

**The role of social shopping and self-brand connection on emotional engagement:
an online shopping context**

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Declaration

I declare that this research project is my own work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration at the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University. I further declare that I have obtained the necessary authorisation and consent to carry out this research.

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Abstract

The study investigates whether social shopping and self-brand connection predicts emotional engagement when customer shop online.

Customer engagement has emerged as an important avenue for marketers to build long term relationships with customers as a mechanism for sustainable competitive advantage. However, although academics and practitioners are aware of the importance of customer engagement, most remain focused on behavioural components of engagement with limited focus on emotional engagement.

The study proposes a that social theories provide an avenue to investigate customer engagement, specifically emotional engagement by investigating social shopping and self-brand connection and whether it predicts emotional engagement.

A quantitative study was conducted via the survey method and questionnaires were distributed to collect data. Multiple regression analysis was carried out to determine whether social shopping and self-brand connection predicts emotional engagement.

The research confirmed that self-brand connection is a predictor of emotional engagement, and that the relationship is strengthened when taking into consider gender. However, social shopping was found not to be a predictor of emotional engagement. Implications for theory and practitioners are provided in the context of the literature review.

Key words

Customer engagement

Emotional engagement

Social shopping

Self-brand connection

Social exchange theory

Social identity theory

Ecommerce

Fashion

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1. CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH PROBLEM

1.1 Introduction

E-retail has outpaced traditional retail settings and retailers. Ecommerce in South Africa is exploding, with higher than forecasted growth rates in 2018 and is expected to show revenue growth of 13.5% in 2020 (Statistica, 2019). More specifically, the online fashion market segment is expected to show the highest growth within South Africa over the next five years and expected to generate US\$1,112m by 2023, making it the second largest revenue generating segment after electronics and media at US\$1,279m (Statistica, 2019).

As ecommerce is growing, online retailers are increasingly looking for ways to explore the opportunities created by online shopping through value creation and enhancing customer engagement (Izogo & Jayawardhena, 2017). The growth of ecommerce, together with technological advancement and increasing consumer connectedness has increased competition in the online marketplace (Akroush & Al-Debei, 2015). The rise of social media technologies have further impacted how people socialise and engage with one another. The way consumers engage and build psychological relationships with brands and companies have fundamentally changed due to continued connectedness afforded by the digital technologies and social media (Kawaf & Istanbuluoglu, 2019). Technology and digital media have made it possible for people to share information and shopping experiences when online (Ozen & Engizek, 2013). This has given way to an increasingly social customer online.

The current study focuses on social shopping and self-brand connection and how it impacts on customer engagement. More specifically, the study takes on a social perspective in explaining customer engagement and focuses on how psycho-social dynamics explains customer engagement by focusing on emotional engagement.

Various studies have considered engagement within social and online brand communities. Other studies have highlighted the importance of emotions in driving customer engagement (Hollebeek, 2013). Of significance, is the fact that social and affective factors related to community identification and social support have strong association with customer engagement (Molinillo, Anaya-Sánchez, & Liébana-Cabanillas, 2019).

However, Kawaf and Instabulluogly (2019) argue that lack of perceived relevance of customer reviews for online fashion shopping has opened new ways to think of sociality in the online shopping environment. For example, some online stores have incorporated human like characteristics and social cues to facilitate brand connection and brand resonance (Liao, 2017). More recently, scholars have also investigated the concept of co-browsing and co-shopping enabled through technology and screen sharing where customers can shop online concurrently in real time (Wei, Seedorf, Lowry, Thum & Schulze, 2017). Co-shopping meets the social needs of consumers and has also been demonstrated to result in higher spend, loyalty and engagement (Wei, Seedorf, Lowry, Thum & Schulze, 2017). Most fashion websites have included a sharing function so that users can share their outfits with friends and their social network

1.2 The emergence of customer engagement

Over the last decade, academics and practitioners have acknowledged that transactional interactions with consumers are increasingly becoming irrelevant to customers as they seek to build relationship with the brands and companies that they interact with. Traditional marketing approaches, such as promotions and loyalty programmes, are becoming less of a differentiator as competition is becoming increasingly intense and competitors can easily mimic and enhance the offering (Prentice, Wang, Loureiro, 2019). This has given rise to and increased interest in customer engagement as a modern approach to capturing customer value (Gilgor, Bozkurt, & Russo, 2019). Customer engagement are associated with positive customer outcomes such as enhanced brand relationship and loyal customer behaviour (Molinillo, Anaya-Sánchez, & Liébana-Cabanillas, 2019). Customer engagement has also been demonstrated to be associated with enhanced firm outcomes such as higher profitability and sales growth (Shen, Li, Sun, Chen, & Wang, 2019).

However, within the engagement literature, social dynamics are understudied. Social interactions could be vital to customer engagement. Specifically, fashion is inherently visual, communal and associated with social expression and social identity, highlighting that psycho-social factors could be key to enhancing customer engagement.

1.4. Motivation for future research

Although various studies have focused on social dynamics within online shopping, these have mostly been focused on social commerce, and has not considered the social dynamics of ecommerce. This is surprising as technology are increasingly offering integrated ways of including social based applications on a website such as customer reviews and social media links. Most studies on social factors related to online shopping have focused on functional aspects related to design and implementation of social features within an ecommerce context (Wei, Seedorf, Lowry, Thum & Schulze, 2017).

The increasingly online consumers have numerous ways to gather, produce and distribute information about a company or a brand, which can be either be through online or off-line social interactions. Online interaction has demonstrated a positive correlation with online sales and increased expenditure (Kim, Kim, Choi,& Trivedi, 2019). Grange, Benbasat, & Burton-Jones (2019) argue that together with information clutter and the abundance of product choice, preprogrammed recommendation systems are frustrating customers. Rather, environments that incorporate online friendship and social features have a positive effect on happy experiences for customers and positively facilitate customer choice.

Although various studies have focused on customer engagement within an online setting, it is important to note that online shopping differs significantly across product categories (Schultz & Block, 2015). Fashion is an increasingly important segment within the online retailing sector, due to its predicted growth. Fashion is a unique product category as it is highly associated with self-image and self-expression (Ruane & Wallace, 2013). It is therefore argued that consumers interact differently when purchasing fashion in comparison to other categories such as food and electronics. This implies that the way consumers build relationships and identify with fashion brands online, will be vastly different from relationships and interaction with brands within other product categories. This holds specifically true for high involvement categories such as fashion, that relate to consumer interests and self-identity, where consumers exhibit high levels of enduring involvement with the category (Arpita, Ankita, Ceeba & Rajlaxmi, 2011).

People attached social meaning to fashion, and it is critical to highlight that fashion is related to social conformity and acceptance, social image and self-identity (Arpita, Ankita, Ceeba & Rajlaxmi, 2011). Fashion communicates symbolic values of a group and acceptance within a group (Arpita, Ankita, Ceeba & Rajlaxmi, 2011). It is therefore argued that social dynamics would be greatly important in terms of how customer engage with fashion online and how they identify with a brand online. It is argued that customer engagement within an online fashion context will play a key role in how consumers connect with a brand and how customer shape connections with brands that link to their individual sense of self.

Furthermore, there are arguable differences between the way women engage and identity with brands online in comparison with their male counterparts. Females are more likely to form personal attachment with fashion and are more involved in fashion in comparison to men. It is argued that social interaction during online shopping for fashion would have a greater impact on women and how it impacts on their customer engagement. Furthermore, as women are more likely to form emotional bonds through social interactions, it is argued that they will identify and engage stronger with brands which an emotional bond is established.

Numerous studies have investigated social dynamics in the context of fashion shopping within an online setting (Dennis, Morgan, Wright, & Javawardhena, 2010; Kawaf & Tagg, 2012; Ha & Stoel, 2012). However, few studies have investigated the social factors related to fashion within an ecommerce. Additionally, limited studies have investigated customer engagement from a social perspective (See Appendix 1) and how emotional customer engagement translates into self-brand connection with specific investigation focused on the South African market.

1.3 Research objectives

The purpose of the study is to understand the role of social shopping and self-brand connection on emotional engagement. The study has three main objectives: (1) understand the role of social shopping on emotional engagement during online shopping, (2) understand whether emotional engagement results in a stronger self-brand

connection, and (3) understand whether gender moderates the relationship between social shopping, self-brand connection and emotional engagement

1.4 Contribution of the research

The research is firstly motivated to provide business with a different understanding of customer engagement that focuses on social factors related to customer engagement that might currently be overlooked in practice. Furthermore, the research is motivated by the call made for customer engagement to consider alternate theoretical perspectives and to consider customer engagement from a social psychology perspective by focusing on social exchange and social identity theory. In the below section the research motivation is discussed in detail by focusing on the contribution to business and the academic literature.

1.4.1 Contribution to business

While business acknowledge the increasingly importance of online retail, most strategies and measurement remain focused on transactional metrics such as likes, click through rates and conversion. However, more businesses realise that in order to truly engage customers, it is important to focus on emotional engagement, however, business often lack the know-how of how to emotionally engage with customers. The study's core focus is on emotional engagement and whether social shopping and self-brand connection drives it. The study's contribution to business is discussed in more detail below.

Ecommerce has become increasingly important in terms of retailer market share (Schmid & Axhausen, 2019). Business are increasingly introducing online retail models as the online market grows (Dang & Pham, 2018). However, as ecommerce is increasingly gaining popularity and attracting new customers, increased competition has resulted in online retailers struggling to retain a loyal customer base (Li, Zhuang, Lu, & Chen, 2019). This is mainly due to changing customer expectations and increased interaction opportunities afforded by digital technologies. Contemporary marketing practices have realised that importance of customer focused view and as a result there has been a shift in focus to move from transactional relationship to customer-brand engagement.

Customer engagement is essential for retaining customers and ultimately creating a competitive advantage and enhanced business performance. It is therefore becoming

increasingly important for companies to understand the motivations of consumers to explain why customers decide to engage and purchase online (Shen, 2019). Furthermore, the online environment offers new opportunities for engagement and allows for real time interaction and engagement with a brand or online store. This highlights the need for marketers to understand factors that influence online consumer engagement (Laohapensang, 2009). However, a comprehensive understanding of consumer engagement within an online setting remains limited (Park & Hill, 2018). The study therefore aims to expand on the current literature by investigating the role of psycho-social factors on emotional engagement with a brand within the online context to explain how online retailers can build stronger engagement with customers.

Although it is acknowledged in practice that customer engagement is an important focus point for sustainable competitiveness, most businesses focus on behavioural dimensions of customer engagement. For example, businesses focus on social media engagement through the measurement of “click through rates”, “likes”, “check out ratios”. However, few businesses focuses on emotional engagement within an ecommerce setting. In addition, the major emphasis placed on building customer engagement is a focus on social media. However, customers are socially motivated outside of online and brand communities. Customers interact with their friends and family both online and offline. For this reason, engagement with a brand is not isolated to the once-off interactions, but rather in social interactions that reside in both online and off line spheres. Therefore, the study contributes to current marketing and business practices by considering how social interactions and dynamics impact on customer engagement which might currently be overlooked in most marketing and customer relationship management strategies.

With the growing maturity of ecommerce, business is increasingly focused on website quality and website experience to ensure ecommerce success (Tsao, Hsieh & Line, 2016). However, as argued previously, the focus on website enhancement is related to functional or utilitarian website design elements. By focusing on social factors, specifically investigating social shopping and self-brand connection, the study aims to provide recommendations on management of ecommerce websites that will allow for deeper understanding of engagement strategies that could result in optimised emotional engagement levels.

The online fashion industry is the second biggest segment and fastest growing segment within South Africa (Statistica, 2019). Globally, the fashion industry has seen numerous retail closures due to bankruptcies and poor performance. For example, JC Penny, Barney's, Charlotte Russe have all announced recent closures of hundreds of stores (Business Insider, 2019). Similarly, in South Africa, various off-line fashion retailers have closed, such as Stuttafords and The Platinum Group (who owned fashion brand labels including Jenni Button and Hilton Weiner). Most recently, Edcon has announced a 30% reduction in their GLA footprint. These failures have mostly been due to a lack of fashion retailers remaining relevant to the needs of shoppers, especially due to the high levels of new entrants with ecommerce business models. In South Africa, there has been a rise in pure play online fashion retailers, such as Superbalist and Zando. In addition, numerous smaller online fashion retailers have entered the market, such as Platform23. This is resulting in increased competition for traditional brick-and-mortar retailers.

Although numerous studies have investigated customer engagement within ecommerce, limited studies have specifically focused on fashion. It is argued that customer engagement within product categories are different, and that shopping for fashion online have higher involvement than other categories such as event ticket purchases (Sohn, 2017). In other words, shopping for fashion has more of an emotional component where purchase decisions are not necessarily rational and customer aim to minimise negative emotions (Groissberger & Riedi, 2017). In the context of this study, by focusing on emotional engagement, the study contributes to a better understanding of how online retailers can build emotional engagement specifically looking at social components that drive emotional engagement.

1.4.2 Contribution to the literature

Prior studies on customer engagement has mainly focused on service dominant logic of customer engagement. Social theories have mostly been neglected within the engagement literature, with only a handful of recent literature focusing on the social theories as a premise to understand how customer engage online. In the customer engagement literature, numerous calls have been made for future investigations to explore alternate theoretical perspectives within the customer engagement domain. This

study contributes to the theoretical domain of customer engagement by extending on prior empirical studies and proposes social psychology perspectives of customer engagement. Specifically, the research focuses on social exchange and social identity theory perspectives in explaining the role of social motivation in customer engagement and how it impacts on how customers identity and connect with brands online. Although some studies have focused on social theories, few have incorporated both social exchange and social identity theory (See Appendix 1).

Customer engagement has been studied extensively in the literature. However, most studies on customer engagement within an ecommerce setting have focused on utilitarian motives and functional benefits of ecommerce (Liu, Lim, LI, Tan, & Cyr, 2019). Hedonic factors are also important motives for customer to shop online. Social shopping is an important dimension of hedonic value and motivations. Furthermore, only recently have academics focused on the social nature of customer engagement (e.g. Islam, Hollebeek, Rahman, Khan, & Rasool, 2019).

Customer engagement has mainly been studied from an overall engagement view, with limited research focusing specifically on emotional engagement. It is argued that nurturing an emotional engagement with customers is key in building a long-term relationship with customers (Moliner, Monferrer-Tirado, & Estrada-Guillén, 2018). Although emotional engagement has been deemed an important tenant of overall customer engagement, limited research exists that focus on specific dimensions of customer engagement. Additionally, engagement literature that focuses on emotional engagement has mainly been conceptual in nature (See Appendix 1) and limited empirical studies have been undertaking to understand the relationship between social shopping, self-brand connection and emotional engagement. The study therefore aims to advance the theoretical understanding of customer engagement within an online shopping context, specifically focusing on social dynamics and how it plays out on emotional engagement.

Fourth, by focusing specifically on fashion, the study responds to recent calls within the customer engagement literature to incorporate context specific investigations to further the knowledge on customer engagement (Islam, et al., 2019).

1.5 Research scope

The research will specifically focus on customer engagement with a focus on emotional engagement in the context of online interactions, brand connection and fashion shopping. A specific focus will be given to the emotional engagement component of customer engagement. The study is grounded in social psychology theory as the basis of understanding customer engagement within an ecommerce fashion setting.

1.6 Structure of the report

Chapter One: Introduction to the research problem

The chapter introduces the rationale of the research, the research motivation and contribution of the study to business and academia and presents the research problem and scope of the research study.

Chapter Two: Literature review

This chapter provides background on traditional theories of customer engagement. The review defines customer engagement and describes the dimensions of customer engagement. The review then focuses on building an argument for the social nature of online shopping and provides an argument for the consideration of social psychology theories in the understanding of customer engagement. The review then specifically focuses on the social nature of customer engagement when shopping for fashion and discusses gender as a moderator.

Chapter Three: Research hypotheses

The hypotheses are constructed and presented related to answering the research questions and objectives of the research study.

Chapter Four: Research methodology

This chapters describes and motivates the research methodology and design. This chapter then focuses on providing a discussion on the population, sample and sample size, and sampling method. The measurement instrument used is discussed and data collection process is detailed.

Chapter Five: Results

This chapter presents the results of the study and provides a breakdown on the descriptive and inferential statistical results.

Chapter Six: Discussion of the results

This chapter provides a comprehensive discussion on the results on customer engagement and how it relates back to the literature discussed in Chapter 4.

Chapter Seven: Research conclusion

This chapter presents the final conclusions drawn. This chapter also provides a section on limitations of the research study and recommendations for future studies.

2 CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The literature review section provides a review of relevant and nascent literature related to customer engagement. The first part of the chapter focuses on current theoretical perspectives that are dominant within the customer engagement literature. The chapter then proceeds to focus on defining customer engagement. The review then builds on the link between motivational states and customer engagement and then argues around social motivations within the online shopping context. The third section of the chapter builds a motivation on the relevance of social psychology perspectives on customer engagement. The chapter then considers self-brand connection social shopping for fashion and reviews the literature on the role of gender when shopping for fashion. The chapter closes off with highlighting the main points drawn from the review.

2.2 Theoretical perspectives of customer engagement

Customer engagement has been studied from various theoretical perspectives. In the current literature, there are four main perspectives, namely Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R), Service Dominant Logic (SDL), Customer Dominant Logic (CDL), Customer Experience (CX), and Social Psychology Theories. S-O-R proposes that environmental stimuli, such as marketing messaging or branding, triggers a cognitive and/or emotional response from customers, which then results in a behavioural response from the customer. SDL and CDL considers that customer value is co-created between interactions of the brand and the customer within networked systems, whereas CX considers that customer engagement is as a result of positive experiences that customers have when interacting with a brand. More recently, social psychology perspectives have been investigated as an alternate theoretical foundation in the study of customer engagement. Social psychology perspectives consider the social nature of brand interactions that goes beyond a mere focus on the customer brand interaction. Rather, social psychology perspectives take into account that customers are social beings and are socially motivated and incentivised to behave in certain ways. In the context of the study, it is argued that in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of customer engagement, that extends beyond the transaction and services context, it is required to view engagement from a social perspective.

Most studies on customer engagement have focused on SDL (Carlson, Rahman, Taylor & Voola, 2019). Few studies have focused on social psychology theories in explaining customer engagement. Therefore, a gap exists in understanding customer engagement from a different perspective. This is supported by Hollebeek (2019) that suggests that future studies need to investigate customer engagement from another theoretical lens in order to develop the concept of customer engagement in the academic literature. Therefore, the study takes on a social psychology perspective, specifically grounded in social exchange and social identity theory.

The next section will specifically focus on providing an overview of traditional theoretical perspectives on customer engagement. The section describes the dominant theoretically approaches and highlight the main tenants of these approaches. The focus is then drawn to the limitations of these studies and the gaps in these theories in explaining the social factors associated with customer engagement.

2.2.1. Traditional approaches to customer engagement

Over the past decade, customer engagement has received scholarly attention to establish customer and brand relationships (Prentice, Han, Hua, & Hu, 2019). Previous studies have focused on S-O-R theory (Erdoğmuş & Tatar, 2015; Islam & Rahman, 2016; Ahn & Back, 2018) which focuses on the role of brand related stimuli that create individual customer cognitive and emotional reaction, which then results in a behavioural responses or outcomes (Erdoğmuş & Tatar, 2015). In this sense, customer engagement is viewed as an automatic process (Kawaff & Tagg, 2012), where any brand related stimuli, such as website content, advertising, or promotions would create a stimulus, resulting in an emotional or cognitive response from the customer, such as feelings and thoughts, which then results in behavioural responses such as trust, commitment, and purchase intention (Erdoğmuş & Tatar, 2015). However, S-O-R is limited in that it assumes that any stimulus directed to a customer will directly result in a response from the customer. It is argued that customer response is more complex than a mere reaction to stimuli. Customers are motivated by value that they derive from interacting with a brand and the benefits derived from engagement with a brand, which S-O-R does not consider.

More recently, it has been argued that customer-brand relationships need to move beyond a conventional, transactional and one-way interactions towards approaches that focuses on value co-creation and customer-brand exchange (Dessart, Veloutsou, Morgan-Thomas, 2015). For example, previous studies have demonstrated that there exist positive customer outcomes related to consumer engagement including trust (Stouthuysen, Teunis, Reusen, & Slabbinck, 2018) and behavioural intention (Ahn & Back, 2018). However, these studies have mainly focused on behavioural outcomes of customer relationship management that have short term transactional and economic outcomes for the firm. Others argue that businesses today need to focus on a long-term view of customer relationships that could potentially improve returns and long-term sustainable firm performance (Islam, Hollebeek, Rahman, Khan & Rasool, 2019). Furthermore, it is argued that customer engagement is a complex and dynamic phenomenon, especially in highly networked systems (Jaakkola & Alexander, 2014) and that customer engagement is a dynamic phenomenon (Brodie, 2011). In other words, customers interact with multiple stakeholders within an online setting that influence their levels of engagement. They do not merely react to stimuli within the environment, but rather actively participate in the engagement process.

In response, other studies have taken on a services system view, with a specific focus on SDL (Abdul-Ghani, Hyde, & Marshall, 2019). SDL is concerned with interactions and exchanges through a co-creating process that occur in dynamic networked environments known as service systems (Jaakkola & Alexander, 2014). Specifically, the SDL framework is a relational perspective where customer value is created through interactive and co-created experiences between brand and the customer (Brodie, Hollebeek and Juric, 2011).

However, criticism of SDL as an engagement framework is that it provides a limited representation of the customer's life, and therefore real-life interaction with the brand. It is argued, that customer engagement is not limited to only the service interaction, but rather that customers lives exists outside of the marketing relationship (Heinonen & Tore, 2015). Furthermore, Heinonen & Tore (2015) argue that it is required to understand engagement from the customer point of view and criticises SDL as being too focused on how the customer becomes involved in the brand system.

Rather, CDL argues that it is necessary to understand how customers involve brands into their processes within the invisible and mental life of the customer (Heinonen & Tore, 2015). CDL differs from SDL as it focuses on how customers involve brands into their day to day lives, processes, activities and experiences to the extent where they become entrenched within the customer's lives (Heinonen, Strandvik, & Voima, 2013). Therefore, it becomes critical to understand the processes and activities within the context within the customer context, and the types of input, physical, mental and emotional they require to conclude these processes successfully (Heinonen & Tore, 2015).

In other words, customer-brand relationships exist beyond brand interaction in a service setting, but also occurs in, for example, a social setting. This hold especially true in today's digital world where customers are increasingly engaging with one another and with brands socially online (Eigenraam, Eelen, van Lin, & Verlegh, 2018).

Other approaches have considered customer experiences as a means of understanding the everyday setting within which customer engagement occurs. Customer experience is seen as an outcome of intangible feelings, memorable influences and perceived value related to the total interaction with a brand (Thomas, 2017). The online environment offers increased opportunities and pathway for consumers to interact with or about brands, and thus gain interactive experience encouraging engagement, including social media, brand communities, brands, product services, organisations (Rissanen & Luoma-Aho, 2016). Furthermore, online and digital markets have resulted in a dynamic relationship between customer experience and customer engagement (Gummerus, Liljander, Weman, Philstrom, 2012). Although it is acknowledge in the literature that the online environment poses numerous engagement opportunities for brands to build customer-brand relationships, most of these studies have focused on specific industries including online hotel bookings (Bilgihan, 2016), online auctioning (Chen, Yen, Kuo, Capistrano, 2016), and financial services (Khan, Rahman, & Fatma, 2016).

Customer engagement has been argued to be context specific. Numerous studies have attempted to describe the role of customer engagement dimensions within the online environment, such as social media, online communities, ecommerce, social commerce

and mcommerce (Algharabat, Rana, Alalwan, Baabdullah, & Gupta, in press; Machado, Vacas-de-Carvalho, Azar, André, & dos Santos, 2019). However, limited studies have considered the role of customer engagement in an ecommerce setting with a specific focus on shopping for fashion. As shopping for fashion is a high involvement category compared to air-line tickets as an example, it is argued that customer engagement within a fashion ecommerce setting would be different from other categories that has been extensively studied within the literature.

2.2.2. Customer engagement

Engagement studies and interest within the marketing discipline started in 2005 and is rooted in relationship marketing and customer-brand relationship (Hollebeek, 2011a). The concept of engagement has received substantial scholar and practice attention in recent years (Thakur, 2018). Engagement has been studied in numerous disciplines, including sociology, psychology, political sciences, business management and marketing (Gómez, Lopez, & Molina, 2019) and within various engagement settings, such as service quality (e.g. Islam, Hollebeek, Rahman, Khan & Rassol, 2019), online brand communities (e.g. Martínez-López, Anaya-Sánchez, Molinillo, Aguilar-Illescas, & Esteban-Millat, 2017) and social media (e.g. Algharabat, Rana, Alalwan, Baabdulla, & Gupta, 2019) with various subjects such as organisations, consumers and customers (Kleinaltenkamp, Karpen, Plewa, Jaakkola, & Conduit, 2019).

2.2.2.1 Defining Customer Engagement

Within the literature there are numerous inconsistencies within the conceptualisation of engagement. Scholars refer to “consumer engagement”; “customer brand engagement”, “brand engagement”, “customer engagement”, “brand community engagement” (See Appendix 1). Hollebeek (2011a; 2011b) argue that the concept of engagement, although approached and applied from various contexts and subjects, fundamentally refer to the same thing.

Various definitions of customer engagement exist, and two dominant streams are highlighted in the literature (Islam, Hollebeek, Rahman, Khan, & Rasool, 2019). The first definition focuses on the behavioural outcomes of customer engagement. More specifically, as set out by van Doorn, Lemon, Mittal, Nass, Pick, Pirner, & Verhoef (2010,

p. 254) “customer engagement behaviors go beyond transactions, and may be specifically defined as a customer’s behavioral manifestations that have a brand or firm focus, beyond purchase, resulting from motivational drivers.”

The second stream defines customer engagement from a psychological engagement perspective. It is argued that when a customer is highly engaged with a brand, a strong psychological connection to the brand is fostered which leads to a long-term relationship with the brand (Prentice, Han, Hua, & Hu, 2019).

Customer engagement involves customer’s cognitive, emotional, behavioural and social investments towards a brand during their interactions with a brand which can either have a positive or negative valence (Eigenraam, Eelen, van Lin, & Verlegh, 2018; Hollebeek, 2019; Hollebeek, Glyn, & Brodie, 2014). A highly engaged customer is expected to demonstrate both attitudinal and behavioural manifestations towards a brand (Prentice, Han, Hua, & Hu, 2019). Attitudinal engagement refers to the psychological process which results in behavioural manifestations and engagement behaviours (Prentice, Han, Hua, & Hu, 2019). For this reason, it is argued, that customer engagement is a psychological process that results in a behavioural outcome. Based on the work of Brodie, Hollebeek, Jurić, Illić (2011, p. 260) customer engagement is defined as “a psychological state that occurs by virtue of interactive, cocreative customer experiences with a focal agent/object (e.g., an online brand)”.

2.2.2.2 Dimensionality of customer engagement

There exist numerous arguments in the literature on the dimensionality of customer engagement (e.g. van Doorn, 2011, Brodie & Hollebeek, 2011). The one school of thought views customer engagement as a unidimensional construct (Rather & Sharma, 2019). However, the uni-dimensional approach has been criticised as too narrow as it is argued that customer engagement is a complex phenomenon (Brodie & Hollebeek, 2011, Hollebeek, Glynn, & Brodie, 2014). In addition, it is argued that uni-dimensional approach to engagement are mostly focused on behavioural aspects of engagement. For this reason, a uni-dimensional approach is limited as it only refers to behavioural outcomes of engagement. As argued previously, customer engagement transcends behavioural manifestation and does not hold exclusive behavioural outcomes. In response to such a

limited view, other scholarly work has argued that customer engagement can be constructed as having more than one dimension (Hollebeek, Glynn, & Brodie, 2014).

The second school of thought of the dimensionality of customer takes on a holistic multi-dimensional approach (van Doorn, Lemon, Mittal, Nass, Pick, Pirner & Verhoef, 2010) proposes that customer engagement dimensions consists of valence, form or modality, scope, nature of its impact. Hollebeek (2011a; 2011b) argue that customer engagement (CE) relates to the level of a customer cognitive, emotional and behavioural investment and activity related to specific brand interactions (Hollebeek, 2011a; Hollebeek, 2011b). These dimensions links with those set out in the broader customer engagement literature (Thomas, 2017; Kuvykaitė & Tarutė, 2011). More specifically, customer brand engagement can be classified into three sub-dimensions namely cognitive processing, affection and activation (Hollebeek, Glynn, & Brodie, 2014). Hollebeek, Glynn, & Brodie (2014) argue that the specific dimensions of engagement may vary across context. The study adopts an inclusive approach to customer engagement, namely a multi-dimensional definition of engagement which is generally accepted by most academic research and popularised by Hollebeek (2011a; 2011b).

- **Cognitive engagement**

According to Hollebeek and Mackey (2019), cognitive engagement is driven by consumer level motives of seeking functional and authentic outcomes and related to a customers through and mental engrossment in and concentration towards a brand.

- **Behavioural engagement**

Hollebeek and Mackey (2019) define behavioural engagement as the level to which a customer exerts activity, energy, effort and time towards a brand during interaction with the brand and can be either be driven by functional or emotional motives. It is also important to note that behavioural manifestation towards a brand transcend beyond direct transaction and also include behavioural activities related to referrals, word of mouths, recommendations, providing customer ratings and writing reviews.

- **Emotional engagement**

According to Hollebeek and Mackey (2019) emotional engagement refers the level of customers positive affect and feelings towards a brand that occurs during interaction with the brand. According to Hollebeek & Macky (2019), customers motives of seeking authentic and hedonic outcomes result in emotional engagement. Hollebeek and Macky (2019) conceptualise emotional engagement with a digital content related to a brand stems from both hedonic and authenticity motives, and that these can either be exclusive or hybrid.

Although numerous studies have investigated emotional attachment (Moliner, Monferrer-Tirado, & Estrada-Guillén, 2018), few studies have focused specifically on emotional engagement. It is argued that as fashion is a high involvement category, can be social in nature and is associated with expression of self, it has a higher emotional dimension. The study recognises that customer engagement is a multi-dimensional construct. However, for this purpose of this study, a specific focus is given on the customer engagement dimension of emotional engagement. Therefore, in the context of the study, customer engagement is operationalised as emotional engagement.

2.2.3. Motivational states and emotional engagement

It is argued that personal and intrinsic customer motives have greater relevance to customer engagement than external business driven efforts such as platforms, processes, and rewards incentives (Prentice, Han, Hua, & Hu, 2019). Van Doorn et al. (2010) explicitly state that customer engagement behaviours go beyond transactions resulting from motivational drivers. van Doorn et al. (2010) argues that customer goals can affect customer engagement which can either be related to consumption goals or non-product or non-service goals related to the individual, such as goals related to individual identity. Customer engagement therefore needs to be understood as a motivational construct with differing levels of intensity (Hollebeek, Glynn, & Brodie, 2011). In other words, there are numerous factors that need to be in place for consumers to be motivated to engage with a brand.

Motivation to engage with a brand is also context dependent. In defining customer engagement, Hollebeek (2011a; 2011b) highlight the contextual nature that influence consumer engagement. Various studies have focused on customer engagement within various contexts (Lee, Chan, Chong, & Thadani, 2019). Therefore, it is argued that the online fashion shopping environment will have differing customer motivations in comparison to other online context, such as banking for example. The nature of fashion shopping is more hedonic, which fulfils psycho-social needs, in comparison to online grocery shopping which may be more functional and online banking could be more cognitive. Furthermore, emotion is a significant contributor to the online experience (Kawaf & Tagg, 2017) and the emotional aspect of consumption is also relevant in driving customer engagement (Högberg, Ramberg, Gustafsson, & Wästlund, 2019). This highlights the importance of social needs and emotional engagement.

Customer engagement has been studied in numerous online environments, including online reviews (Thakur, 2018) and virtual brand communities (Brodie, Ilic, Juric, & Hollebeek, 2011). Both utilitarian and hedonic characteristics are associated with online shopping (Liu, Lim, Li, Tan, & Cyr, 2019). Within an e-commerce context customer seek utilitarian, or functional, benefits and hedonic, or pleasurable, benefits from their engagement (Bilgihan, 2016). Customers however do not only seek tangible or functional benefits from the brands that they consume (Prentice, Wang, Loureiro, 2019). Five different shopping motivations have been identified in the literature related to online shopping, including convenience, variety seeking, information seeking, shopping experience and social shopping (Patmavathy, Swapana, & Paul, 2019).

Studies have investigated hedonic (e.g. experience, enjoyment, entertainment and escapism) attributes and motivations and found that these positively predict consumers purchase intentions (Moon, Khalid, Awan, Attiq, Rassol, & Kiran, 2017). However, contradictions in the literature exists for example a previous study by Anderson, Knight, Pookulangara, and Josiam (2014) found that experiential shopping, deemed as a hedonic attribute, did not to influence purchase intention. Shopping enjoyment is argued to be associated with off-line shopping rather than online shopping, however results have been inconclusive (Schmid & Axhausen, 2019).

Retail shopping can be enjoyable, pleasurable and fun, which relates to the hedonic benefits (Moon, Khalid, Awan, Attiq, Rassol, & Kiran, 2017). Högberg, Ramberg, Gustafsson, & Wästlund (2019) highlight that the hedonic value derived from gamification of the retail environment resulted in higher brand engagement and continued engagement intention. Another study based on social media engagement found that entertainment, interaction and trendiness enhance customer engagement (Liu, Shin, & Burns, 2019). Furthermore, hedonic motives such as shopping enjoyment result in engagement. However, few studies have investigated hedonic motives by exclusively focusing on social needs as a hedonic motivation for customer engagement.

Social shopping has been explored by Haas and Kenning (2014) who demonstrated that customer affect and shopping enjoyment was positively associated with the customers willingness to engage with salespeople in a retail setting. A study conducted on luxury brands found that social value related to showcasing status and success enhances customer engagement (Prentice & Loureiro, 2018). Furthermore, within a social commerce environment, emotionality was also deemed to be important to promote engagement behaviours (Molinillo, Anaya-Sánchez, & Liébana-Cabanillas, 2019). Therefore, it is argued that consumers are socially motivated to engage when they experience positive affect or emotions within a retail environment.

Although studies have investigated social motivation and value within off-line shopping for fashion, few have investigated social dynamics within an ecommerce environment. It is therefore argued that it is important to understand engagement from a social point. Few studies have offered a holistic view of social motivations and customer engagement within the context of online shopping. Furthermore, it is argued that consumer engagement within fashion apparel context is potentially influenced by different factors from than those factors that engagement within hotel bookings and social media communities. Additionally, few studies have focused on understanding social motives and how it relates to customer engagement of online fashion apparel brands, specifically in a South African context.

2.3 Social Psychology Theories and customer engagement

Few studies have considered social theories in the context of customer engagement. Only recently have scholars started to explore engagement from a social perspective (Rather & Sharma, 2019; Lee, Chan, Chong, & Thadani, 2019; Prentice, Wang, Hua, & Hu, 2019; Harrigan, Evers, Miles, & Daly, 2018). Social theories are especially relevant in the context of engagement as it more fully reflects the socially networked environment in which customers participate (Hollebeek, Srivastave, & Chen, 2019) and that engagement refers to the enduring psychological personal connection that an individual has with a brand (So & Sparks, 2014). In other words, customer engagement cannot only be viewed from a transactional and services view, but broader psychological understanding of engagement is required. Rather, it is argued that it is necessary to consider the social nature of engagement exchange. Furthermore, consumer choices can be viewed as an extension of self, where consumers base their decisions on what they perceive as congruent to their identities, lifestyle and social roles which are driven by what they perceive will provide them with a sense of belonging to a certain social group (Papaoikonomou, Cascon-Pereira, & Ryan, 2014). Therefore, during the engagement process, customers construct their social identities during their interaction with a brand. It is therefore argued that in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of customer engagement, that extends beyond the transaction and services context, it is required to view engagement from a social perspective.

2.3.1 Social Exchange Theory

Social exchange theory has been demonstrated to be an applicable theoretical framework to explain customer engagement (Lee, Chan, Chong, & Thadani, 2019). Social exchange theory proposes that individuals make rational decisions to participate in continuous and mutually beneficial exchanges and reciprocation that can be economic (e.g. goods, knowledge, service or money), social (e.g. friendship, social influence, love and status) or be both in nature (Harrigan, Evers, Miles & Daly, 2018; Wang, Xiang, Yang, & Ma, 2019). Social exchange theory fundamental tenants include that (1) there exists rules and norms of reciprocity under which an exchange takes place, (2) resources are exchanged, and (3) that relationships emerge from an exchange (Alvarez-Milán, Felix, Rauschnabel, Hinsch, 2018).

Accordingly, any actor can participate in social exchange, where participation is driven by the notion of expected exchange benefits that is derived from interactions (Huang, Cheng, Huang, & Teng, 2018). One participant makes the first move to participate in the relationship, where the next participant decides to participate based on the perceived exchange benefit based on cost benefit analysis (Yan, Wang, Chen, & Zhang, 2016; Shiau & Luo, 2012). This then stimulates a cycle of exchange reciprocity and the cycle of exchange will continue as there remains positive benefits for both parties. Although SDL considers exchanges between customer and brand, its focus is mainly on value cocreation through the exchange processes (Rihova, Buhalis, Gouthro, & Moital, 2018). A fundamental difference between SDL and CDL compared to social exchange theory is the notion that social exchange theory views that participants are motivated to maintain a positive balance of equity with actors (Khalid & Ali, 2017). In other words, once a social exchange occurs where one party offers a benefit, the other party will feel obliged to respond and to repay or return a benefit to the other party (Wang, Xiang, Yang, & Ma, 2019). Each individual party strives to maintain a balance of positive equity and aim to maximise the benefits, increasingly enhancing their motivation to commit and participate in the relationship (Lee, Capella, Taylor, Luo, & Gabler, 2019). They will continue to participate in the relationship if the expected positive benefits are derived from engaging in the relationship.

As customer engagement relates to the interaction of customers with a brand, it is argued that customers participate in non-transactional behaviours to seek benefits that are hedonic, functional and authentic in nature (Molinillo, Anaya-Sánchez, & Liébana-Cabanillas, 2019; Hollebeek & Mackey, 2019). Within an online shopping environment, it is argued that customers interact with a brand which creates a social exchange benefits between the customer and the brand. Harrigan, Evers, Miles and Daly (2018) further argue that customer brand engagement involves social exchanges that relate to information, affiliation and social status, highlighting the social dynamics involved.

Similar to SDL, within the framework of SET, customers proactively participate with brands and firms, rather than passively obtaining benefits. In other words, they actively direct cognitive, emotional and physical resources towards a brand or firm through during their interactions from which they derive benefits (Lee, Chan, Chong, & Thadani, 2019).

Hollebeek (2018), posits that customers compare their customer engagement investment with that of their customer engagement benefits. In other words, customers compare the cognitive, behavioural and emotional benefits derived from a brand engagement and deduct that from the psychological, emotional and physical investments that they committed to the brand engagement (Harrigan, Evers, Miles & Daly, 2018). From a SET perspective, customers will only be motivated to engage or invest resources towards the brand based on their expected economic or social benefit. Therefore, from a social exchange approach, it is argued that customers will be motivated to engage with a brand if they believe that the engagement exchange is equitable from a cognitive, emotional and behavioural point of view. In other words, customers will engage through investing resources during the interaction that yield an expected economic or social benefit for them.

Customers exchange numerous resources with marketers, which includes economic, emotional, cognitive, social and physical resources (Rather & Sharma, 2019). For customers' engagement to be maintained, brands are therefore required to respond in an equitable manner that drives an expected benefit for the customer (Rather & Sharma, 2019). In the context of the study, emotional investment in a brand would be encouraged should customers view that such engagement would yield social benefits and value. Adongo, Kim, and Elliot (2019) argue that social exchanges are not isolated to a dyadic exchange, but that social exchange are interdependent on inter-group interaction. These can exhibit through seeking and giving opinion, friendship, status and a sense of belonging that is broader than the brand interaction. In other words, it is argued that customer engagement is driven by a customer's social motivation state for a sense of belonging and identification with other people, through beneficial social exchanges with the brand, which in turn positively strengthens the customers' social motivational state to engage with the brand. This then ultimately results in a reiterative process whereby the customer invests more emotional resources during the engagement process.

Online tools such as product reviews, consumer communities and social networking sites have a significant impact on consumer behaviour as customers seek information and affirmation on product choices during their decision-making journey (Thaichon, 2017). Various studies have investigated motivations for participating in online customer reviews is the sense of belonging that is created through an online community. Studies have

demonstrated that a higher sense of community identification leads to higher engagement levels driven by enhanced motivations to engage within a social commerce context and supersedes the importance of trust (Molinillo, Anaya-Sánchez, & Liébana-Cabanillas, 2019). When considering online shopping, it is then posited that customers that seek social benefits from online shopping, through co-shopping, co-browsing and social sharing whilst shopping, will invest more resources when interacting with the brand, therefore enhancing their level of engagement with the brand.

Although it is acknowledged that identification with online communities impact on customer engagement, customers mostly interact with strangers or anonymous users in such a setting (Kawaf & Instanbulluoglu, 2019). Consumers take inputs and opinions from friends in higher regard than online social interactions (Kim, Kim, Choi, & Trivedi, 2019). Therefore, it is argued that interacting with friends and family would entice a different emotional attachment from the shopper, especially as fashion and clothing is associated with high emotional involvement, identity attachment and social status symbolism (Kawaf & Instanbulluoglu, 2019).

2.3.2 Social Identity Theory

Social identity theory proposes that individuals develop self-identification through classifying themselves and others in social categories through self-comparison and seek to identify themselves in a social group to improve their self-esteem (Prentice, Han, Hua, & Hu, 2019). Social identity theory also proposes that social categorisation results in in-group and out-group notions where people compare themselves by evaluating the ingroup in comparison to relevant outgroups (e.g. women versus men) (Scheepers, & Derks, 2016).

Social identity theory has been utilised in numerous studies with regards to organisations, communities and social groups. Social identity theory states that consumers will choose brands that they are able to identify with and that express who they are (Reed, Cohen, Battacharjee, 2009). Strong identification improves commitment to a brand and motivates customers to exert effort towards to task or brand.

Harrigan, Evers, Miles, and Daly (2018) argue that customers create a link between a brand and their own self-identity. This is known as self-brand connection which refers to the extent to which an individual has incorporated a brand into their concept of self (Lin, Lobo, & Leckie, 2017). In other words, self-brand connection refers to the extent to which an individual finds congruence between a brand and their identity of self.

More recent studies have demonstrated the applicability of social identity theory within the customer engagement domain (Prentice, Han, Hua, & Hu, 2019). Within the engagement literature, it has been demonstrated that emotional engagement has the highest impact on self-brand connection where positive engagement reinforces a stronger connection with the brand (Harrigan, Evers, Miles, & Daly, 2018). Furthermore, a sense of community also ties in with psychological identification which results in personal relevance (Shen, Li, Sun, Cheng, & Wang, 2019).

According to Molinillo, Anaya-Sánchez, and Liébana-Cabanillas (2019), online interaction through online communities allows for the creation of common bonds amongst a network of friends and family, which ultimately results in a common identity amongst participants. It is argued that emotional engagement results in a higher common identity which ultimately results in higher identification with the brand, ultimately enhancing the self-brand connection. Furthermore, customers foster relationships with brands relate to their self identity (Prentice, Han, Hua, & Hu, 2019).

2.4 Self-brand connection and fashion

Customers do not exclusively buy and consume products for its functional purpose, but also attach meaning to the brands and products that they acquire (Moliner, Monferrer-Tirado, & Estrada-Guillén, 2018). The psychological links that customers attribute between their own identity and a brand is referred to as self-brand connection (Harrigan, Evers, Miles & Daly, 2018). Customers perceive brands that are strongly linked to the concept of self as more important than brands that they have a weak self-identity link to. As customers interact with brands online, their self-brand connection is reinforced (Harrigan, Evers, Miles & Daly, 2018). For example, a customers can read reviews that they resonate with or brand visuals that link with the consumers self-image will foster a stronger self-brand connection.

Self-brand connection is associated with the fulfilment of individuals' psychosocial needs, through strengthening self-identity, social assimilation and differentiation as well as self-expression (Moliner, Monferrer-Tirado, & Estrada-Guillén, 2018).

Fashion holds strong ties with identity, social links and self-presentation (Kawaf & Istanbuluoglu, 2019). The internet has a major impact on consumer socialisation and identity formation (Thaichon, 2017). Furthermore, fashion serves as a non-verbal means of self-identity and self-acceptance amongst peers and consumers manage their identities and self-expression through clothing (Lee, Jackson, Miller-Spillman, & Ferrell, 2015). Therefore, it is argued that when customer shop online for fashion, they would engage with brand with which hold social links and strong ties that is congruent with their social identities.

2.5 Social shopping for fashion

Social dynamics have been argued to play a significant role in influencing customer perceptions and shopping behaviour (Zhang, Li, Burke, & Leykin, 2014). Customers engage in various social behaviours during the pre-purchase, purchase and post purchase of shopping for fashion (Kang & Park-Poapes, 2011). Such social behaviours include observation of people, interacting with people and sharing information with others occur in all types of retail settings including traditional brick-and-mortar settings as well as digital, social and online commerce settings (Kang & Park-Poapes, 2011). More specifically, social shopping is strongly associated with shopping for fashion (Kim & Hong, 2011). Engaging in social shopping activities online is argued to provide customers with purchase support and reinforcing post-purchase evaluation, which includes sharing and recommending products or brands (Hsu, Chang, Kuo, & Cheng, 2016).

Social factors significantly influence the consumer decision to purchase online (Dhanapal, Vashu, & Subramaniam, 2015). A study by Ogonowski, Montandon, Botha and Reyneke (2014) found that social presence influences initial trust as well as the enjoyment and perceived usefulness of ecommerce sites. Although studies have investigated other factors such as online social presence, online shopping experience and brand equity, the majority of these have focused on behavioural outcomes such as purchase intentions.

Social interaction has a significant impact on online consumer decision making, reducing perceived risk and contributes to experience sharing (Kim, Kim, Choi, & Trivedi, 2019). The need for connection and social sharing has been argued to be a main motivation for social media usage and online shopping and contributes to the online shopping experience (Kang & Johnston, 2015). Furthermore, social bonding has been demonstrated to have positive affective and emotional outcomes of the shopping experience (Kang & Park-Poapes, 2011). Social motives have been demonstrated to be important factors for the intent to engage in online social shopping for apparel where social interaction and bonding are key motivations for online shopping (Kang & Johnston, 2015).

Some studies have indicated that social interaction motivations are strongly associated with off-line shopping (Kim, Kim, Choi, & Trivedi, 2019). However, as technology and social media are becoming more advanced, some studies have also indicated that off-line social interaction has strong links with online shopping (Kim, Kim, Choi, & Trivedi (2019).

Reading customer reviews and receiving style advice results in increased intention to purchase (Kawaf & Istanbuluoglu, 2019). Kim, Kim, Choi, & Trivedi (2019) argue that limited studies have investigated the interactions between off-line interactions and how it influences online shopping and demonstrated that offline social interactions are positively associated with increased online shopping demand. Furthermore, off-line interactions are more trusted than online interaction (Kim, et al., 2019) as it involves interactions with a known person. It is therefore argued that purchasing high involvement products such as fashion items online, could result in higher social interactions on and offline.

2.6 The role of gender

The literature with regards to the effect of gender on online shopping has been inconclusive (Lee, Sener, Mokhtarian, & Handy, 2017). Some scholars argue that shopping orientations and online shopping differ across gender (Hansen & Jensen, 2009).

Females are accepted to be more engaged with fashion and have higher association with fashion as an expression of self-identity (Ruane & Wallace, 2013). Women are more likely to buy fashion and persuade others to buy new fashion (Ruane & Wallace, 2013). Women

are also more likely to use fashion as a means of self-definition and self-identity (Arpita, Ankita, Ceeba & Rajlaxmi, 2011). Self-brand connection...

A study specifically focusing on females found that social media enable self-presentation through means of fashion and create online identities through their fashion choices and are influenced and inspired by friends, people that appear on their social media feeds, brand pages and celebrities (Ruane & Wallace, 2013). Furthermore, socially interacting online provide reassurance on purchase and new trends for females (Ruane & Wallace, 2013).

The social dynamic of shopping online changes as consumers have less physical interaction with salespeople and friends (Ruane & Wallace). However, the social dynamic is not eliminated, consumers remain to rely on friends for product and brand recommendations, ask for opinions and seek approval through social networks before purchasing (Ruane & Wallace, 2013).

Islam et al. (2019) argue that although gender differences have been investigated in numerous academic research, very few have investigated gender within the customer engagement literature. Studies have indicated that gender moderates social dynamics within shopping contexts (Gentina & Chandon, 2014). Studies have also indicated that for adolescent girls shopping is a social activity (Sramova & Pavelka, 2018).

Studies have indicated that females have a lower cognitive attitude towards online shopping (Chang, Chih, Liou, & Yang, 2015). Furthermore, convenience is a higher motivator for men to shop online in comparison to women (Heng, Gao, Jiang, & Chen, 2018). Therefore, it is argued that social dynamics such as social shopping and self-brand connection, related to shopping online would be stronger for females than for males.

2.7 Conclusion

The chapter started with a discussion on traditional approaches to customer engagement where it highlights the dominant approaches to customer engagement and highlight the dominance of SDL theory within this domain. However, it is illustrated in the chapter that these theories often neglect the social components of customer engagement. It then

moved on to define customer engagement and provide an overview of motivational states linked to customer engagement. It is highlighted that social motivations play a role in how customers engage when shopping online. The chapter then proceeded to build an argument on the suitability of social psychology theories and how it applies to customer engagement, specifically considering social exchange and social identity theory. The chapter then provided context on social shopping for fashion and the role of gender when shopping online.

The main points of the literature review are summarised below:

- Dominant approaches of customer engagement within the literature does not sufficiently capture the social dynamics of customer engagement.
- Customer engagement is a motivational construct and social motivation has been demonstrated to be an important aspect to drive customer engagement.
- Self-brand connection are associated with psychosocial needs related to consumers sense of self and seek brand congruence as part of self-expression and self-identity
- Shopping for fashion is strongly associated with self-expression, self-identity and social acceptance.
- Social psychology theories, specifically social exchange theory and social identity theory, are deemed suitable alternate approaches to understand customer engagement more holistically as it considers the social aspects of how consumers engagement.
- Gender is an important factor to consider as females and males differ in how the engage with fashion and online shopping. Females are more likely to buy fashion that are related to their identity of self and are more likely to be influenced by their friends on fashion related purchases.

3 CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

3.1. Introduction

Based on literature review, social dynamics related to customer engagement has been demonstrated to be important factors for consideration within fashion online shopping. This chapter sets out the hypotheses based on the literature. The hypotheses which the studies seek to test and answer are set out in the below. .

3.2. Research hypotheses

Based on the literature discussed in Chapter 4, social factors are argued to be important for consideration for customer engagement. Based on this, the study outlines the following hypotheses:

- **Research Question 1:**

Social interaction has been demonstrated to have a positive association with online consumer decision making and perceived risk reduction within the online environment and contributes to experience sharing (Kim, Kim, Choi, & Trivedi, 2019). Social dynamics related to how customer create social links and bonds has been demonstrated to impact on customer affective response during the online shopping experience (Kang & Park-Poapes, 2011). Furthermore, social motives are important drivers for the intent to engage in online social shopping for apparel (Kang & Johnston, 2015). In other words, social benefits related to shopping online impact on customer engagement, specifically emotional engagement.

Is there a relationship between social shopping and emotional engagement in online shopping?

- Hypothesis 1: Greater degrees of social shopping will drive increased consumer engagement.

- **Research Question 2:**

A higher sense of community identification leads to higher engagement levels (Molinillo, Anaya-Sánchez, & Liébana-Cabanillas, 2019). From this, customers that seek social benefits from online shopping, and, will invest emotional resources when interacting with a brand to which they identify with, therefore enhancing their level of engagement with the brand. Therefore, it is expected that self-brand connection will result in higher levels of emotional engagement.

Is there a relationship between emotional engagement and self-brand connection in online shopping?

- Hypothesis 2: Greater degrees of self-brand connection will drive increased consumer engagement.

- **Research Question 3:**

Although findings have been inconclusive, some studies have indicated that there are distinct gender differences during the consumer purchase decision-making processes when considering social commerce design features such as usability, functionality and sociability (Huang & Benyoucef, 2017). Furthermore, others have highlighted that that women are more likely to develop social relationship-orientated attachment to others whereas men focus more on functional and utilitarian values (Islam et al., 2019). In addition, it has been demonstrated that gender moderates social dynamics within shopping contexts (Gentina & Chandon, 2014). For this reason, it can be expected that gender plays a role in the psycho-social outcomes and how it relates to how customers engage emotionally with a brand.

Is the relationship between social shopping, self-brand connection and emotional engagement in online shopping stronger for women than for men?

- Hypothesis 3: Gender strengthens the positive relationship between social shopping and emotional engagement.
- Hypothesis 4: Gender strengthens the positive relationship between self-brand connection and emotional engagement.

4 CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1. Introduction

This chapter provides a description and justification on the choice of methodology, followed by the defining the unit of analysis. The section then describes the population, sample and sample size proposed for the study. This is followed by a description of the research and data collection process. Ethical considerations and limitations of the research methodology is provided.

4.2. Choice of methodology

Research philosophy refers to 'a system of beliefs and assumptions about the development and nature of knowledge' (Saunders & Lewis, 2018, p. 106). The positivist paradigm is associated with quantitative research methods that highlight the empirical nature of inquiry into the study of social phenomena (Leung & Shek, 2018). Based on the researchers' perspective, social phenomena, human motivation and consumer behaviour is deemed to be visible and observable, especially in the context of studying social shopping, self-brand connection and emotional engagement, the study assumes a positivist research philosophy. The study will aim to empirically test relationships between social shopping, self-brand connection and emotional engagement, therefore the objective and research questions set out lends itself to a positivist paradigm.

Deductive reasoning refers to the formulation of hypothesis and drawing on existing theory to test and explain relationships between variables (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). For the purpose of the research study, a deductive reasoning approach is used as the study set out to test assumptions of the relationship between social shopping, self-brand connection and emotional engagement and to explain the findings by drawing on existing academic knowledge, specifically referring to social exchange theory and social identity theory. In addition, deductive reasoning is applicable in the context of a positivist research philosophy as the acquisition of scientific knowledge is based on strict rules and procedures that are deductive nature (Leung & Shek, 2018).

From a positivist paradigm, data collection takes the form of structured methods that are repeatable and offers generalisation (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). As the study seeks to quantify the relationship between social shopping, self-brand connection and emotional

engagement, a quantitative correlation design is deemed suitable for the purpose of the proposed study. Quantitative research methods mainly refer to the collection and analyses of numerical data for the purpose of studying social phenomena. Quantitative research design emphasises objectivity of inquiry, where bias and subjectivity are minimised during the data collection and analyses process, it values neutrality where the role of the researcher is neutral and objective.

According to Saunders and Lewis (2018), the data collection method selection for a study depends largely on the focus of the study. From a positivist paradigm, data collection takes the form of structured methods that are repeatable and offers generalisation (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). The proposed methodology identified for the purpose of addressing the research was therefore the online survey method.

Online surveys are most commonly used for quantitative research designs making use of close-ended questions suited to collect quantitative data for statistical analysis (Toepel, 2016). Online surveys have become the predominant data collection tool due to its cost effectiveness and fast turnaround time, but most importantly it provides broad geographical spread (Toepel, 2016; Sue & Ritter, 2007). As online shopping is geographically dispersed and people can shop online from various locations, online surveys were suitable to reach a larger proportion of the population. Furthermore, due to time constraints, a cross-sectional study was conducted which is suitable for online survey method. This means that the study was based in one moment in time (Saunders & Lewis, 2018).

Chipp and Ismail (2004) also highlight that within a South African context, online methods can only be used for certain products and services. Due to the focus on the study within an online environment, the methodology is suitable as the study does not attempt to investigate consumer behaviour of individuals that do not have access to the internet.

4.3. Unit of analysis

The unit of analysis for the purpose of the study is identified as online shoppers' motivations, perceptions and attitudes.

4.4. Population

According to Saunders and Lewis (2018), the population of a study refers to the complete set of members belonging to a specified group which can consist of people, organisations or places from which a sample is drawn. The population identified for the purpose of the study includes online customers of fashion. The utilised universe included individuals that shop for fashion online. The sample was therefore qualified as the respondents have had exposure to online shopping for fashion. Due to this research's focus on shopping for fashion, the participants who had an online fashion shopping interaction, was included for the purpose of the study.

4.5. The sampling method and sample size

A sample refers to a sub-set consisting of members of the whole population (Saunders & Lewis, 2018). In order to obtain the required sample, a non-random convenience and snowball sampling was used as questionnaires was distributed online on platforms that researchers have access to. After completion of the survey, individuals were requested to forward and share the survey with friends creating a 'snowball effect' (Saunders & Lewis, 2018). A filter question, known as a screener, was included to ensure that individuals that completed the survey shopped online for fashion within the past year. Similar sampling methods have been demonstrated to be suitable for the measurement engagement within an online shopping environment (e.g. Kukar-Kinney, Scheinbaum, & Schaefers, 2016; Arora & Aggarwal, 2017).

For determining the sample size of the study, it is important to consider the analysis requirements. Analysis that require sub-populations require a larger sample size than studies that are only reporting on descriptive parameters of populations (Daniel, 2012). Furthermore, for non-probability sampling, such as convenience and snowball sampling utilised in the study, non-statistical sampling methods can be utilised (Daniel, 2012). The sample size obtained resulted in a total of 133 people who completed the survey, off which 41 responses were removed as these individuals have not shopped online and another

two responses were removed due to being incomplete. This resulted in a total of 90 respondents. The minimum rule of thumb is 10 respondents per predictor (Ho, 2006), therefore as the study includes two predictors, namely social shopping and emotional engagement, the sample size of 90 respondents are deemed suitable for multiple regression analysis. Outliers were removed which resulted in a total of 80 responses that were used for data analysis.

4.6. Measurement instrument

The measurement instrument used was a structured questionnaire. Questionnaires are deemed an appropriate method for explanatory research where structured questions need to be answered for measurement (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012). Previous literature has demonstrated the usability of online structured questionnaire for the purpose of data collection within the domain of online shopping (Martin et al., 2015; Rose et al., 2012). A self-completed questionnaire, where respondents were required to complete the survey was therefore deemed suitable as the nature of the study is explanatory.

The survey questionnaire was divided into three parts. The first part including screener questions related to whether respondents have shopped for fashion online. The second part included the measures of the construct, namely a social shopping scale, self-brand connection scale and an emotional engagement scale. The third section included basic demographic information.

As mentioned previously, the measurement instrument was adopted from previous studies. The questionnaire consisted of three parts. The first part contained a screener question which ascertained whether respondents have shopped online for apparel to ensure that respondents met the requirements of the universe. For ethical purposes, respondents were also screened on their age and respondents under the age of 18 was excluded from the research survey. The second section consisted of questionnaire measures consisting of the variables to be measured, including dimensions of social shopping, self-brand connection and emotional engagement. The social shopping scale adapted from Arnold and Reynolds (2012), the self-brand connection scale was adapted from Tan, Salo, Juntunen, and Kumar (2018), and the emotional engagement scale

adapted from the scale developed by Hollebeek, Glynn, and Brodie (2014). Participants was asked to consider their favourite fashion related e-commerce site or brand and use this as a reference point when answering the questionnaire which aids to avoid framing all responses with a single research chosen ecommerce brand (Martín-Consuegra, Díaz, Gómez, & Molina, article in press). The third section of the questionnaire captured sample characteristics such as gender and race. Demographic information was captured at the end to ensure that should respondents decide to close the survey before completion, the possibility of capturing scale questions increases.

The questionnaire was administered in English. This is an appropriate language as it is one of the eleven official languages in South Africa and most online stores marketing and website content is based on the English language.

4.7 Details of how the data was collected

An online self-complete structured questionnaire was programmed through the online survey website, Survey Monkey. Self-complete questionnaires are generally sent electronically, in this case via social media, specifically Facebook and Whatsapp. A survey link was created via the Survey Monkey tool for both Facebook and Whatsapp. For Facebook, a link was posted on the social media platform inviting connections to participate in the research study. For Whatsapp, a link was sent to known contacts with an invitation to participate in the research study. Various previous studies based within the fashion and retailing context has made use of online survey questionnaires by using social media (e.g. Coetzee, 2016) deeming it suitable for the purpose of studying consumer behaviour within the online fashion apparel category.

Data collection took place over 41 days between 7 September 2019 to 17 October 2019. A benefit of online surveys is that data input is automated therefore reducing the need to manually capture data and saving time (Saunders & Lewis, 2018). This is important for the research study as the study will be conducted within a limited time frame.

Based on recommendations highlighted by Moliner, Monferrer-Tirado, and Estrada-Guillén, (2018), questions structure did not follow the hypothesis order and the question order was randomised for each participant per construct.

4.8 Questionnaire piloting

In order to establish face validity, a pilot survey was undertaken. A total of 10 pilots were conducted and based on the pilot feedback, question wording and numbering were amendment and shortened where necessary. Limited changes were applied and the total of 10 pilots were included in the total sample.

4.9 Process of analysis

Numeric data was statistically analysed by making use of SPSS 14.0. After data collection was completed, data was cleaned, zero values were discarded, and data was coded. After data was cleaned, descriptive and inferential statistics was conducted on the final cleaned dataset.

Interval data refers to numerical data that provides numerical differences between two values (Saunders & Lewis, 2018) and is deemed suitable for parametric statistical analysis such as central tendency measures and regression analysis which will allow for measuring relationships between the identified constructs (Harpe, 2015). The constructs were measured using multiple items on a seven-point Likert scale. Scales from which the study draws on make use of a seven-point Likert scale in previous studies and was therefore utilised to ensure consistency. The measurement model was validated through Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) and data was imputed from the validated model, in order to obtain continuous data for each validated construct which is deemed fit for descriptive and inferential statistical analysis (Harpe, 2015).

4.9.1 Descriptive statistics

According to Leung and Shek (2018, p. 1352) 'descriptive statistics are used to summarise and organise large numbers of observations to describe the data and make sense of them'. For this proposed research study, demographic data will be used to describe the characteristics of respondents that participated in the survey. Data is presented through frequency distributions.

4.9.2. Inferential statistics

Inferential statistics makes use of the sample data to make inferences to the population and test hypothesis. As the study will be based on assessing relationships instead of testing differences between means, correlational and regression analyses were considered.

Researchers use linear regression as a statistical tool to analyse quantitative data to test the developed hypothesis. Linear regression is used to determine whereby the "values on one variable are predicted from values of another variable with which they are correlated" (Frey, 2018, p.1516) and how one construct relate to another and creating models to explain relationships between variables. For the purpose of testing the hypothesis and explaining the relationships between more than one variable, multiple linear regression was used. As multiple linear regression is a parametric statistical technique, certain assumptions are required for analysis (Frey, 2018; Allen, 2017). For this reason, in order to conduct a multiple regression, assumptions were confirmed after which the multiple regression was conducted

4.10 Construct validity and reliability of scale

Although construct validity and reliability of the scales have been demonstrated in previous studies, it remained crucial to validate the measurement scale and assess the reliability thereof. This is due to the fact that the adapted measurement scales have mainly been utilised in research studies conducted in developed markets where ecommerce is relatively matured. As ecommerce in South Africa is still growing, it was deemed to appropriate to test the validity and reliability of the measure.

4.10.1 Content and construct validity

Content validity refers to the extent to which the measurement instrument provides suitable information to answer the research questions and meet the research objectives (Saunders & Lewis, 2018). Therefore, careful consideration has been given to ensuring questions are clear, are not double-barrelled or leading. Questionnaires were also piloted to ensure that respondents understood the questions asked.

Construct validity is defined as the extent to which questions measure what it intends to measure. In other words, to what level does the questions represent a true reflection of the constructs under investigation. The measurement instrument used for the study was adapted from previous studies where high levels of internal consistency reliability, construct reliability and validity were demonstrated. Metrics from scale validation in previous studies are summarised below in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of validity and reliability metrics

Measurement Scale	Internal consistency reliability	Construct Reliability	Construct Validity	Source
	<i>Cronbach Alpha</i>	<i>CR</i>	<i>Average variance extracted</i>	
Emotional Engagement (Affective)	.894	.76	.873	Hollebeek, Glynn & Brodie (2014)
Social Shopping	.86	.69	0.87	Arnold & Reynolds (2012)
Self-Brand Connection	.85	.74	.85	Tan et al. (2018)

However, these measures have mainly been used in developed markets and due to the research being conducted in an emerging market context, it is required to confirm the construct validity. For this study, Exploratory Factor Analysis was first conducted to assess whether question items were clustering or converging together. Item loadings exceeding 0.5 indicates acceptable convergent validity (Islam et al. 2019). In other words, to assess whether items in the measurement scale “cluster” together to represent the construct.

Construct validity was conducted through confirmatory factor analysis through Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) techniques in order to measure the uniformity of the construct to determine the extent to which variables are similar and together explain the operationalised construct (Akroush & Al-Debei, 2015).

4.10.2 Construct reliability

To determine the internal consistency reliability, or construct reliability, Cronbach’s α has used as it measures the internal consistency among items measuring the same construct

(Harpe, 2015). Internal consistency was tested for each construct, namely social shopping, self-brand connection and emotional engagement.

4.11 Conclusion

This chapter provided a breakdown of the research design. The study undertaken assumed a positivist approach, taking observable and measurable quantitative method through online surveys. The measurement instrument was adopted from previous studies that have been validated using a seven-point Likert Scale. The data collection process was discussed and the statistically analysis process of the findings is provided. The next chapter presents the results of the study.

5 CHAPTER 5: RESULTS

5.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the statistical results of the study. It starts off with providing a comprehensive description of the sample. The chapter then moves on to provide a discussion on data screening and how the data was transformed. Validity and reliability of the measure scale and model is provided through Structural Equation Modelling techniques. Descriptive and Inferential statistics are provided, and the hypothesis are tested by means of multiple regression.

5.2. Description of the sample

To provide context on the sample a detailed description of the sample response rate and demographic breakdown of the sample is discussed in the next section.

5.2.1. Sample response rate

A total of 136 responses were captured. An average completion rate of 52% was obtained and the typical time spent on completing the questionnaire was 5 minutes. From the total of 136 responses, a total of 41 respondents indicated that they did not shop online and were excluded from the data analysis. This resulted in a total of 95 responses. Incomplete responses were excluded which resulted in another 5 responses being removed from the data. As indicated in Appendix 4, 10 outliers were removed from the data which then resulted in a total of 80 responses that were deemed fit for analysis.

5.2.2. Demographic profile of the sample

In order to describe the demographic distribution of the sample, frequency tables are presented for age, gender, race, province, and time period of when last shopped online and is discussed in the next section.

Table 2: Age profile (n=80)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	20-29	13	16.3	16.3	16.3
	30-39	45	56.3	56.3	72.5
	40-49	14	17.5	17.5	90.0
	50-59	4	5.0	5.0	95.0
	60+	4	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	80	100.0	100.0	

Most of the sample was aged 30 – 39 (56,3%), followed by 40-49 (17.5%) and 20-29 (16.3%). A small proportion of the sample was aged between 50-59 (5%) and aged 60 and above (5%). The age distribution is mostly aligned to population statistics from TGISA (2018C) which indicated that the biggest proportion of the population that shop online for fashion are aged 30-39 (27%), followed by 20-29 (27%), and 40-49 (26%) with a small proportion being aged 50-59 (8%) and 60+ (4%). In comparison, the sample is slightly skewed towards the 30-39 age bracket.

Table 3: Gender profile (n=80)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	57	71.3	71.3	71.3
	Male	23	28.7	28.7	100.0
	Total	80	100.0	100.0	

The sample distribution is skewed towards females within 71.3% being females and 28.7% male. According to TGISA, the gender split within South Africa for online shopping for fashion is 54% female and 46% male. This indicates that there does exist a gender skew towards females when considering online fashion shopping. However, in comparison, the sample for this study is slightly more skewed towards females than the South African population distribution. This is however to be expected as the study made use of a snowball sample where people are more likely to pass on the survey to people similar to them.

Table 4: Race profile (n=80)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Black	9	11.3	11.3	11.3
	Coloured	1	1.3	1.3	12.5
	Indian/Asian	15	18.8	18.8	31.3
	White	52	65.0	65.0	96.3
	Prefer not to say	3	3.8	3.8	100.0
	Total	80	100.0	100.0	

The majority of the sample indicated that they are white (65%). Furthermore, 18.8% respondents indicated that they are Indian, 11.3% of respondents indicated that they are black, and 1.3% indicated that they are coloured. Based on TGI figures, online shopping for fashion is racially distributed with 47% of people being black, 35% being white, 11% are coloured and 7% are Indian/Asian. Therefore, it is important to be cognisant that the sample of the study is skewed towards white groups rather than for black and coloured groups, not surprising since snowball samples comprise of greater homogeneity than other samples.

Table 5: Provincial breakdown (n=80)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Eastern Cape	3	3.8	3.8	3.8
	Free State	3	3.8	3.8	7.5
	Gauteng	67	83.8	83.8	91.3
	Kwa-Zulu Natal	2	2.5	2.5	93.8
	Western Cape	5	6.3	6.3	100.0
	Total	80	100.0	100.0	

The majority of respondents indicated that they reside in Gauteng (83.8%), with some respondents indicating that they reside in Western Cape (6.3%), Eastern Cape (3.8%) , Free State (3,8%), and Kwa-Zulu Natal (2,5%). According to TGISA, the majority of online fashion shoppers reside in Gauteng (44%), Western Cape (23%), and Kwa-Zulu Natal (12%) and Mpumalanga (8%). Other provincial breakdowns include North West (5%),

Eastern Cape (3%), Free State (3%), Limpopo (1%), and Northern Cape (1%). Therefore, the sample is skewed towards Gauteng. Although some respondents were from other provinces, the sample did not include any respondents from Mpumalanga, North West, Limpopo and Northern Cape. The sample was a convenience one based on snowball sampling, so it is not surprising that one province is mainly reflected.

Table 6: Time period of online shopping breakdown (n=80)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Shopped online for fashion in the past 3 months	60	75.0	75.0	75.0
	Shopped online for fashion longer ago	20	25.0	25.0	100.0
	Total	80	100.0	100.0	

75% shopped for fashion in the past three months and 25% shopped for fashion longer ago. This is consistent with online shopping behaviour statistics from TGISA which indicated that 78% of online shoppers have shopped for fashion online in the past three months and 22% of online shoppers have shopped for fashion longer ago. Therefore, the sample frequency of shopping online is aligned to population statistics.

5.3. Data screening and data transformation

In order to ensure that data is usable, reliable and valid, it is necessary to clean the data. First, it was necessary to clean out missing data. Two respondents had missing data for questions and therefore they were excluded from the study. This resulted in a total of 90 responses. Furthermore, outliers were removed from the data. Box plots (Appendix 1) were analysed and extreme outliers were identified on two of the social shopping items. These were consequently removed from the analysis which resulted in a total of 80 responses.

5.4 Validity and Reliability

In order to assess validity, an initial exploratory factor analysis was conducted after which confirmatory factor analysis was run using SEM. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha. Details of validity and reliability tests are described in the next section.

5.4.1 Exploratory Factor Analysis

To determine construct validity, an Exploratory Factor Analysis was conducted to assess construct validity.

Table 7: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.818
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1058.113
	df	120
	Sig.	.000

A correlation matrix (Appendix 1) indicated that all items have acceptable correlation scores. Table 6 indicates that the results are deemed acceptable on a KMO score of 0.818. Furthermore, Bartlett's Test as illustrated in Table 6 has a p-value < 0.05 which indicates that the observed variables are adequate for use in the Exploratory Factor Analysis.

Table 8: Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	7.356	45.975	45.975	7.356	45.975	45.975	5.551	34.694	34.694
2	2.181	13.631	59.605	2.181	13.631	59.605	3.681	23.005	57.699
3	2.163	13.517	73.122	2.163	13.517	73.122	2.468	15.423	73.122
4	.989	6.184	79.306						
5	.666	4.161	83.468						
6	.565	3.532	87.000						
7	.400	2.503	89.502						
8	.355	2.220	91.722						
9	.276	1.723	93.445						
10	.248	1.547	94.992						
11	.212	1.324	96.316						
12	.153	.956	97.272						
13	.142	.890	98.162						
14	.129	.808	98.970						
15	.098	.610	99.580						
16	.067	.420	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

In Table 8, based on the Eigenvalue rule of 1, the above analysis indicates that three factors have emerged that explain 73% of the measurement model.

Considering Harman's single factor test, the majority of variance explained is seen for Factor 1. However, Harman's single factor test has been argued to be outdated and therefore the study disregarded it is a major concern.

Table 9: Communalities

	Initial	Extraction
A1_SOCIAL	.673	.464
A2_SOCIAL	.809	.922
A3_SOCIAL	.710	.709
B1_EMOTIONAL	.719	.711
B2_EMOTIONAL	.708	.692
B3_EMOTIONAL	.839	.869
B4_EMOTIONAL	.815	.785
C1_SBC	.742	.624
C2_SBC	.825	.708
C3_SBC	.825	.722
C4_SBC	.794	.755
C5_SBC	.780	.621
C6_SBC	.652	.426
C7_SBC	.763	.587
C8_SBC	.808	.757
C9_SBC	.535	.469

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.

Principle Axis Factor analysis indicate that communalities are above 0.4 therefore deeming the variables adequate for Exploratory Factor Analysis.

Table 10: Rotated Component Matrix

	Component		
	1	2	3
A1_SOCIAL	-.124	.271	.771
A2_SOCIAL	.225	.010	.903
A3_SOCIAL	.217	.035	.865
B1_EMOTIONAL	.152	.875	.059
B2_EMOTIONAL	.180	.844	.158
B3_EMOTIONAL	.276	.886	.083
B4_EMOTIONAL	.287	.853	.095
C1_SBC	.619	.538	-.034
C2_SBC	.840	.158	.087
C3_SBC	.799	.312	.085
C4_SBC	.823	.311	-.017
C5_SBC	.789	.182	.109
C6_SBC	.663	.126	.213
C7_SBC	.722	.074	.369
C8_SBC	.857	.137	.173
C9_SBC	.708	.183	-.162

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

Based on the rotated component matrix in Table 10, it is seen that items C1, C2, C3, C4, C5, C6, C7, C8 and C9 has the highest load values for Factor 1, items B1, B2, B3, and B4 has the highest load values for Factor 2 and A1, A2, and A3 has the highest load values on Factor 3. Consequently, items were grouped accordingly, and constructs were formed based on the highest load values per Factor.

5.4.2 Confirmatory factor analysis

To conduct a confirmatory factor analysis, Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was used. SPSS AMOS 24 software package was used for the analysis. The process of conducting confirmatory factor analysis through SEM included obtaining an initial model and to run invariance tests from which the model was refined. The next step was to assess common method bias and impute composites. SEM is a multi-variate analysis that combines features of statistical techniques such as principle component and regression analysis and is suitable for developing and testing measurement models (Hair, Ringle & Sarstedt,

2012). SEM is suitable for measuring interrelated relationships between constructs determined by numerous variable items, therefore making it suitable for testing scale validity (Sarstedt, Ringle, Smith, Reams, & Hair, 2014). SEM allows for complex analysis related to determining model fit. A minimum sample of 50 is required to conduct SEM. As the sample size was 80, SEM was considered suitable for confirmatory factor analysis. SEM involves measuring latent variables (illustrated by the ovals in Figure 1) by the observed variable, in this case the items in the questionnaire and include the raw data obtained during the data collection phase (illustrated by the rectangles in Figure) (Sarstedt, Ringle, Smith, Reams, & Hair, 2014).

- **Initial model test**

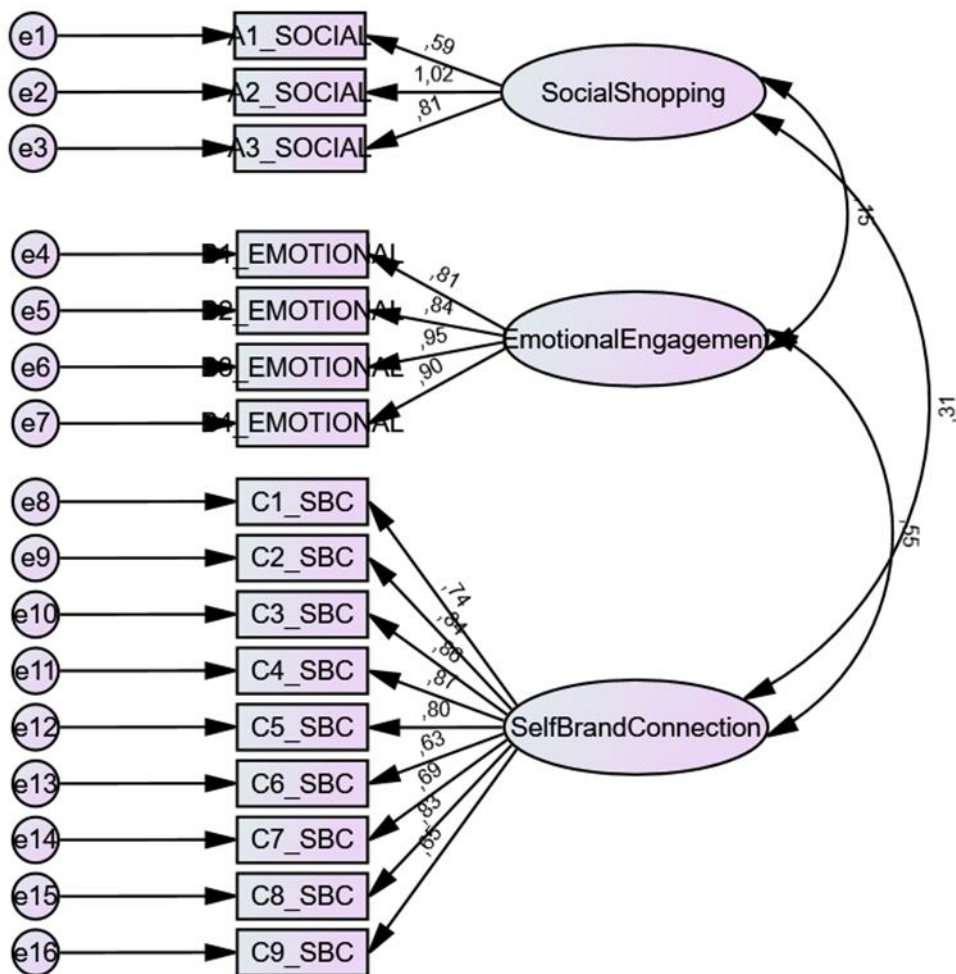


Figure 1: SEM initial model test

Convergent validity was established from the initial analysis, with most items scoring higher than 0.7 which are considered good (Sarstedt, Ringle, Smith, Reams, & Hair, 2014). Factor loadings of less than 0.65 were poor for the model, and e1(A1) and e13(C6) were subsequently removed. The below scores were obtained:

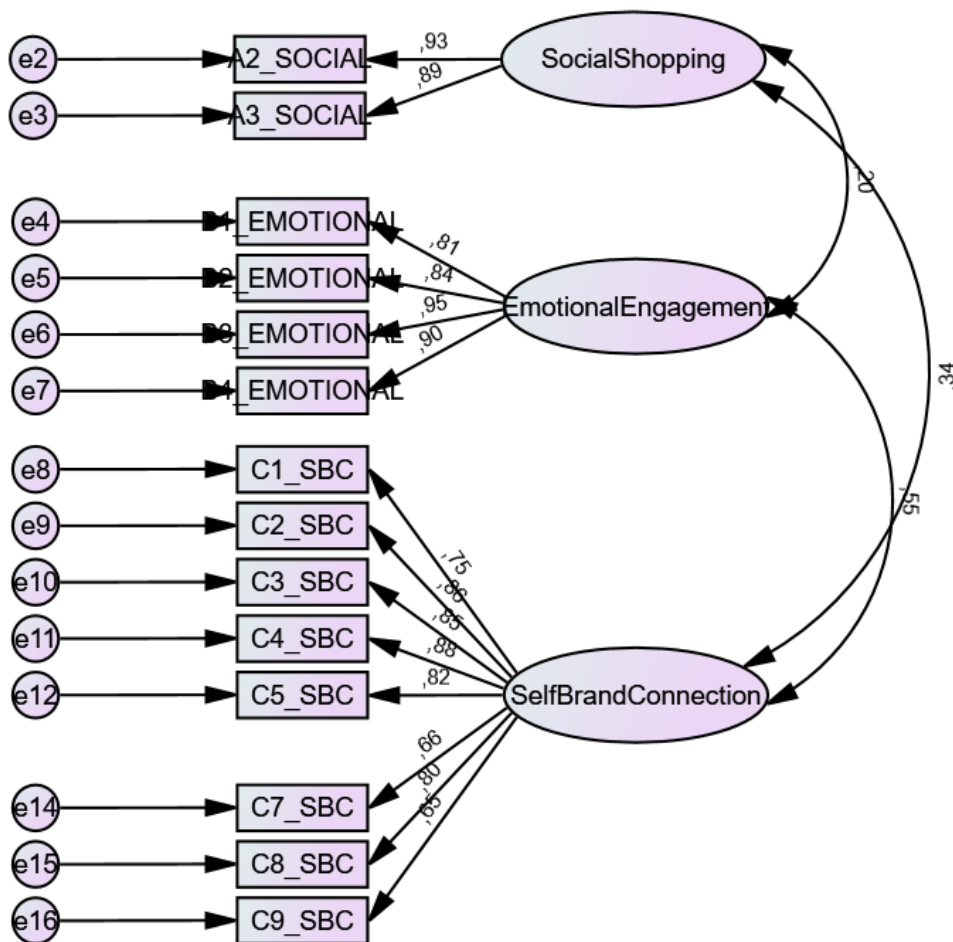


Figure 2: SEM revised model test

After the elimination of poor loaded items, the model was deemed fit as all items scored 0.65 and above with an average of above 0.7 for each construct (Sarstedt, Ringle, Smith, Reams, & Hair, 2014). Furthermore, discriminant validity of constructs achieved less than 0.7 scores which indicates that constructs do not have high co-variance.

Based on the modification indices, e1 and e13 were removed, which improved the model fit statistics as indicated in Table 11.

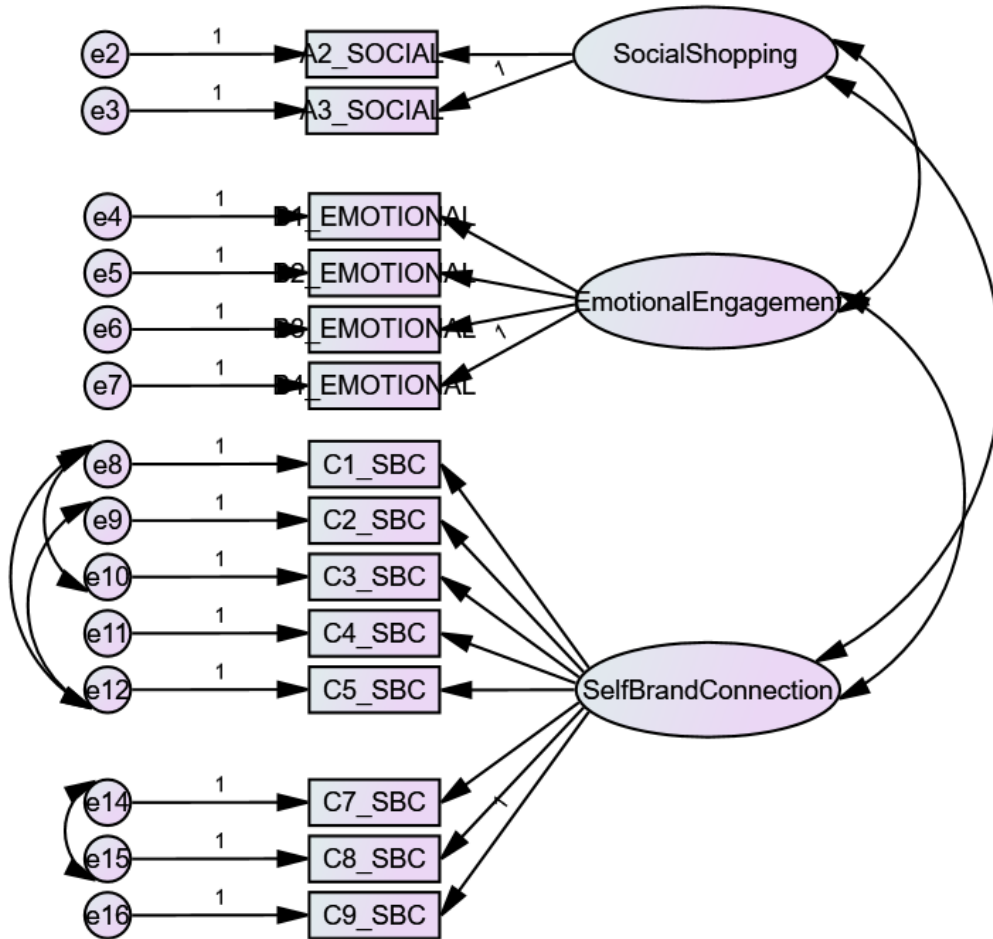


Figure 3: SEM final overall measurement model

Table 11: Fit statistics of the structural model - CMIN

Model	NPAR	CMIN	DF	P	CMIN/DF
Default model	36	98,246	69	,012	1,424
Saturated model	105	,000	0		
Independence model	14	976,056	91	,000	10,726

For the initial model test (Figure 1) the initial CMIN was 2.268. After removing low loading items, a CMIN of 1.889 was obtained as per Table 11. This indicates good model fit at 1.889 as the CMIN falls between 1 and 3.

Table 12: Fit statistics of the structural model - Baseline comparisons

Model	NFI Delta1	RFI rho1	IFI Delta2	TLI rho2	CFI
Default model	,893	,861	,962	,949	,961
Saturated model	1,000		1,000		1,000
Independence model	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000

Base line comparison requirements should be above 0.95+. In Table 12, the CFI is indicated to be 0.9561 which demonstrates that there exists a good model fit.

Table 13: Fit statistics of the structural model - RMSEA

Model	RMSEA	LO 90	HI 90	PCLOSE
Default model	,079	,045	,109	,075
Independence model	,351	,331	,371	,000

In order to achieve a good RMSEA a PCLOSE value of less than 0.05 indicate that a good model fit exists. In Table 13, RMSEA is indicated to be 0.79 and n PCLOSE value of 0.075 was obtained, which is above the 0.05 threshold. However, the results are also dependent on the sample size and due to a smaller sample size, the interpretation of the results can adhere to less stringent measures. Therefore, a good model fit exists.

- **Invariance tests**

In order to assess invariances, group invariance and metric invariance tests were run.

Table 14: Group invariance test by gender: CMIN

Model	NPAR	CMIN	DF	P	CMIN/DF
Default model	70	194,223	140	,002	1,387
Saturated model	210	,000	0		
Independence model	28	1125,665	182	,000	6,185

Table 15 : Group invariance test by gender: Baseline comparisons

Model	NFI Delta1	RFI rho1	IFI Delta2	TLI rho2	CFI
Default model	,827	,776	,945	,925	,943
Saturated model	1,000		1,000		1,000
Independence model	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000

Table 16: Group invariance test by gender: RMSEA

Model	RMSEA	LO 90	HI 90	PCLOSE
Default model	,070	,044	,093	,091
Independence model	,258	,243	,272	,000

A configural invariance test was run. The results obtained indicated adequate goodness of fit when estimating freely estimated model across groups, looking at gender (male and females).

- **Metric invariance**

Table 17: Metric invariance analysis: Chi-Square differences of unconstraint and constraint models

	Chi-square	df	p-val
Overall Model			
Unconstrained	194,2	140	
Fully constrained	210,8	154	
Number of groups		2	
Difference	16,6	14	0,278

A metric variance test was run by constraining the two models (unconstraint and fully constraint) to be equal. Thereafter a chi-square difference test was run between the fully constraint and unconstraint models. The results indicated that no variances exist with a p-value = 0.278 which is above the $p = 0.05$ threshold.

Table 18: Factor Matrix indicating Composite Reliability (CR), Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and discriminant validity

	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)	Social Shopping	Emotional Engagement	SelfBrand Connection
SocialShop	0,906	0,828	0,092	0,909	0,910		
Emotional	0,928	0,763	0,321	0,944	0,196	0,873	
SelfBrandC	0,923	0,604	0,321	0,937	0,304	0,567	0,777

Average variance extracted (AVE) was calculated by using the average variance extracted and composite reliability equation. In order to assess convergent validity, the AVE should be higher than 0.50 (Sarstedt, Ringle, Smith, Reams, & Hair, 2014). The AVE across all three constructs were higher than 0.50 and therefore convergent validity was demonstrated for social shopping (AVE = 0.828), emotional engagement (AVE = 0.763) and self-brand connection (AVE = 0.604).

Composite reliability (CR) needs to exceed a minimum of 0.70 in order to establish discriminant validity (Sarstedt, Ringle, Smith, Reams, & Hair, 2014). For all three constructs, composite reliability exceeded the minimum requirement, indicated by CR = 0.906 for social shopping, CR = 0.928 for emotional engagement and CR = 0.923 for self-brand connection.

Furthermore, discriminant validity has been achieved based on the square root of the AVE being greater than any interfactor correlation on the validity matrix as demonstrated in Table 18 (Sarstedt, Ringle, Smith, Reams, & Hair, 2014).

- Common method bias

Table 19: Common method bias analysis - Chi-Square differences of unconstrained and constraint models

	<u>Chi-square</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>p-val</u>
Overall Model			
Unconstrained	62,8	56	
Fully constrained	104,6	90	
Number of groups		2	
Difference	41,8	34	0,168

Common method biased test was run by comparing the unconstrained common method factor model to the fully, zero constraint common method factor models. The Chi-Square results were significant above the 0.05 level, indicating significant shared variance. Therefore, for the analysis, CLF were retained for imputing factor scores.

5.4.3 Reliability

Cronbach Alpha for each construct were analysed and results are summarised as below:

Table 20: Cronbach's Alpha

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha
Social Motivation	.888
Emotional Customer Engagement	.926
Self-Brand Connection	.924

The values are required to exceed >0.7 , which therefore indicates adequate scale reliability (Islam et al. 2019) and the internal consistency for the constructs measured are deemed acceptable.

According to conduct the inferential analysis, it was necessary to transform data into aggregated construct scores. For this reason, data was aggregated by making use of the mean for each item within a construct after first checking the reliability and validity.

5.5 Multiple regression analysis

Multiple regression is a widely used statistical technique in applied marketing sciences for determining linear relationships as well as to draw conclusions on predictor variables (Mason & Perreault, 1991). Multiple regression is a process that expands linear regression by including multiple independent variables to establish the relationship on a dependent variable (Allen, 2017). Multiple regression is different from correlation analysis in that it is suitable for prediction and casual inference (Allen, 2017). Therefore, multiple regression was suitable to test the hypothesis as the aim is to establish the relationship between two predictors, namely self-brand connection and social shopping, on emotional engagement.

5.5.1 Confirming multiple regression assumptions

- **Normality**

The first assumption considered for multiple regression is the existence of normally distributed errors (Allan, 2017). In order to assess normality, histograms were constructed to assess whether data falls on a bell-curve line and whether errors are normally distributed.

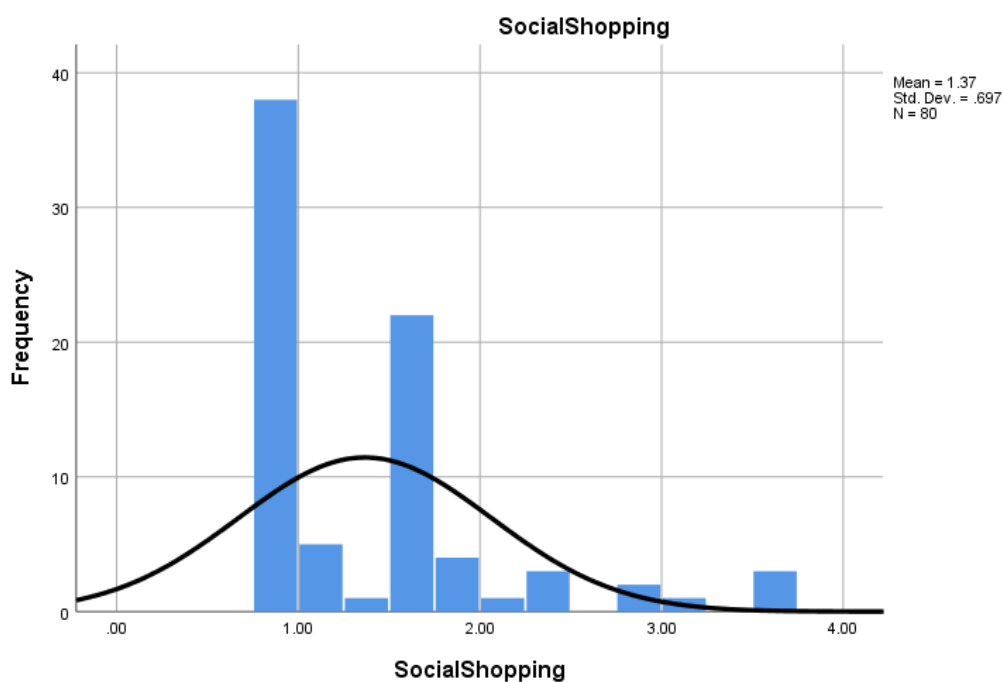


Figure 4: Histogram - Social Shopping

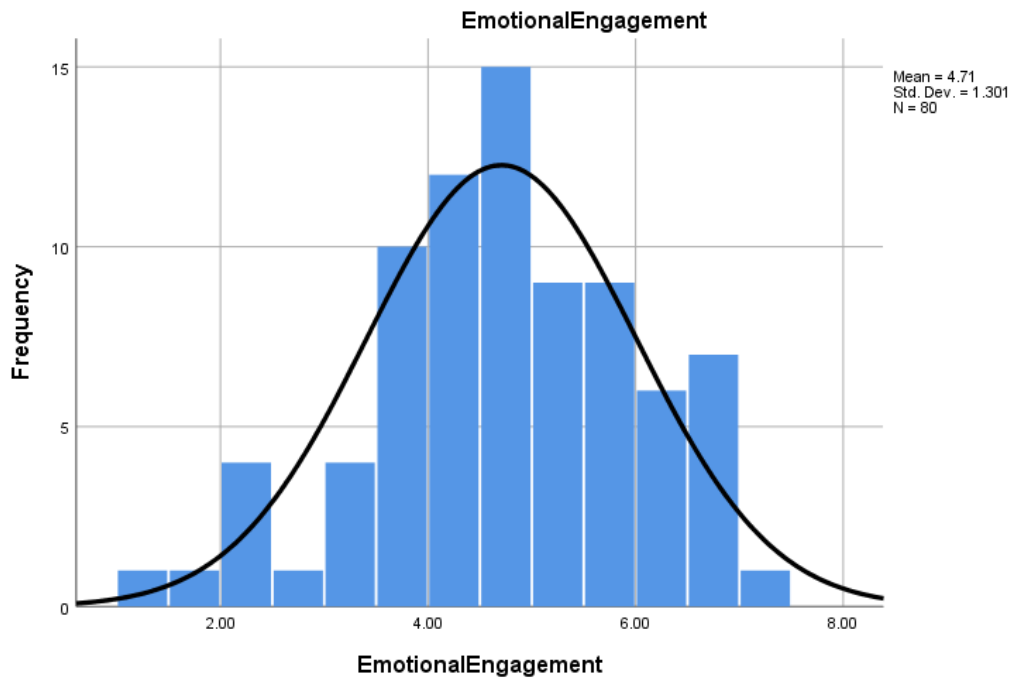


Figure 5: Histogram - Emotional Engagement

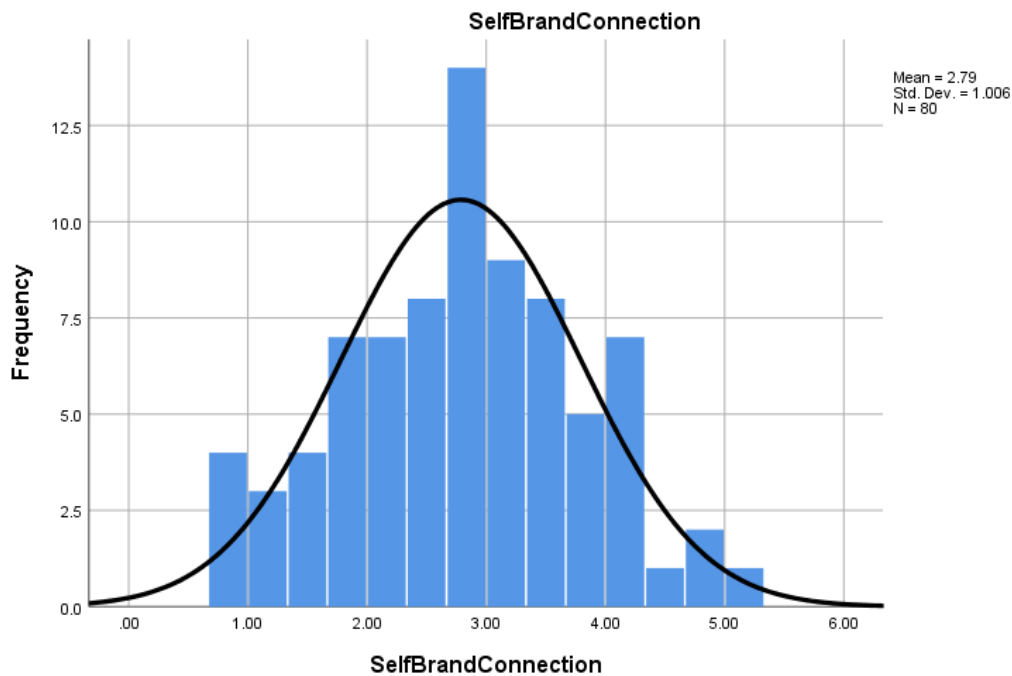


Figure 6: Histogram - Self-brand Connection

From the above histograms, it is indicated that emotional engagement (see Figure 5) and self-brand connection (see Figure 6) show normally distributed graph. Therefore, the assumption of normal distribution of errors is confirmed for the two constructs. However, when considering social shopping, the histogram distribution initially showed a negative skew (see Figure 4). For this reason, skewness analysis was conducted to assess whether the data was normally distributed.

Table 21: Analysis of skewness

		Social_Shopping	Emotional_Engagement	SelfBrand_Connection
N	Valid	80	80	80
	Missing	0	0	0
Skewness		1.481	-.328	.127
Std. Error of Skewness		.269	.269	.269
Kurtosis		2.003	.221	-.635
Std. Error of Kurtosis		.532	.532	.532

When considering the skewness of the responses, it is seen that responses for social motivation has a positive skew. Data is considered normal for skewness between -2.58 and + 2.58 (Hair 2010). Skewness factors for each construct were between this range and therefore data normality can be assumed.

Kurtosis was also considered to address any normality issues, where a large kurtosis indicates a high number of outliers. A kurtosis of between -7 and +7 is considered acceptable. Furthermore, the standard error of kurtosis was multiplied by three which gave a value of 1,596 for all three constructs. All values were less than three times the standard error therefore normal distribution can be assumed.

Table 22: Test for normality - Shapiro-Wilk test

	Social_Shopping	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Emotional_Engagement	1.00	.083	38	.200 [*]	.964	38	.253
	1.50	.202	6	.200 [*]	.912	6	.449
	2.00	.119	22	.200 [*]	.938	22	.184
	2.50	.279	5	.200 [*]	.885	5	.335
	3.00	.175	3	.	1.000	3	1.000
	3.50	.	2	.			
	4.50	.175	3	.	1.000	3	1.000

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

c. Emotional_Engagement is constant when Social_Shopping = 4.00. It has been omitted.

Shapiro-Wilk Normality test was also utilised as it is suitable for smaller sample sizes and a more robust measure of normality. Data is normally distributed for sig values that are greater than a value of 0.05. For this reason, data is assumed to be normally distributed as the sig value for the Shapiro Wilk test is great than 0.05.

- **Linearity**

Multiple regression is a linear based analysis technique and therefore it is required to assume linearity of the data to make predictions (Allen, 2017). According to Shapiro (2011), when determining associations between two variables, we should begin by plotting a scatterplot before we proceed with examining correlation. The scatter plot is a good starting point to indicate the type of relationship. If the data points of one variable plotted against the other tend to be positioned in a straight line, we can conclude that there is an indication of a linear relationship between the two variables (Shapiro, 2011).

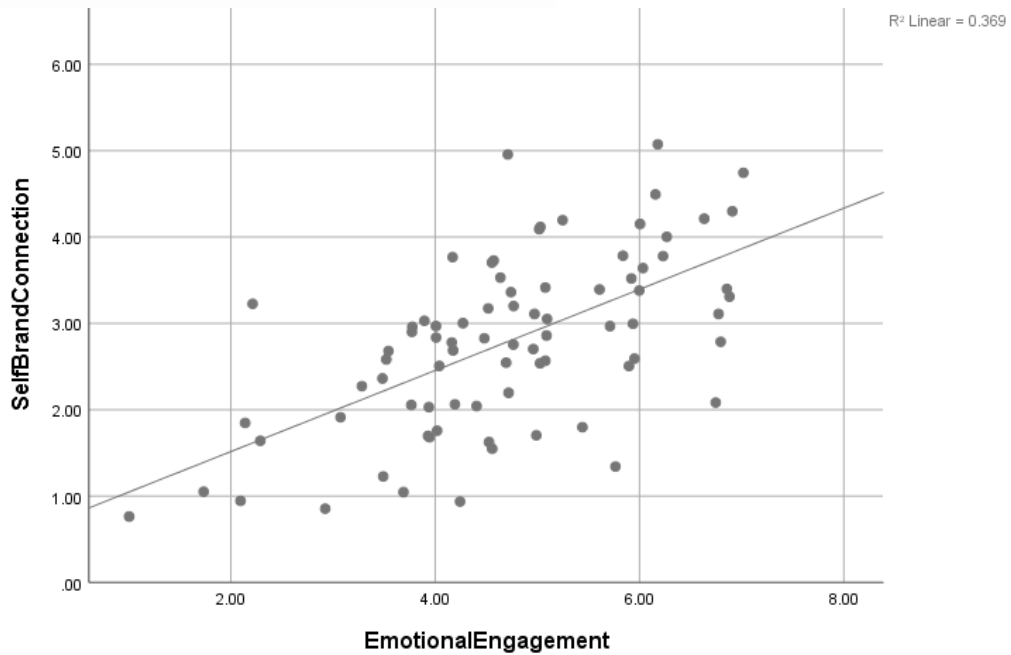


Figure 7: Scatter plot - Self-Brand Connection and Emotional Engagement

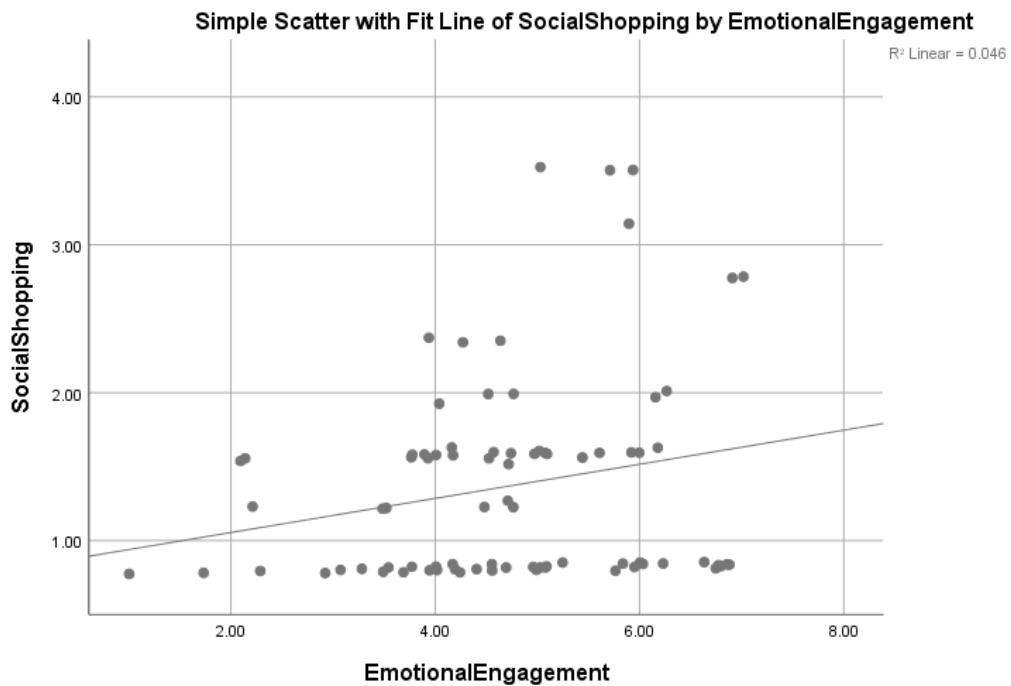


Figure 8: Scatter plot - Social Shopping and Emotional Engagement

From Figure 7 and Figure 8, it is indicated that (1) social shopping and emotional engagement and (2) emotional and self-brand connection show a relatively positive linear relationship. However, in order to accurately assess linearity, deviation from linearity was also assessed.

Table 23: ANOVA - Emotional Engagement and Social Shopping

			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Emotional_Engagement * Social_Shopping	Between Groups	(Combined)	20.799	7	2.971	1.920	.079
		Linearity	4.700	1	4.700	3.037	.086
		Deviation from Linearity	16.098	6	2.683	1.733	.126
	Within Groups		111.450	72	1.548		
Total			132.249	79			

Table 24: ANOVA - Emotional Engagement and Self-Brand Connection

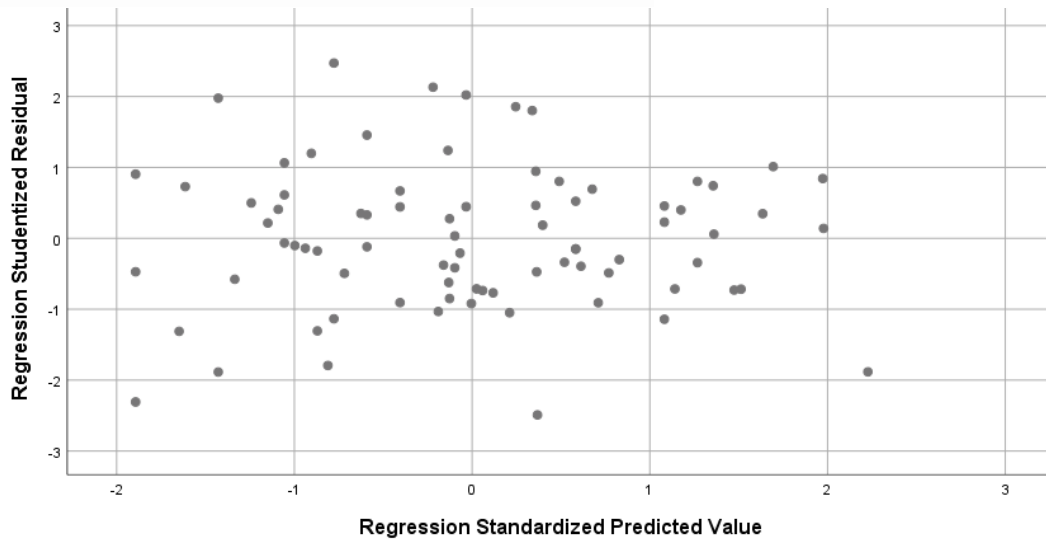
			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Emotional_Engagement * SelfBrand_Connection	Between Groups	(Combined)	63.296	34	1.862	1.215	.268
		Linearity	35.113	1	35.113	22.915	.000
		Deviation from Linearity	28.184	33	.854	.557	.959
	Within Groups		68.953	45	1.532		
Total			132.249	79			

From the analysis in Table 9 and Table 10, linearity was confirmed and therefore multiple linear regression was conducted to measure the strength of the relationship that exists between the outlined variables. The Sig. value for Deviation from Linearity is greater than 0.05 at 0.126 and 0.959 for the respective predictors and therefore linearity can be assumed. Therefore, multiple linear regression was deemed suitable for the analysis.

- **Homoscedasticity**

In order to run multiple regression, equal variances need to be assumed (Allen, 2017). When the data indicates low variance, homoscedasticity is assumed and when the data indicates high variance, heteroscedasticity is assumed. More specifically, homoscedasticity assumes that the data is equally distributed around the regression line.

Figure 9: Scatterplot – Testing for homoscedasticity



From Figure 9 it is evidence that there is no clear pattern therefore heteroskedasticity does not appear to be a problem.

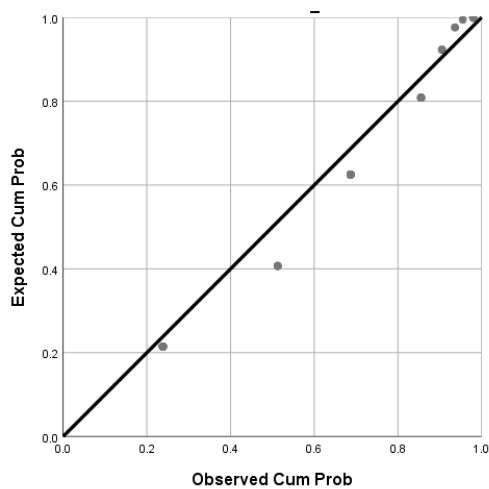


Figure 10: PP Plot – Social Shopping

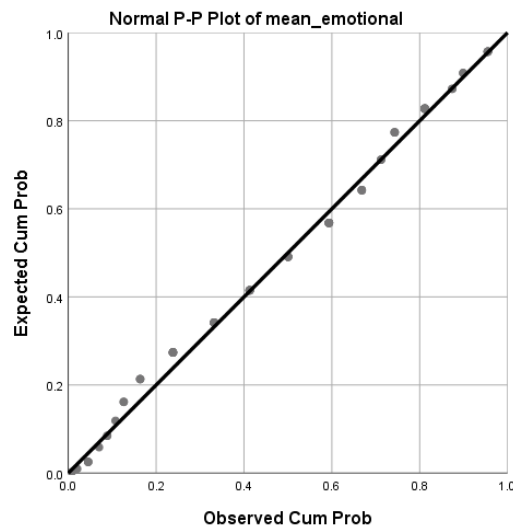


Figure 11: PP Plot – Emotional Engagement

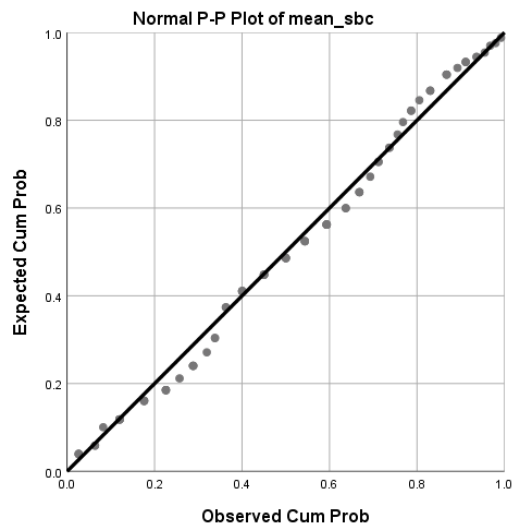


Figure 12: PP Plot – Self-brand Connection

From the above PP plots, it is indicated that social shopping, emotional engagement and self-brand connection show distributed data points around the regression line. Therefore, homoscedasticity exists, and equal variances are assumed.

- **Multicollinearity**

According to Allan (2017), the final assumption of multiple regression is that there should exist no multicollinearity. In other words, the predictors should not be highly correlated as this will limit the model's ability to predict the individual predictors contribution to the model. To establish multicollinearity, variance inflation factors (VIFs) were tested for. According to Delpechitre, Beeler-Connelly, and Chaker (2018) VIF should be less than 3 to establish non-multicollinearity.

Table 25: Multicollinearity and coefficients test

Model		Collinearity Statistics	
		Tolerance	VIF
1	Social_Shopping	.899	1.112
	SelfBrand_Connection	.899	1.112

a. Dependent Variable: Emotional_Engagement

From Table 25 it is indicated that the VIFs for (1) social motivation and emotional engagement and (2) emotional and self-brand connection were below 3, which provides an indication that non-multicollinearity can be confirmed. To confirm these findings, a Durbin-Watson score of 1.935 was obtained which falls within the 1.5 to 2.5 range deemed necessary for non-multicollinearity.

5.5.2 Multiple Regression Results

Measures of central tendency, including mean, median and mode, range, standard deviation and variance will be used to assess the distribution of scores across constructs.

Table 26: Descriptive statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Social_Shopping	80	1.00	4.50	1.7125	.90279
Emotional_Engagement	80	1.00	7.00	4.7781	1.29385
SelfBrand_Connection	80	1.00	6.50	3.4891	1.32006
Valid N (listwise)	80				

From the descriptive statistics, it is seen that respondents responded positively to the survey constructs with averages above 3,5 for self-brand connection and 4,9 for emotional engagement. The mean for social motivation was lower than the midpoint of the scale indicating that social motivations for shopping is generally low amongst participants.

Multiple regression is associated with measuring the contribution of an independent variable in predicting the dependent variable and significance is indicated where $p < 0.05$ (Allen, 2017). In this case, the independent variables, or predictors, are self-brand connection and social shopping and the dependent variable is emotional engagement.

Table 27: Multiple regression model summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	Change Statistics			Sig. F Change
						F Change	df1	df2	
1	.516 ^a	.266	.247	1.12265	.266	13.965	2	77	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), SelfBrand_Connection, Social_Shopping

b. Dependent Variable: Emotional_Engagement

In Table 27, the multiple correlation coefficient (R) equals 0.516 which represents the combined correlations of the two predictors (Allen, 2017). According to Allen (2017), an outcome closer to 1 indicates a good relationship and a value of 0 indicates that no relationship exists. From the results, it can therefore be concluded that the model fit indicates a moderate strength relationship between the predictors and the dependent variable. However, although R Square is an important measure, it is necessary to contextualise the findings by understanding the variance that the model shares.

The coefficient of multiple determination (R Square) is equal to 0.266. R Square represents the variance with which the independent variables predict the dependent variable. In this case, the independent variables explain the dependent variable by 26.6%.

Table 28: Multiple regression – ANOVA output

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	35.202	2	17.601	13.965	.000 ^b
	Residual	97.047	77	1.260		
	Total	132.249	79			

a. Dependent Variable: Emotional_Engagement

b. Predictors: (Constant), SelfBrand_Connection, Social_Shopping

The F ratio (F) is an indicator of the variability that is explained by the overall regression model (Allen, 2017). The above output in Table 28 provides evidence of a p-value < .0005. Therefore, at the p < .05 level and a confidence interval of 95%, the regression model is significant.

Table 29: Regression coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95,0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	2.978	.383		7.768	.000	2.215	3.742
	Social_Shopping	.039	.148	.027	.267	.790	-.254	.333
	SelfBrand_Connection	.496	.101	.507	4.919	.000	.296	.697

a. Dependent Variable: Emotional_Engagement

In Table 29, individual predictors, or the regression coefficients, illustrate the contribution of each independent variable on the dependent variable (Allen, 2017). A positive standardised coefficient (Beta) value indicates a positive relationship with larger Beta values indicating a larger contribution of the predictor on the relationship with the outcome variable (Allen, 2017). A t-test that indicates a higher value than the confidence level (Sig.) is deemed to indicate the confidence with which the data predicts the relationship (Allen, 2017). The above table illustrates that the p-value for self-brand connection is significant with a p-value of < 0.05 with a t-test of 4.919. For social shopping the p-value is greater than 0.05 with a t-test of .267 and therefore there does not exist a significant relation.

Table 30: Gender as a moderator for social shopping and emotional engagement – model summary

Model Summary	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
	0,2092	0,0438	1,664	1,1596	3	76	0,3308

Table 31: Gender as a moderator for social shopping and emotional engagement – model

Model	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	4,7724	0,1448	32,9583	0	4,484	5,0608
Social_S	0,2461	0,1644	1,4972	0,1385	-	0,5735
GENDER	0,207	0,3208	0,6451	0,5208	-0,432	0,8459
Int_1	0,1478	0,3328	0,4442	0,6582	-0,515	0,8106

Table 32: Gender as a moderator for social shopping and emotional engagement – test of highest order unconditional interaction

Test(s) of highest order unconditional interaction(s)	R2-chng	F	df1	df2	p
X*W	0,0025	0,1973	1	76	0,6582

Table 33: Gender as a moderator for self-brand connection and emotional engagement – model summary

Model Summary	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
	0,6174	0,3812	1,0768	15,6042	3	76	0,0000

Table 34: Gender as a moderator for self-brand connection and emotional engagement – model

Model	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
-------	-------	----	---	---	------	------

constant	4,7628	0,1162	40,9911	0	4,5314	4,9942
SelfBran	0,7937	0,1188	6,6789	0	0,557	1,0304
GENDER	0,3363	0,257	1,3089	0,1945	0,1755	0,8481
Int_1	-	0,238	-2,4377	0,0171	-	-

Table 35: Gender as a moderator for self-brand connection and emotional engagement – test of highest order unconditional interaction

Test(s) of highest order unconditional interaction(s)	R2-chng	F	df1	df2	p
X*W	0,0484	5,9424	1	76	0,0171

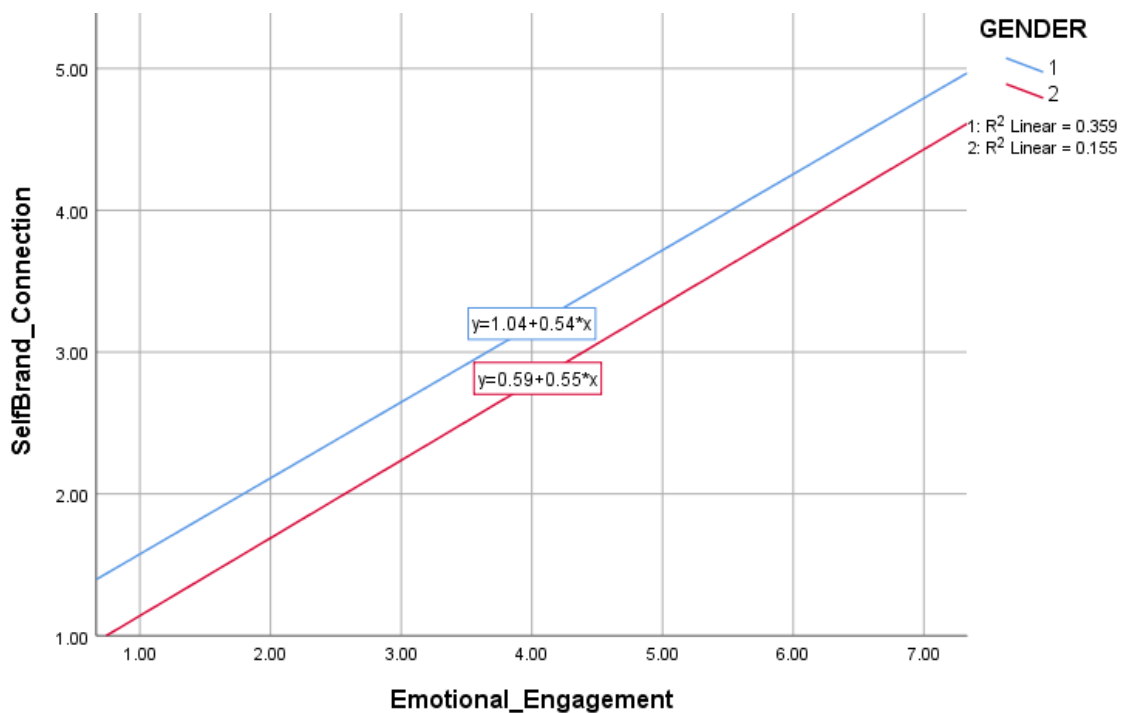


Figure 13: Scatter plot - Gender as a moderator for self-brand connection and emotional engagement

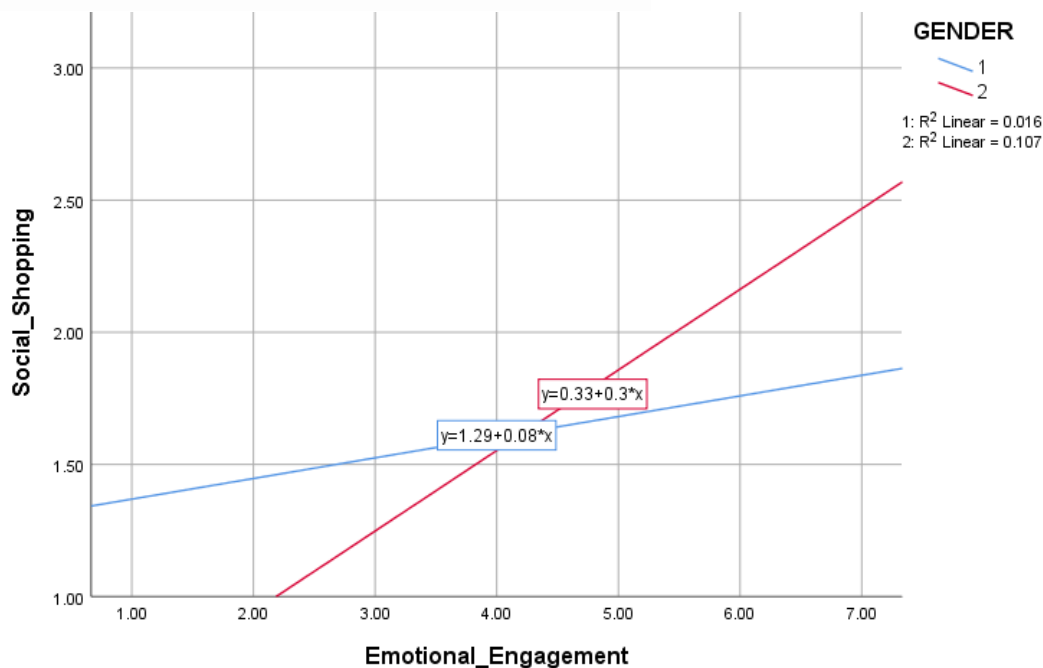


Figure 14: Scatter plot - Gender as a moderator for social shopping and emotional engagement

- **Research hypothesis 1**

A multiple regression was run to predict emotion engagement from social shopping. Social shopping does not add statistically significance to the prediction of emotional engagement at the $p < 0.5$ level ($t = 0.267$; $p = 0.790$). Based on this, it can be concluded, with 95% confidence, that social shopping does not predict emotional engagement. In other words, social motivation does not share a significant contribution to emotional engagement.

- **Research hypothesis 2**

A multiple regression was run to predict emotion engagement from self-brand connection. Self-brand connection is a significant predictor of emotional engagement based on a p value < 0.05 ($t = 4.919$; $p = 0.000$). Based on this, it can be concluded, with 95% confidence, that self-brand connection does predict emotional engagement. In other words, self-brand connection shares a significant contribution to emotional engagement.

- **Research hypothesis 3:**

In order to determine the effect of gender as a moderator, the PROCESS plug-in developed by Prof Hayes was used on SPSS. Gender as a moderator was analysed by determining the effect of gender on the relationship between social shopping and emotional engagement and self-brand connection on emotional engagement respectively.

Social shopping and emotional engagement.

The model fit analysis demonstrated a $p < 0.05$. Therefore, the effect of gender on the relationship between social shopping and emotional engage was deemed significant.

Self-brand connection and emotional engagement

The model fit analysis demonstrated a $p > 0.05$. Therefore, the effect of gender on the relationship between social shopping and emotional engage was deemed insignificant. When testing for the interaction effects by considering the Rsquare change, a value of -.0484 was obtained, indicated that the gender as a moderator explain an addition 4.8% of the variance. In other words, when gender as a moderator is considered, self-brand connection predicts emotional engagement with an additional 4.8%. Self-brand connection, moderated by gender, added statistically significant to the prediction of emotional engagement at the $p < .0.5$. When considering the regression lines, it is demonstrated that the RSquare is higher for females (code 1) than for males (code 2). In other words, there exists a stronger prediction for emotional engagement from self-brand connection when only considering females.

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter presented the research results based on the quantitative data collected. A total of 80 response were deemed valid and suitable for the analysis to test the hypothesis as set out in Chapter 3.

Demographic descriptions of the sample indicated that the majority of respondents were White, resided in Gauteng, were skewed towards females and aged between 30-39. The distribution of the sample can be expected as snow ball sampling was used and individuals are likely to distribute the survey to similar profiles as themselves.

The measurement scale and model were suitable for the analysis as demonstrated by the confirmatory factor analysis conducted through SEM which demonstrated the convergent and discriminant validity of the measurement model. Reliability was established through Cronbach's Alpha.

Multiple regression revealed that Hypothesis 2 and 4 was supported, however Hypothesis 1 and 3 was not supported. The next chapter discusses the results by drawing on theory discussed in Chapter 2.

6 CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

6.1. Introduction

This chapter provides a discussion on the set out answer the set-out research questions as formulated in Chapter 3. This chapter draws on the statistical analysis and results as described in Chapter 5 to provide evidence that supports or rejects the hypotheses set out in Chapter 3. Furthermore, this chapter discusses the results in the context of the relevant literature as discussed in Chapter 4.

6.2. Research Question 1:

Is there a relationship between social shopping and emotional engagement in online shopping?

Hypothesis 1: Greater degrees of social shopping will drive increased consumer engagement.

Based on the literature and evidence discussed in Chapter 2, it was expected that there exists a relationship between social shopping and emotional engagement within an online shopping environment.

Based on the linear regression analysis results discussed in Chapter 4, it can be concluded, with 95% confidence, that social shopping does not predict emotional customer engagement. Therefore, the hypothesis is rejected. In other words, higher levels of social shopping do not result in higher levels of emotional engagement.

Customer engagement is a motivational construct where customers are motivated by their goals to engage with a brand (van Doorn et al. 2010; Hollebeek, Glynn, & Brodie, 2011). Based on the findings, it is demonstrated that social shopping is not associated with emotional engagement. These findings contradict findings by Kang & Johnston (2015) that indicated that social shopping motives are a driver for online engagement. It is therefore argued that factors other than social shopping are important to consider when driving emotional engagement within a fashion commerce setting.

From a social exchange perspective, it can be argued that social shopping does not result into valuable benefits to the customer when shopping for a specific brand, and therefore they do not direct resources towards the brand.

Based on Högberg, Ramberg, Gustafsson, and Wästlund (2019) hedonic motives of shopping include various other goals such as enjoyment, excitement, and fun and therefore could explain why social shopping does not hold on its own as a driver of emotional engagement. From a social exchange theory, the limited relationship of social shopping and emotional engagement could be explained by considering that a combination of hedonic benefits would be viewed more equitable to the customer than only social shopping.

6.4. Research Question 2

Is there a relationship between emotional engagement and self-brand connection in online shopping?

Hypothesis 2: Greater degrees of self-brand connection will drive increased consumer engagement.

Based on the linear regression analysis results discussed in Chapter 4, it can be concluded, with 95% confidence, that self-brand connection predicts emotional engagement. Therefore, the hypothesis is accepted. In other words, emotional engagement has a positive relationship with self-brand connection.

These findings are supported by Harrigan, Evers, Miles, and Daly (2018) that illustrate that a positive relationship exists between strong connection with a brand and emotional engagement (Harrigan, Evers, Miles, & Daly, 2018). Based on social identity theory, individuals classify themselves by in-group and out-group categorisation. Based on social comparison, they will view themselves as part of the in-group which is deemed superior than the outgroup (Prentice, Han, Hua, & Hu, 2019; Scheepers, & Derks, 2016). In this case, higher personal identification and resonance with a brand will result in a customer viewing themselves as part of a specific in-group, which in turn fosters a stronger bond with the brand and strengthen their belongingness to the in-group. Therefore, stronger

self-brand connection and higher levels of self-identification with the brand, will result in increased emotional engagement.

Furthermore, according to social identity theory, individuals will also seek identification with a certain group to improve their self-esteem (Prentice, Han, Hua, & Hu, 2019). Consumer choices provide an avenue for customers as an extension of self, and the brands they consume will provide a sense of belonging to a certain social group (Papaoikonomou, Cascon-Pereira, & Ryan, 2014). In other words, the customer creates a social link with the brand where a psychological identification with the brand exists (Shen, Li, Sun, Cheng, & Wang, 2019). Therefore, it is argued that self-brand connection facilitates customers identification with the brand as part of their self-expression, which ultimately improves their sense of self and self-esteem which fosters emotional engagement with the brand.

Furthermore, online shopping for fashion is associated with identity, social and self-presentation (Kawaf & Istanbuluoglu, 2019). In other words, customers are motivated by psycho-social needs when they buy and consume fashion that result in feeling of belongingness. By identifying with an ecommerce brand, a bond is created where the customers feel strongly affiliated to the brand, which holds specifically true for fashion as a mechanism for self-identity and self-expression. As self-brand connection is fostered, it results in a higher sense of identity congruence, ultimately resulting in higher emotional engagement.

From a social exchange perspective, as customers will seek to maintain a positive balance between their investment and their benefit, they will continue to invest resources, amidst they experience positive benefits from the interaction. As engagement transcends transactional interaction, social benefits derived from the interaction could include social status, a sense of belonging, validation and information sharing. Such social interactions result in social bonding, that have positive emotional outcomes for the customer (Kang & Park-Poapes, 2011). Therefore, through social bonding created through the customer's social identification, emotional engagement is fostered.

The notion of reciprocity states that once a benefit is derived from the exchange, the party will feel obliged to respond by investing resources that are equitable or exceed the benefit derived. This will then trigger the receiving party to respond equitably, perpetuating a mutually beneficial exchange. In the context of the study, a customer will receive a social benefit from the brand, such as status or sense of belonging. They will therefore be motivated to respond through resource exchange. In this case, customers will leverage personal resources to invest in a brand up until they do not receive any further social benefits from engaging with the brand. In this case, as customers receive social benefits, they will invest emotional resources towards the brand. This will result in higher social benefits derived from social interactions resulted from engagement with the brand. As a result, the customer will be further motivated to engage with the brand and increased emotional investment will be directed towards the brand, resulting in an increasingly emotionally engaged customer.

6.3. Research Question 3

Is the relationship between social shopping, self-brand connection and emotional engagement in online shopping stronger for women than for men?

Hypothesis 3: Gender strengthens the positive relationship between social shopping and emotional engagement.

Hypothesis 4: Gender strengthens the positive relationship between self-brand connection and emotional engagement.

Based on the linear regression analysis results discussed in Chapter 4, it can be concluded, with 95% confidence, that gender, does not moderate the strength of the relationship between social shopping and emotional engagement. Therefore, hypothesis 3 is rejected. In other words, social shopping of females is not a stronger predictor of emotional engagement.

Social shopping was not a predictor for either females or males. This is in line with Lee, Sener, Mokhtarian, & Handy, (2017) that found that studies on gender as a moderator has been contradictory. As customer engagement is underpinned by customer motives to achieve a goal (van Doorn et al. 2010; Hollebeek, Glynn, & Brodie, 2011), this implies that

there are other factors that drive both genders to emotionally engage with an ecommerce fashion website.

Based on the linear regression analysis results discussed in Chapter 4, it can be concluded, with 95% confidence, that gender does moderate the strength of the relationship between self-brand connection and emotional engagement. Therefore, hypothesis 4 is accepted. In other words, self-brand connection of females, compared to men, are a stronger predictor of emotional engagement.

These findings are supported by Chang, Chih, Liou, & Yang (2015) who illustrated that gender differences play a key role in how consumers engage online. The findings are further corroborated as previous studies have demonstrated that males are more likely to engage online based on functional and cognitive motives, whereas women are more likely to engage online due to social benefits derived from shopping (Heng, Gao, Jiang, & Chen, 2018; Gentina & Chandon, 2014). This study specifically found that females are not necessarily more likely to engage online due to social shopping. Rather, in the context of social identity theory, when females identify with a brand and hold a strong self-brand connection, they have increased levels of emotional engagement.

Islam et al. (2019) argue that females build more social relationship-orientated attachment to others in comparison to men. Therefore, females derive more benefits from social exchanges. According to social exchange theory, women will therefore perceive higher social benefits, such as status and a sense of belonging from engaging with a brand when shopping online. An addition, based on social identity theory, common bonds established will lead to identification with friends and family. Higher social identification with an ecommerce brand would result in higher emotional engagement with the brand. In this way, through a strong self-identification with the brand, that results in positive benefits related to in-group status and a sense of belonging, emotional engagement is fostered with the ecommerce brand. More specifically, in the context of fashion, women are more likely to express their identities through buying and consuming fashion (Ruane & Wallace, 2013). In other words, females are more likely to create self-identity links with fashion

brands, and as a result of the positive social benefits associated with buying, consuming and interacting with a specific brand, emotional engagement is enhanced.

Females gain more social value from fashion as they attribute high levels of self-identification and self-expression towards fashion. Therefore, from a social exchange perspective, they derive higher social value from consuming fashion. As social theory posits that customers that customers will attempt to retain an equitable relationship, they will invest higher levels of resources in order to reciprocate and balance out the benefits that they receive. In other words, due to the fact that they receive social benefits, they will increased their emotional investment towards the brand which will result in higher levels of customer engagement.

6.4 Conclusion

This chapter provided an in-depth discussion of the findings in relation to the theoretical underpinnings outlined in Chapter 4. This chapter specifically unpacks the three main research questions and provide an explanation of the findings by drawing on findings from previous studies and contextualising the findings in relation to the identified social theories.

7 CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

7.1 Introduction

The study is mainly was mainly focused on the relationship between social shopping, self-brand connection and emotional engagement. The study secondly positions the understanding of customer engagement within social psychology perspectives as an alternative philosophy to describe customer engagement and how it relates to online shopping for fashion. This chapter highlights the key findings of the study and provides a discussion on the implications for theory and management practices. The chapter also discusses the limitations of the study and provides recommendations for future studies.

7.2 Findings

The study set out to investigate (1) the relationship between social shopping and emotional customer engagement, (2) the relationship between emotional customer engagement and self-brand connection, and (3) whether gender moderates the relationship between social shopping and emotional engagement and self-brand connection and emotional engagement respectively. The study undertook a social identity and social exchange perspective to explain the tested relationships.

Findings indicated the self-brand connection is a positive predictor of emotional customer engagement. Customers seek psychosocial benefits related to self-expression, self-identification and affirmation through the brands that they interact with and consume. According to social exchange theory, when such benefits are derived from brand, customers will feel the need to reciprocate and invest emotionally towards the brand, resulting in emotional engagement. Furthermore, when considering the application of social identity, through self-brand connection, customers view brands are part of their in-group and which then become part of their social identities, fostering social bonds that result in higher emotional engagement.

Results also demonstrated that gender moderated the relationship between self-brand connection and emotional customer engagement, however, did not moderate the relationship between social shopping and customer engagement. These findings indicate that psycho-social aspects related to how customers self-identify with a brand are more

important for females to emotionally engage with a brand. As females have higher identification and self-expression fulfilment through fashion, it is argued that self-brand connection within an ecommerce environment is crucial for emotional engagement. In other words, from a social exchange perspective, as females derive more personal social benefits related to fashion, they will attempt to achieve an equitable standing, where they will be more likely to invest higher levels of resources in reciprocation to the benefits that they receive. In other words, they will have increased emotional investment directed to a brand that provides them with social benefits, ultimately resulting in higher levels of customer engagement.

Last, the findings of the study also demonstrated that social shopping does not have a significant relationship with emotional engagement. Contradictory to our initial premise, social shopping has little impact on customers to emotionally engage with a brand, and there exist no differences between women and men.

7.3 Theoretical implications

First, the research contributes to the academic literature by extending the understanding of customer engagement by focusing on the emotional dimension of customer engagement. The study specifically focuses on social shopping and self-brand connection. More specifically, it was demonstrated that self-brand engagement is a predictor of customer engagement. However, findings also indicated that social shopping was not a significant predictor of emotional engagement. The findings of the research further highlight that customer engagement is a complex phenomenon and many factors contribute to customer engagement.

The study further extends on the engagement literature and addresses calls from nascent publications to focus on different theoretical premises. For the purpose of the study, customer engagement was described with a focus on psychology theories related to social identity and social exchange theory. The study demonstrates the applicability of social psychology theories in the study and explanation of customer engagement.

The study contributes to prior research on the moderating role of gender within the online shopping context. This finding indicates that demographics such as gender play a role in

customer engagement, specifically for self-brand connection, and research should not ignore these factors within the description of customer engagement within the online context.

Furthermore, the study also contributes to a gap in knowledge related to shopping for fashion within the online context. More specifically, the study investigated customer engagement within a fashion ecommerce environment further extending knowledge on customer engagement, where only limited number of past studies have investigated online shopping for fashion within the customer engagement literature.

7.4 Implications for management

The study contributes to customer engagement within a fashion ecommerce environment through providing insights to facilitate improved marketing strategies and website design that encourages emotional engagement with a brand by emphasising the importance of self-brand connection within the fashion ecommerce context.

Based on the findings, it is suggested that online retailers can increase demand through incorporating support that encourage self-expression and social bonding. It is suggested that marketers need to understand their target market fully to incorporate visuals and language that resonate with the self-identity and self-concept to foster higher levels of self-brand connection as this ultimately leads to emotional engagement.

In addition, it is suggested that practitioners could improve targeting effectiveness by tailoring strategies for specific segments by considering different strategies for males and females. The more customers can personally identify with the marketing, branding and the online website, the greater their emotional engagement to the brand would be.

7.5 Limitations of the research

The study has various limitations. First, the sampling method used, namely convenience and snowball sampling limits generalisability of the findings.

Due to time constraints, the study has a cross sectional time dimension. As the study was not conducted over an extended period, it is limited in being able to understand the role

social shopping, self-brand connection and emotional engagement on consumer behavioural outcomes of online shopping over time. Future studies could explore longitudinal data to understand how emotional engagement and social factors manifest over time.

Another limitation of the study is that since surveys are completed online, respondent questions cannot be answered, and questions cannot be explained.

The characteristics of the participants are also limiting in that only participants that have shopped online have included in the sample. The findings can therefore not be generalised to individuals that do not shop online. Other factors could be influencing their emotional engagement to a brand and their decision to shop online.

The study also makes use of a mono-method design. This limits triangulation and validation of findings through qualitative means.

The data is also limited to online consumers in South Africa, therefore application to other countries is limited as consumer engagement might differ from country to country.

The study also only focuses on one dimension of customer engagement namely emotional engagement. Future studies could take a more comprehensive approach to understand the role of social shopping and self-brand connection on a more holistic level of customer engagement by considering cognitive and behavioural engagement.

7.6 Suggestions for future research

As engagement is context specific, future studies could investigate the role of social shopping, self-brand connection and emotional engagement within low involvement product categories such as groceries, airline travel and electronic purchases.

Future studies could potentially investigate the different shopper segments and shopping missions. In other words, younger segments could engage differently with ecommerce brands in comparison to older segments. Engagement could also be different heavy online shoppers as compared to shoppers that shop less frequently online.

Future studies could investigate the role of social shopping and self-brand connection by considering the total customer engagement dimensions including cognitive and behavioural engagement.

Additionally, studies could potentially investigate a holistic approach to hedonic factors that do not exclusively focus on social shopping, but rather a combination of hedonic factors that could predict emotional engagement such as joy and fun.

Although social shopping did not show significance towards the relationship on emotional engagement within an ecommerce setting, future studies could also investigate social shopping within off-line retail. Furthermore, as omni-channel retailing is also gaining traction, social shopping and emotional engagement could be investigated with the context of the fully networked systems, not exclusively focusing on one channel or commerce.

Future research studies could potentially investigate other moderating variables such as race and age.

Future studies could also potentially investigate customer engagement from other social psychology perspectives such as social learning theory.

7.7 Conclusion

The study provides an alternative lens with which customer engagement can be viewed by demonstrating the applicability of social psychology theories in the understanding of customer engagement. Furthermore, the study mainly focuses on emotional engagement as a dimension of customer engagement which provides a more in-depth understanding of emotional engagement. The study demonstrated that self-brand connection is a crucial element in building customer engagement, specifically emotional engagement within an ecommerce environment. It has also been demonstrated that gender has an impact on customers self-brand connection and the relationship it shares with emotional engagement. It was however demonstrated that social shopping potentially is ineffective in building emotional engagement.

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9. APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Literature review summary

Engagement object	Authors	Paper Type	Dimensionality	Construct	Context	Industry	Theoretical framework
Community members	Dessart, Veloutsou, & Morgan-Thomas (2015)	Empirical - Qualitative	Cognitive, emotional and behavioural	Consumer engagement	Social media context	Generic	
Brand	Yasin, Liébana-Cabanillas, Porcu, & Kayef (2020)	Empirical - Quantitative	Cognitive, emotional and behavioural	Online brand community engagement	Online context	Finance sector	Brand identity and brand experience
Brand and service	Prentice, Wang, & Loureiro (2019)	Empirical - Quantitative	Cognitive, emotional and behavioural	Customer engagement	Services context	Airline	Brand experience and love
Brand	Gilgor, Bozkurt, & Russo (2019)	Empirical - Quantitative	Cognitive, emotional and behavioural	Customer engagement	Social media context	Generic	Complexity theory
Online brand community	Prentice, Wang, Hua, & Hu (2019)	Empirical - Quantitative	Attitudinal and behavioural	Customer engagement	Online context	Tourism	Social identification theory
Brand	Högberg, Ramberg, Gustafsson,	Empirical - Experimental	Behaviourial engagement	Customer engagement	Off-line context (retail)	Sporting goods	Flow

	& Wästlund (2019)						
Customer- media engagement	Thakur (2016)	Empirical - Quantitative	Cognitive, emotional and behaviourial	Customer engagement	Mobile devices for shopping		Unified Theory of Acceptance and Usage of Technology
Online brand community	Islam & Rahman (2016)	Empirical - Quantitative	Behaviourial engagement	Customer engagement	Social media context	Generic	Stimulus- Organism- Response
Online brand community	Baldus, Voorhees, & Calantone (2015)	Empirical - Qual & Quant	Multidimensional - social status enhancement, social interaction, learning more about using the product and having fun	Online brand community engagement	Online context	Generic	Grounded theory
Online Consumer to consumer	Abdul-Ghani, Hyde, Marshal (2019)	Empirical - Qualitative	Motivation driven	Consumer engagement	Online auction	Generic	Experiential view of the consumer
Brand	Harrigan, Evers, Miles, & Daly (2018)	Empirical - Quantitative	Cognitive, emotional and behaviourial	Customer engagement	Social media context	Tourism	Social exchange theory

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Brand	Ahn & Back (2018)	Empirical - Qual & Quant	Cognitive, emotional and behavioural	Customer brand engagement	Resort experience context	Hospitality	Stimulus-Organism-Response
Brand	Eigenraam, Eelen, van Lin, & Verlegh (2018)	Empirical - Quantitative	Cognitive, emotional and behavioural	Customer engagement	Digital platforms	Generic	Uses and gratifications framework
Brand	Lee, Chan, Chong, & Thadani	Empirical - Quantitative	Cognitive, emotional and behavioural	Customer engagement	Omni-channel	Omnichannel retailing	Social exchange theory
Brand	Erdoğan & Tatar, 2015)	Conceptual	Cognitive, emotional and behavioural	Customer engagement	Social commerce	Generic	Stimulus-Organism-Response
Brand/Company	Rather & Sharma (2019)	Empirical - Quantitative	Multidimensional - enthusiasm, attention, absorption, interaction and identification	Customer engagement	Services context	Hospitality	Social exchange theory
Brand	Islam, Hollebeek, Rahman, Khan, & Rasool (2019)	Empirical - Quantitative	Cognitive, emotional and behavioural	Customer engagement	Services context	Hospitality	Social exchange perspective

Brand	Graffigna & Gambetti, 2015	Conceptual	Cognitive, emotional and behavioural	Consumer-brand engagement	Total brand experience	Apparel, Accessories, Technology, Automotive, FMCG	Grounded theory
Brand	So, King, & Sparks, 2012	Emperical - Quantitative	Identification, enthusiasm, attention, absorption, interaction		Social media context	Tourism	Employee engagement
Brand	Khan, Rahman, & Fatma, 2016	Emperical - Quantitative	Cognitive, emotional and behavioural	customer-brand engagement	Online banking	Finance sector	Brand experience

Appendix 2: Theoretical constructs matrix

Construct	Label	Item	Source
Social shopping	SS	I go online shopping with my friends or family to socialize. I enjoy socializing with others when I shop online. Online shopping with others is a bonding experience	Arnorld and Reynolds (2012)
Emotional Engagement	EE	I feel very positive when I use this online store Using this online store makes me happy. I feel good when I shop on this online store I'm proud to shop on this online store	Hollebeek, Glynn, & Brodie
Self-brand connection	SBC	To what extent does this online store reflect part of you and who you are? To what extent do you feel personally connected to this online store?	Tan, Salo, Juntunen, & Kumar (2018)

Appendix 3: Survey Questionnaire

**THE ROLE OF SOCIAL SHOPPING AND SELF-BRAND CONNECTION ON CUSTOMER
ENGAGEMENT: AN ONLINE SHOPPING CONTEXT**

Introduction

Good day,

I am currently a student at the University of Pretoria's Gordon Institute of Business Science and completing my research in partial fulfilment of an MBA. I am conducting research on the reasons people decide to visit an online clothing shop. To that end, you are asked to complete a survey about on this topic. This will help us better understand online shopping for clothing and should take no more than 5 minutes of your time.

Your participation is voluntary, and you can withdraw at any time without penalty. Your participation is anonymous and only aggregated data will be reported. Your responses will be used for academic research purposes only. By completing the survey, you indicate that you voluntarily participate in this research. If you have any concerns, please contact my supervisor or me. Our details are provided below.

Researcher name: Ruchelle Mouton
Email: 24289125@mygibs.co.za
Phone: 082 414 9362

Research Supervisor: Kerry Chipp
Email: chippk@gibs.co.za
Phone: 082 330 8759

Would you be willing to participate?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Continue
No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Thank respondent and terminate interview

Section S: Screener

S1. What is your age (Programmer: Ask all)
(Programmer: Close interview for respondents aged 17 and below)

S3. Which of the following best describes you....?

In the past three months you have.....

Programmer: Single Mention

Shopped for fashion or clothing online	01	Continue
I do not shop online for clothing or fashion related items	02	Close

Section A – Online Shopping Motivations

Using a 0-7 point scale, please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the below statements on the reason for you to shop online?

0= “Completely disagree” and 7= “Completely disagree”

Programmer: Randomise list

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A1. When I shop online, I enjoy sharing my experience with my friends or family on social media such as Instagram or Whatsapp.								
A2. I enjoy socialising and sharing my experience with others on social media when I shop online.								
A3. Sharing my online shopping experience on social media with others is a bonding experience								

Section B – Emotional Engagement

For the next section, thinking of your preferred online clothing store, please answer the questions below:

B5. Using a 0-7 point scale, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the below with regards to your preferred online clothing store:

0= “Completely disagree” and 7= “Completely agree”

Programmer: Randomise list

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B1. I feel very positive when I use this online store								
B2. Using this online store makes me happy.								

B3. I feel good when I shop on this online store								
B4. I'm proud to shop on this online store								

Section C – Self-Brand Connection

For the next section, thinking of your preferred online clothing store, please answer the questions below:

B5. Using a 0-7 point scale, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the below with regards to your preferred online clothing store:

0= “Completely disagree” and 7= “Completely agree”

Programmer: [Randomise list](#)

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C1. The extent to which this online store reflect part of you and who you are?								
C2. The extent to which you feel personally connected to this online store?								
C3. This online shopping site reflects who I am.								
C4. I can identify with this online shopping site								
C5. I feel a personal connection to this online shopping site								
C6. I use this online shopping site to communicate who I am to other people								
C7. I think this online shopping site (could) help me become the type of person I want to be.								
C8. I consider this online shopping site to be 'me' (It reflects who I consider myself to be or the way that I want to present myself to other(s)).								
C9. This online shopping site suits me well.								

Section D – Demographics

E1. Gender:

Male	01
Female	02

E2. Could you please tell me what ethnic group you are in?

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White	01
Black	02
Coloured	03
Indian / Asian	04
Not willing to say	05

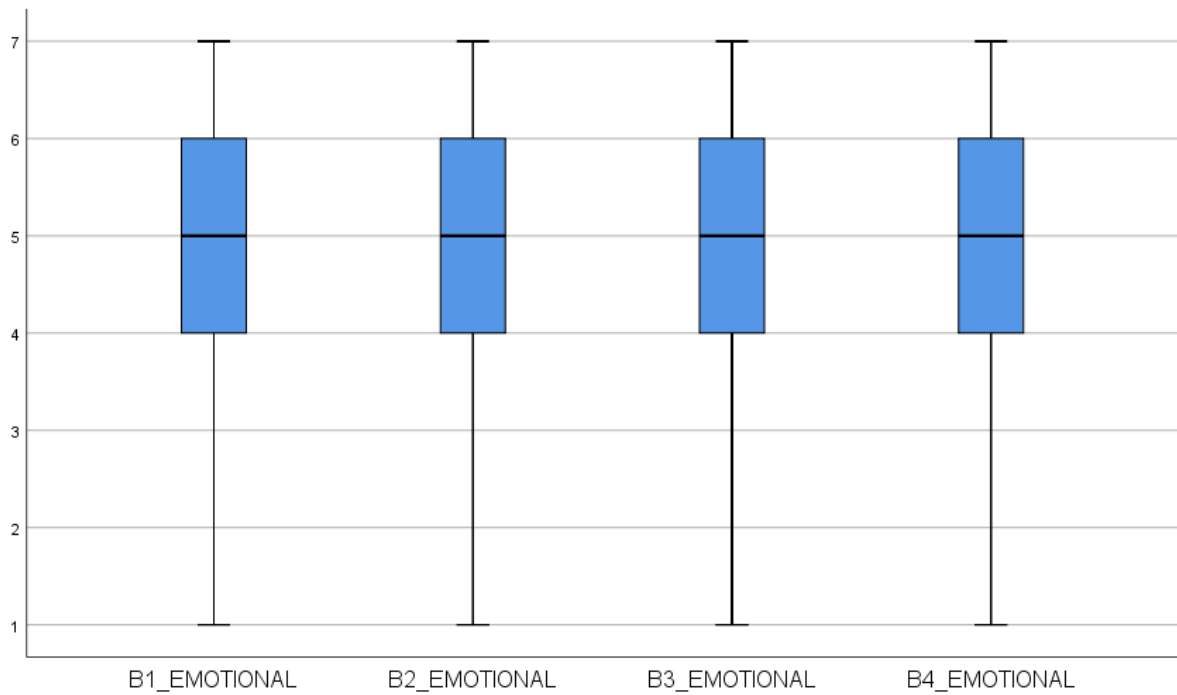
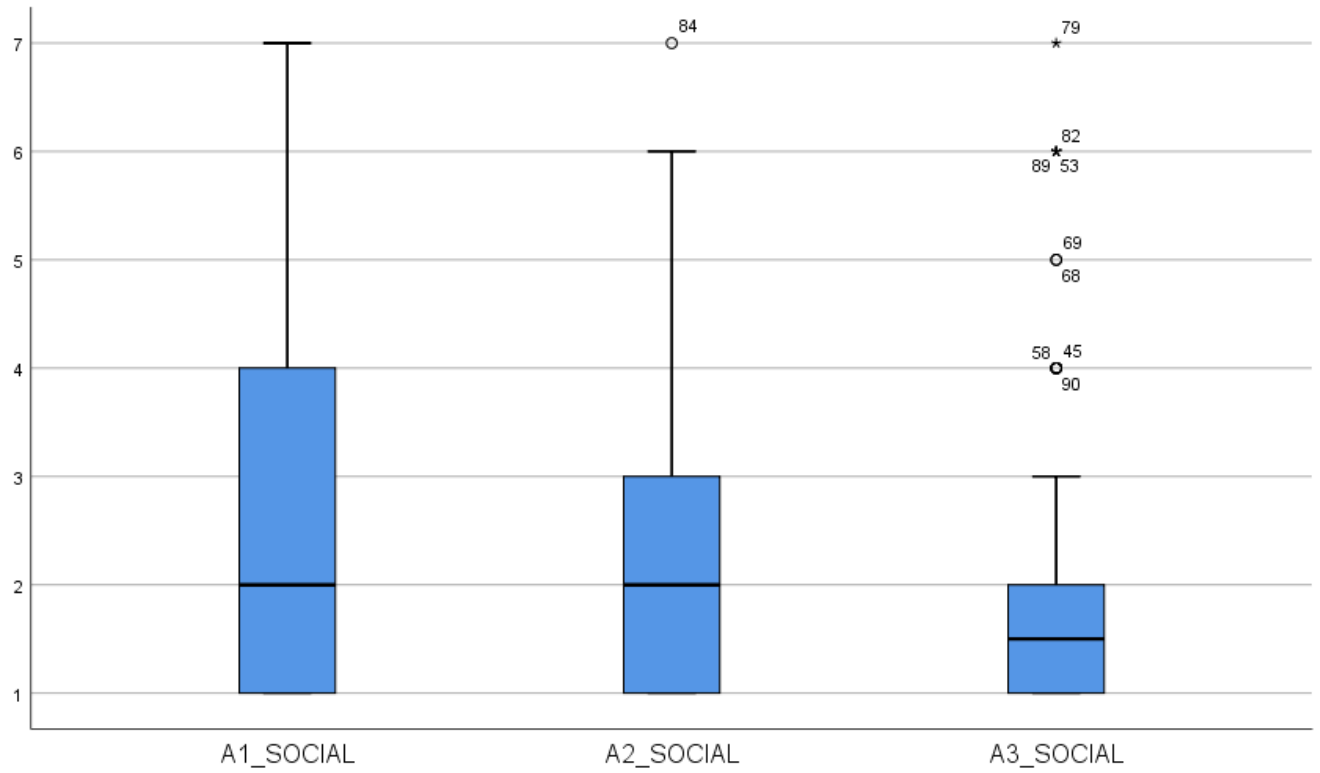
E3. In which province do you reside?

Eastern Cape	01
Free State	02
Gauteng	03
Kwazulu - Natal	04
Limpopo	05
Mpumalanga	06
North - West	07
Northern Cape	08
Western Cape	

CLOSING

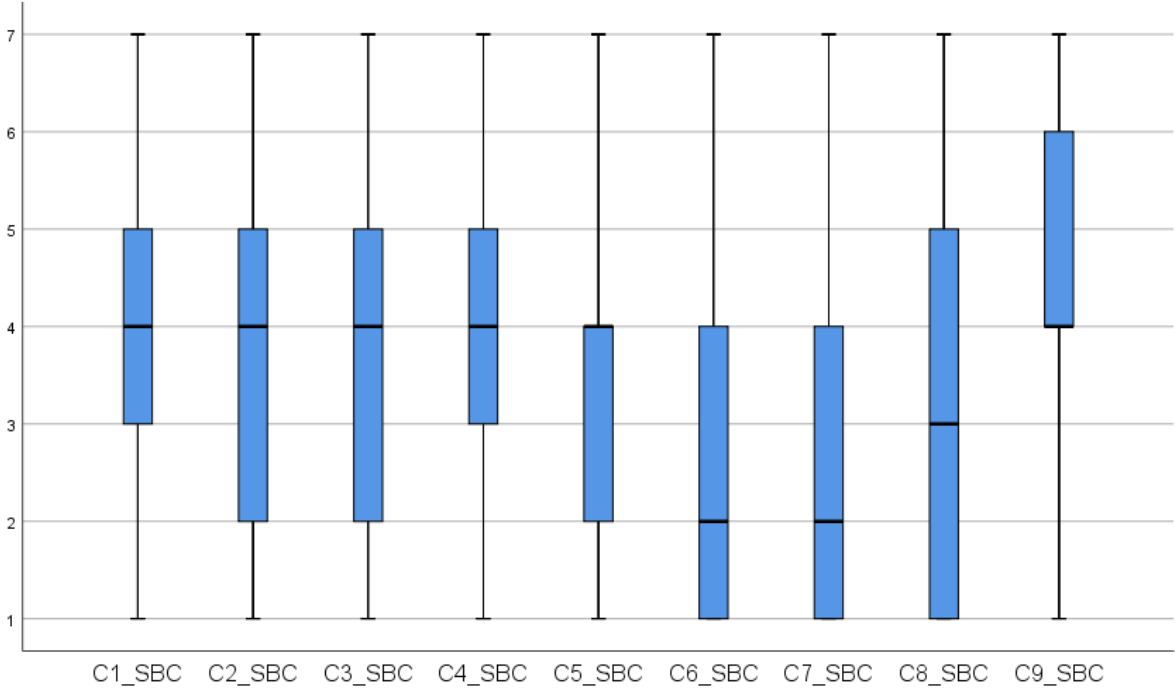
Thank you for participating. Have a good day.

Appendix 4: Box Plot analysis and outlier identification



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Appendix 5: Correlation Matrix

		Correlation Matrix															
		A1_SOCIAL	A2_SOCIAL	A3_SOCIAL	B1_EMOTIONAL	B2_EMOTIONAL	B3_EMOTIONAL	B4_EMOTIONAL	C1_SBC	C2_SBC	C3_SBC	C4_SBC	C5_SBC	C6_SBC	C7_SBC	C8_SBC	C9_SBC
Correlation	A1_SOCIAL	1.000	.604	.481	.243	.272	.235	.207	.088	-.014	.198	-.044	.015	.161	.113	.119	-.121
	A2_SOCIAL	.604	1.000	.827	.114	.181	.143	.167	.121	.310	.208	.233	.331	.219	.438	.283	.088
	A3_SOCIAL	.481	.827	1.000	.151	.193	.174	.187	.138	.282	.213	.214	.304	.247	.446	.273	.046
	B1_EMOTIONAL	.243	.114	.151	1.000	.698	.744	.749	.547	.269	.350	.418	.324	.249	.148	.256	.297
	B2_EMOTIONAL	.272	.181	.193	.698	1.000	.803	.717	.493	.343	.373	.400	.322	.286	.308	.306	.209
	B3_EMOTIONAL	.235	.143	.174	.744	.803	1.000	.851	.586	.373	.495	.458	.360	.322	.341	.380	.380
	B4_EMOTIONAL	.207	.167	.187	.749	.717	.851	1.000	.581	.329	.456	.497	.389	.317	.390	.400	.343
	C1_SBC	.088	.121	.138	.547	.493	.586	.581	1.000	.645	.751	.654	.519	.391	.421	.562	.439
	C2_SBC	-.014	.310	.282	.269	.343	.373	.329	.645	1.000	.691	.759	.831	.414	.573	.645	.511
	C3_SBC	.198	.208	.213	.350	.373	.495	.456	.751	.691	1.000	.751	.654	.591	.551	.717	.545
	C4_SBC	-.044	.233	.214	.418	.400	.458	.497	.654	.759	.751	1.000	.757	.465	.494	.671	.625
	C5_SBC	.015	.331	.304	.324	.322	.360	.389	.519	.831	.654	.757	1.000	.387	.478	.601	.526
	C6_SBC	.161	.219	.247	.249	.286	.322	.317	.391	.414	.591	.465	.387	1.000	.668	.755	.403
	C7_SBC	.113	.438	.446	.148	.308	.341	.390	.421	.573	.551	.494	.478	.668	1.000	.767	.419
	C8_SBC	.119	.283	.273	.256	.306	.380	.400	.562	.645	.717	.671	.601	.755	.767	1.000	.588
	C9_SBC	-.121	.088	.046	.297	.209	.380	.343	.439	.511	.545	.625	.526	.403	.419	.588	1.000

Appendix 6: Ethical clearance letter

**Gordon
Institute
of Business
Science**
University
of Pretoria

31 August 2019

Mouton Ruchelle

Dear Ruchelle

Please be advised that your application for Ethical Clearance has been approved.

You are therefore allowed to continue collecting your data.

Please note that approval is granted based on the methodology and research instruments provided in the application. If there is any deviation change or addition to the research method or tools, a supplementary application for approval must be obtained

We wish you everything of the best for the rest of the project.

Kind Regards

GIBS MBA Research Ethical Clearance Committee