fieldworkers. A cover letter was attached to the front of the questionnaires stating that participation in the survey was voluntary, approximately how much time it would take to complete the questionnaires, stating that the findings were for academic purposes, as well as that respondents would remain anonymous.

The ethics approval for this study was received in 2016 from the Ethical Committee which oversees the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences at the University of Pretoria before the data collection process began (see Addendum C). The data was collected over a two-week period in May 2016, was supervised by the research coordinators, and carried out by forty-three trained fieldworkers who eventually collected 1019 useable questionnaires per a pre-determined quota sampling method that entailed convenient- and snowball sampling. The questionnaires were self-administered, with the fieldworkers distributing the questionnaires to willing respondents and allowing them to complete them in their own time. The large sample size enhances the reliability of the data, which is jeopardised to some extent because it is not a representative sample of the population of Tshwane.

The completed questionnaires coded by the trained field workers and checked under supervision. It was submitted to a research company to be captured and the University of Pretoria's Department of Statistics assisted with the data analysis. Some of the statistical methods which were used for the purpose of processing the data for this study were descriptive statistics, exploratory factor analysis, t-tests, MANOVA's, post hoc Bonferroni– as well as paired t-tests.

As explained in Chapter 4, much attention was devoted to the reliability and validity of the research in every step of the research process: especially also during statistical analyses. The researcher is thus satisfied that the overall aim and hypotheses in this study were satisfactorily addressed and that the findings that are presented, are truthful, valid and reliable.

6.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Despite every effort being made to ensure the overall quality, validity and reliability of this study, a number of limitations presented themselves, or were aware of from the outset.

This study was conducted for the purpose of completing a post graduate degree and was conducted over the course of two years. This time frame and purpose influenced certain strategic decisions of terms on when and how the research was conducted. Funding for the data collection process was limited, which inevitably required the researchers to opt for convenience sampling. The fieldworkers had to physically go out and distribute the questionnaires throughout Tshwane in specific suburbs across the geographic area. also limiting the scope of the research to Tshwane. This type of convenience and snowball sampling made it impossible to attain a fully representative sample of the population. However, the larger sample size improves the reliability of the outcome of the study. Due to these sampling methods, the findings can nevertheless not be generalised. The composition of the sample was satisfactory: the gender split of the sample, although close to half males and half female, turned out to be approximately 56% female and 44% male (while we hoped for an even distribution). The age groups of this sample were more evenly split, with the younger group (aged 21-39) making up 47% of the sample and the older group (aged 40 years and older), comprising 53%, which was ideal for comparative purposes. In terms of monthly household income and level of education, the groups which were most largely represented were the highest earning consumers (R25000+) making up 39.5% of the sample, and those with a diploma or degree at 41.2%. Neither of these are accurately representative of the population of Tshwane. However, due to the large size of the sample, the finding of this study are still useful and applicable.

In terms of statistical analysis, fairly large standard deviations in the means for the dimensions of materialism indicate considerable fluctuation in the data, and therefore cluster analysis might provide more insightful

detail about the sample, for example clustering young men with lower incomes, etc. This could be pursued further.

The self-administered questionnaire posed limitations in that it was fairly long and time consuming thus discouraging respondents from participating. With respondents being able to complete the questionnaires in their own time and location of their choosing, this would have encouraged them to be more honest with their answers, not feeling pressured to answer in a certain way had the fieldworker been present. The questionnaires were screened and coded by the trained fieldworkers, with the half-completed or "less useful" questionnaires being discarded. This increased the reliability of the data. With materialism being at the beginning of the questionnaire these results could have been more accurate than the results of the following sections as respondents were still "fresh" and only getting started on filling out their answers. With the Voluntary Simplicity questions only occurring in section D, the respondents would have been working on the questionnaire for quite some time at this point and may have been trying to finish as soon as possible, maybe rushing their answers at this point. Use of only one dimension of the VS scale was probably not in the interest of the outcome of the study. However, with no immediate, short time restraints and no incentives being offered for completing the questionnaire, one must rely on the honesty of the respondents and the fact that they completed the questionnaire of their own accord and free will. Questions were also printed in a small font size that may have influenced legibility.

6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Over the course of the study a number of opportunities for future research were identified and are presented below.

The particular sampling method that was used in this study provided some form of opportunity for improvement. Had the sampling been more closely monitored, and possibly involved some form of online questionnaire too to better spread them, then perhaps a sample which was more closely representative of Tshwane's population could have been gathered. This could even have been expanded to include a few of the other major cities in South Africa such as Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town. As there tends to be far more opportunity to shop and spend money in larger cities due to the commercial volume, it would have been good to incorporate all the major cities in this study to give it a more inclusive South African context.

Any research looking into the modern South African consumer and their consumption practices and preferences will certainly be useful as a contribution not just to literature, but as an aid for marketers too. This study clearly indicates that extant research is not always relevant in A South African context (developing

country). Gaining more insight into the way the different and diverse groups of South African consumers make their purchasing decisions will help marketers target the groups more effectively and will educate suppliers on which products they should be producing and providing. This study could be expanded by looking at other product categories, instead of just clothing behaviour.

Opportunity to investigate men's increased materialistic tendency will be insightful for a retail environment where men's involvement has increased considerably in recent years. Also, having a look at why men also tend to be more voluntary simplistic than females deserves explanation.

Another way this particular study could have been improved or expanded on, is by including some form of qualitative research, involving some in depth one-on-one interviews to get a more in-depth understanding of the different consumer groups' reasoning for certain purchase and consumption behavioural practices. This method would require a longer time period and more financial support.

6.6 IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

Particularly noteworthy, in this study, is that evidence of a demographic group's materialistic inclination (as a prevalent terminal value that is not easy to change in the short term), does not necessarily predict consumers' inclination to demonstrate voluntary simplistic clothing behavioural practices (materially simplistic). This study concludes that demographic differences exist with regard to consumers' materialistic inclination as well as their material simplistic tendencies when purchasing clothing and that the findings do not concur with extant research that were done in different contexts. Significant demographic differences are useful for retail and marketers who need such information to skilfully target viable consumer groups, which underscores the value of this research.

This study concludes that there are indeed demographic differences among materialists. The most significant differences occur between gender and population groups where men and the Black population groups tend to be more materialistic than the other groups in three out of the four traits of a materialist. *Material Distinctiveness* was the only category out of the four, where the differences between males and females were statistically not significant, meaning that both groups are almost similar and more likely to agree on purchasing a certain product in order to be more distinctive and stand out. In terms of population groups, there was limited evidence that purchases are made to exhibit and experience a sense of success, showing that success is not necessarily achieved or experienced on a personal level by consumers through the acquisition of goods. irrespective of consumers' demographic characteristics. Contrary to this study's initial hypothesis, significant differences could not be confirmed among different income levels, meaning that income cannot be used as a

predictor of consumers' materialistic inclination even though money is an important resource for being a materialist.

Material Distinctiveness was the strongest element/ dimension of materialism across all of the demographic groups in encouraging purchases. Also noteworthy, is that *Material Success* is apparently not achieved/ experienced differently, irrespective of consumers' demographic characteristic.

These results have a practical clothing marketing and manufacturing application in the sense that in order to produce and market products that people are going to want to purchase, producers and marketers need to know what the general public wants. This research has indicated that manufacturers should be making products that are unique, different and are able to stand out from the crowd, as this sample indicated their desire to be distinctive. This shows that there may be a lower interest in mass-produced and generic products, and that people will be more likely to be interested in exclusive stores, exclusive styles and brands - and this is not unique to higher income consumers. Marketers should aim to highlight the individual, customise and emphasize unique selling points of products to grab the general public's interest and spur them to make a purchase - particularly men. Products could also be advertised as a tool to enhance happiness, which is an important goal (terminal value).

This research also makes a contribution to literature in general. As a study has never been done on a single sample comparing the purchasing behaviours of materialists and voluntary simplifiers, let alone in a South African context, this research will help to begin to fill that gap.

6.7 SUMMARY

Despite the effort made throughout this study to maintain a significantly high level of reliability and validity and to conduct the study in an ethical manner, limitations were still evident. However, effort has been made to mitigate these limitations and to reduce any error that they may have subsequently resulted. The results from this study produced interesting and valuable insight into the probable materialistic and voluntary simplistic behavioural practices of a selected South African population, also with regard to a specific product category. It provides insight into why different demographic groups deal with their clothing purchase decisions and what might motivate them to make a purchase. This research contributed to fill an existing knowledge gap that they South African clothing industry and retail would find worth taking notice of.

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ADDENDUM A – COVER LETTER & 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 are no right or wrong answers;

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:_____

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

Section A: IMPORTANCE OF POSSESSIONS	Respondent number:								
1. The following statements investigate your personal regard of the importance of the products that you buy and own in terms of how they contribute to your state of happiness and how you feel. **This is a very personal issue that one does not necessarily openly discuss with other people. Therefore, please respond to every statement honestly.** Please indicate your response to every statement with an **X** in the relevant column.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Undecided/neutral	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Office use	
I like to own things that impress people	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V1.1	
Material possessions are important because they contribute a lot to my happiness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V1.2	
Obtaining valuable things is important for my happiness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V1.3	
Material growth (increase in money and possessions) has an irresistible attraction for me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V1.4	
To buy and possess expensive/ luxurious things is very important to me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V1.5	
Material accumulation (increase in material possessions) helps raise the level of civilization	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V1.6	
I like to own things that make people think that I am unique/ different	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V1.7	
I like to own expensive things because people see that as a sign of success	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V1.8	
To me, it is important to own expensive things such as an expensive home, car, clothes and other things because it makes me happy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V1.9	
Growth (increase) in material consumption (consumption of goods) helps to raise the level of civilization	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V1.10	
The only way to let people know about my high status is to show it through the way that I live and/or goods that I own and consume	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V1.11	
I usually buy things that make me look distinctive/ unique/ different	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V1.12	
I feel uncomfortable when someone else in public is wearing the same clothes that I am	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V1.13	
I am prepared to pay more to get a more distinctive/ unique item	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V1.14	
I feel good when I buy expensive things because people think of me as successful	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V1.15	
When friends have things I cannot afford, it bothers me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V1.16	
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	

2. Continued........ Please indicate your response to every statement with an **X** in the relevant column.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Undecided/neutral	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Office use	
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 C: IMPORTANT THINGS IN YOUR LIFE

3. These statements investigate your personal views and opinions about things that you may regard important in your life. **Please respond to every statement honestly** and indicate your answer with an **X** in the relevant column.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Undecided/neutral	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Office use	
It is important to me to always be polite to other people	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V3.1	
Thinking up new ideas (being creative) is important to me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V3.2	
Being very successful is important to me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V3.3	
It is important to do things the way I learned from my family	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V3.4	
It is important that every person in the world should be treated equally	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V3.5	
I am always looking for new things to do	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V3.6	
The safety of my country is very important to me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V3.7	
It is very important to me to care for the people I know	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V3.8	
I want people to do what I say	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V3.9	
Enjoying life is important to me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V3.10	
I like to make my own decisions about what to do	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V3.11	
I believe that people should be satisfied with what they have	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V3.12	
I want to have a lot of money and expensive things	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V3.13	
Living an exciting life is important to me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V3.14	
Honesty is very important to me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V3.15	
It is important to me that everything is clean and in order	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V3.16	
It is important to me to do things that give me pleasure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V3.17	
I believe that people should care for nature	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V3.18	
I think people should follow rules at all times, even when no one is watching	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V3.19	
I am ambitious and prepared to work hard to get ahead	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V3.20	
I would do anything to make sure my family is always safe	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V3.21	
It is important to me to listen to people who are different from me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V3.22	
I do not like to boast or draw attention to the things I do	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V3.23	
I think it is important to have interests	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V3.24	
I want to avoid doing anything people would say is bad or wrong	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V3.25	
World peace is important to me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V3.26	
I want people to admire what I do	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V3.27	
It is important to me that my friends can always trust me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V3.28	
Being religious is important to me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V3.29	

Section D: VOLUNTARY SIMPLICITY										
4. These statements investigate your personal views about the purchase and consumption of clothing products. **Please respond to every statement honestly** and indicate your response with an *X* in the relevant column.	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Sometimes	Frequently	Usually	Always	Office use		
I buy good quality clothes so that I can wear them longer	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V4.1	
I have an appreciation for handcrafted garments	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V4.2	
I recycle and repurpose old clothing (e.g. using old T-shirts as cleaning rags)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V4.3	
Whenever possible, I buy clothes with eco-friendly features (e.g. organic cotton)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V4.4	
I refuse to buy clothing from companies that are guilty of unethical practices (e.g. child labour)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V4.5	
I prefer clothes that are made in South Africa to imported brands	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V4.6	
I look after my clothes so that they last longer	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V4.7	
I prefer wearing clothes that are handcrafted to clothes that are mass produced	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V4.8	
When going to a special occasion, I would wear something I already have rather than buying a new outfit	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V4.9	
I dispose of useful clothing in an eco-friendly way e.g. by donating it to charities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V4.10	
I buy clothing brands that are known to be environmentally responsible	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V4.11	
I support clothing manufacturers who create fair working conditions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V4.12	
I shop at stores that promote South African clothing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V4.13	
I wear my clothes for more than one season	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V4.14	
When possible, I repair damaged clothing rather than to throw it away	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V4.15	
In our household, we pass clothes on to siblings/ friends/ other family members to be reused	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V4.16	
I try to reduce the environmental impact of my purchases by shopping close to home	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V4.17	
I am inspired by clothing brands that have a reputation for being ethical and socially responsible	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V4.18	
I support clothing labels that are produced by local South African communities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V4.19	
I make a conscious effort to only buy clothes that I really need	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V4.20	
I have clothing altered if it no longer fits me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V4.21	
Given the opportunity, I will sell unwanted clothing so that it can be reused by others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	V4.22	

Section E: YOUR ALLOCATION OF MONEY TO SPECIFIC PURCHASES							
The following section investigates your allocation of money to **three different types of household purchases** **Please respond to every question honestly**							Office use
5. SCENARIO 1 If you have to prepare a special dinner for SIX distinguished guests, **how much money would you be willing to spend on the food, excluding the drinks and décor?** *Stipulate the approximate amount in the adjacent column*	V5.0			R_____			
If you have 50% more than the amount that you indicated in V5.0 to spend on the dinner, how would you revise your plans? Please respond to every statement and mark every relevant answer with an *X*	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided/Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree		Office use
a) **Extend the menu** and add **additional dishes**	1	2	3	4	5		V5.1
b) **Adapt the menu** to include **alternative dishes that require more expensive ingredients** that the former menu did not allow for	1	2	3	4	5		V5.2
c) **Keep to the original menu and save the money**	1	2	3	4	5		V5.3
d) **Keep to the original menu and spend the money** on something else	1	2	3	4	5		V5.4
e) Invite the guests to a **restaurant**	1	2	3	4	5		V5.5
Now reconsider all five of the options listed above and **circle the ONE option** (a or b or c or d or e) that you are most likely to exercise							V5.6

6. SCENARIO 2							
Imagine that you have to attend a special function where you have to look your very best. **How much money would you be willing to spend on an outfit for yourself?** *Stipulate the approximate amount in the adjacent column*	V6.0		R_____				

If you have 50% more than the amount that you indicated in V6.0 to spend on the outfit, how would you revise your plans? Please respond to every statement and mark every relevant answer with an **X**	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided/neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Office use	
a) Purchase accessories with the extra money **to enhance the original outfit**	1	2	3	4	5	V6.1	
b) **Opt for another more expensive outfit**	1	2	3	4	5	V6.2	
c) **Keep to the original outfit and save the money**	1	2	3	4	5	V6.3	
d) Keep to the original outfit and **spend the money on something else**	1	2	3	4	5	V6.4	
e) Have a unique garment designed and custom made	1	2	3	4	5	V6.5	
Now reconsider all five of the options listed above and **circle the ONE option** (a or b or c or d or e) that you are most likely to exercise						V6.6	

7. SCENARIO 3							
Imagine that your washing machine is giving trouble and that you have to replace it soon. **How much money would you be willing to spend on a new washing machine?** *Stipulate the approximate amount in the adjacent column*	V7.0		R_____				

If you have 50% more than the amount that you indicated in V7.0 to spend on the washing machine, how would you revise your plans: Please respond to every statement and mark every relevant answer with an **X**	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided/neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Office use	
a) Purchase the **same appliance brand but another model** that has more features	1	2	3	4	5	V7.1	
b) Opt for **another more expensive brand**	1	2	3	4	5	V7.2	
c) Keep to the original decision and **save the extra money**	1	2	3	4	5	V7.3	
d) Keep to the original decision and **spend the extra money on something else**	1	2	3	4	5	V7.4	
e) Have the **old machine repaired**	1	2	3	4	5	V7.5	
Now reconsider all five the options listed above and **circle the ONE option** (a or b or c or d or e) that you are most likely to exercise						V7.6	

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? **Please specify.**											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 B – ANTI-PLAGIARISM DECLARATION

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

FACULTY OF NATURAL AND AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER SCIENCE

The Department of Consumer Science places specific emphasis on integrity and ethical behaviour with regard to the preparation of all written work to be submitted for academic evaluation.

Although academic personnel will provide you with information regarding reference techniques as well as ways to avoid plagiarism, you also have a responsibility to fulfil in this regard. Should you at any time feel unsure about the requirements, you must consult the lecturer concerned before you submit any written work.

You are guilty of plagiarism when you extract information from a book, article or web page without acknowledging the source and pretend that it is your own work. In truth, you are stealing someone else's property. This doesn't only apply to cases where you quote verbatim, but also when you present someone else's work in a somewhat amended format (paraphrase), or even when you use someone else's deliberation without the necessary acknowledgement. You are not allowed to use another student's previous work. You are furthermore not allowed to let anyone copy or use your work with the intention of presenting it as his/her own.

Students who are guilty of plagiarism will forfeit all credit for the work concerned. In addition, the matter can also be referred to the Committee for Discipline (Students) for a ruling to be made. Plagiarism is considered a serious violation of the University's regulations and may lead to suspension from the University.

For the period that you are a student at the Department of Consumer Science the undermentioned declaration must accompany all written work to be submitted. No written work will be accepted unless the declaration has been completed and attached.

I (full names):   Chelsea Mandy

Student Number: 11009960

Subject of the work: Differences in the demographic characteristics of highly materialistic

consumers and those whose clothing consumption practices reflect material

simplicity

Declaration

1.   I understand what plagiarism entails and am aware of the University's policy in this regard.

2.   I declare that this assignment is my own, original work. Where someone else's work was used (whether from a printed source, the internet or any other source) due acknowledgement was given and reference was made according to departmental requirements.

3.   I did not make use of another student's previous work and submitted it as my own.

4.   I did not allow and will not allow anyone to copy my work with the intention of presenting it as his or her own work.

SIGNATURE

ADDENDUM C – LETTER OF 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