NELSON MANDELA METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY
STUDENTS’ PERCEPTIONS OF TELEVISION
ADVERTISEMENTS FOR FOUR SAB BEER BRANDS

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NELSON MANDELA METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS’ PERCEPTIONS OF TELEVISION ADVERTISEMENTS FOR FOUR SAB BEER BRANDS

By

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DECLARATION

I, Robyn Tye, 208047237, hereby declare that the treatise (Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University Students’ Perceptions of Television Advertisements for Four SAB Beer Brands) for Masters Artium in Applied Media Studies is my own work and that it has not previously been submitted for assessment or completion of any postgraduate qualification to another University or for another qualification.

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ABSTRACT

This research study aimed to provide the South African beer industry and their advertising representative with insights into 18-28-year-olds' perceptions of the communicated message in beer advertisements. This included the use of social and cultural references to attract their attention and the suggestions made by the advertisements about the consumption of beer in certain contexts.

This research study aimed to determine the selected sample’s (NMMU students) perceptions of four South African Breweries beer brands, namely Castle Lager, Castle Lite, Carling Black Label and Hansa Pilsener, in terms of their use of references to social and cultural identity of males and females in South Africa within their television advertisements. The survey questionnaire helped determine what the selected sample’s perceptions were of each advertisement, and whether they fully understood the desired communicated message. It also helped to understand whether each advertisement captured their attention.

A semiotic analysis of each advertisement was conducted to deconstruct the advertisements and to determine if they do contain elements of social and cultural identity in an attempt to sell products to their target audiences, or to affect the perceptions of the brand and drinking beer in general. This was achieved by examining the signs and imagery in each advertisement, looking specifically at the representamen, interpretant and object using Pierce’s model of a sign.

Key words:
South African Breweries; beer; alcohol; advertising; social; cultural; masculinity; audience perception; South Africa
ABSTRACT

Hierdie navorsingstudie is daarop gemik om die Suid-Afrikaanse bierbedryf en sy adverteerders ‘n beter begrip te gee van verbruikers tussen die ouderdomme van 18-28, se waarnemings van die boodskappe in bieradvertensies. Dit sluit in die gebruik van sosiale en kulturele verwysings, wat veronderstel is om die verbruikers se aandag te trek, asook die suggesties wat deur die advertensies gemaak word met betrekking tot die verbruik van bier in ’n bepaalde konteks.

Die studie moes ook die gekose monster (“selected sample”), nl. die NMMU-student se persepsies bepaal van vier handelsname van die South African Breweries, naamlik Castle Lager, Castle Lite, Carling Black Label en Hansa Pilsener, en in watter mate daar in bieradvertensies oor die televisie verwys word na die sosiale en kulturele identiteit van Suid-Afrikaanse mans en vroue. Die meningspeiling het die groep se waarnemings van elke advertensie, asook of die boodskap wat gekommunikeer is ten volle verstaan word, ondersoek. Die vraelys kon ook vasstel of die advertensies hulle aandag getrek het.

‘n Semiotiese ontleding van elke advertensie is gedoen, om die advertensies te dekodeer en sodoende vas te stel of die adverteerders elemente van sosiale en kulturele identiteit gebruik het om hul produkte aan die tekenmarkte te verkoop, of om die idees rondom die handelsnaam en bier oor die algemeen te beïnvloed. Aan die hand van Peirce se semiotiese model is die tekens en beelde in elke advertensie bestudeer.

Sleutelwoorde:
South African Breweries; bier; alkohol; advertensies; sosiale; kulturele; manlikheid; gehoor persepsie; Suid-Afrika
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH

1.1. Background and Context

South Africa’s turbulent political and social history has meant that alcohol consumption was a way for many to escape from the harsh realities in which people lived. Under Apartheid, prohibition laws dominated the drinking habits of many South Africans. The 1928 prohibition act, which was established to prevent the sale of European beer to Africans, effectively boosted the illicit black drinking cultures in shebeens and socially in the townships. As people began to move from rural to urban areas in search of jobs; communal beer halls became places of connection and support for people who felt alienated and disconnected from their homes and families.

A trend emerged as workers used excessive drinking as a reward for a hard day’s labour. Eventually, the connectedness that first encouraged men to gather at these places was lost in the bottom of every beer, and for many was replaced by mindless intoxication. By the 1970s, the black African communities began to consume more bottled beer than the traditional sorghum and grain beer (Mager 2010:73) and the early 1980s also saw that blacks now accounted for nearly 80 percent of beer sales (Mager 2010:55). Charles D. H. Barry, Director of the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Research Unit at the Medical Research Council of South Africa, explained that:

Roughly one in four adult males and one in 10 adult females experience symptoms of alcohol problems, and almost one in four high school students report past month binge-drinking; that is, drinking five or more drinks on one or more days [7,13]. The burden of alcohol related mortality and trauma is extremely high, with just under half of all non-natural deaths in 2002 having blood alcohol concentrations greater than or equal to 0.05 g/100 ml (Barry 2005:426).

It is clear that alcohol plays a complex role in South African society.

In recent years, it has become clear that South Africa has one of the highest rates of alcohol consumption, per drinker, in the world (Akinbode and Mokwena 2010:55; and Rehm et al. 2004, cited in Parry et al. 2008:1). Much of alcohol related advertising research has focused on the ways in which advertisers perpetuate the vicious cycle of alcohol addiction by tapping into human desires and motivators.
(Kilbourne, Cousins and Kypri 2008, and Snyder et al. 2006); as well as why there is a need to improve alcohol marketing regulations (Casswell and Maxwell 2005).

The South African context provides an interesting case study. The World Health Organization conducted research which revealed that South Africa is amongst the top five countries with “risky drinking patterns” (Parker 2011). During a social development summit in Durban, South Africa, in early 2011, the South African government called for a ban on alcohol advertising in public and private media, as well as a ban on the alcohol industry sponsoring sports and recreational events (Parker 2011). There have been many studies conducted which reveal the extent of South Africa’s drinking problems. One such study found that:

While South Africa is a high mortality, developing country, it has recently been calculated that alcohol-related harm accounted for 7.1% of all deaths […]. Alcohol was the third largest contributor to death and disability after unsafe sex/sexually transmitted infections and interpersonal violence. The three largest contributors to the burden specifically related to alcohol included homicide and violence (40% of alcohol’s burden), alcohol use disorders (15%) and road traffic injuries (15%) (Parry et al. 2008:1).

This showed that there is a problem with alcohol abuse in South Africa and it brings into question the marketing strategies of alcohol advertisers.

Anne Mager (2010) mapped the beer drinking climate in the country through the 1900s into the twenty first century, in her book entitled, Beer, Sociability, and Masculinity in South Africa. She noted that despite early prohibition laws in South Africa which governed who drank what and where, the South African Breweries (hereafter referred to as SAB) became South Africa’s largest brewer (Mager 2010:146). It was also discovered that in the years 2005 and 2006, beer consumption made up nearly 80% of total alcohol consumption in South Africa (Akinbode and Mokwena 2010:55), meaning that the majority of alcohol consumed in South Africa was beer. For this reason, it would be socially and culturally significant to study the short term effects of beer advertising on the target audience.

SAB falls under the operation of a larger international company, SABMiller (DataMonitor 2010:16), and it was acknowledged in an Industry Profile undertaken by DataMonitor in 2010 that SAB held 87.8% share of the beer market’s volume in South Africa by the year end of 2009 (DataMonitor 2010:2). This meant that SAB generates some of the highest revenues in the market, and along with its popularity (mentioned above); SAB had an influential power over the beer market.
An aspect of this treatise focused on the concepts and symbols of beer drinking as seen in the television advertisements of *Castle Lager, Castle Lite, Hansa Pilsener* and *Carling Black Label*, and how these selected South African beer brands have adopted the strategy of using cultural and social aspects of beer drinking in their advertisements to attract their target market’s attention. It explains the ways in which the audiences understand the advertised message of television advertisement for each chosen beer brand.

**1.2. Advertising Standards Authority of South Africa**

It is important to have advertising standards in South Africa in order to ensure that advertisers operate in such a way that the public interest becomes the priority in all of their work. It is for this reason that the Advertising Standards Authority of South Africa (or hereafter referred to as ASA) was created as “an independent body set up and paid for by the marketing communication industry to ensure that its system of self-regulation works in the public interest” (ASA 2000-2004:Preface Clause 1).

According to this, advertisers in South Africa should regulate the content of their advertising and are responsible for the advertisements which they present in the public sphere. The Code of Advertising Practice is a guiding document, which has been put together by the ASA, and it puts forth the standards which should be upheld by advertisers in their self-regulatory methods. According to the ASA, “all advertisements should be legal, decent honest and truthful […] [as well as being] prepared with a sense of responsibility to the consumers” (2000-2004:Section I Clauses 1.1 and 1.2).

The Code of Advertising Practice (ASA 2000-2004) also has a section devoted to alcohol advertising. Because the advertising of alcohol is a sensitive and yet, very important part of advertising in South Africa, it is important that advertisers do not abuse the trust of the consumer or exploit their lack of knowledge and understanding. This has particular importance when it comes to alcohol advertisements that may be viewed by a young, immature audience. The ASA (2000-2004:Appendix B Alcohol Advertising) also explains that:

Commercial communication may not be suggestive of sexual indulgence or permissiveness, portray nudity or present an improper portrayal of near nudity, present any situation derogatory to the virtue of either sex or claim or suggest that alcohol beverages can contribute directly to sexual success or seduction.
This section also declares that:

Commercial communication may not imply that alcohol beverage consumption is essential to business and/or social success or acceptance or that refusal to consume is a sign of weakness (ASA 2000-2004:Appendix B Alcohol Advertising).

For these reasons, alcohol advertising is not to be considered lightly, as it needs to be done honestly to ensure that the audience and consumers do not view the advertisement in a different manner to what the advertiser has intended. It is important that advertising satisfies the consumers’ needs and wants, without offending or misleading them. ASA agrees that because advertising is a service to the public:

Advertisements should not contain any statement or visual presentation which, directly or by implication, omission, ambiguity, inaccuracy, exaggerated claim or otherwise, is likely to mislead the consumer (ASA 2000-2004:Section ii Clause 4.2.1).

Such advertisements may result in audiences partaking in unusual and sometimes, even harmful actions and behaviours, due to the fact that advertising is generally persuasive in nature (Arens et al. 2008:7).

1.3. The effects of alcohol advertising on target audiences

In 2011, research was conducted by Szmigin et al. (2011) which investigated the role that alcohol plays in the social and personal lives of young people by focusing on their attitudes towards messages from the government that encourage reduced drinking. Although the aim of this investigation was to critique anti-drinking campaigns by the government, it lends important background information into the context of young people’s drinking and how advertisers reinforce their drinking practices. This study found that:

If alcohol is consumed in the immediate environment, it reinforces social and peer acceptability and normality. If the cultural norm is to go out drinking on a Friday night and this is reinforced by advertising and other media targeted at young people, drinking inevitably becomes generally accepted as a perfectly usual part of sociability (Szmigin et al. 2011:10).

In another study from 2008, the following was found:

The causes of heavy drinking among young people involve a complex mix of individual, social and environmental factors. Among the environmental factors is promotion of alcohol via advertising, a pervasive activity in most developed countries (Cousins and Kypri 2008:566).

Advertisers take great care in assigning brand identity to each product that needs to be marketed. This means that a brand can have many individual images or
associations linked to it as its brand image. A leading marketing theorist explained that “the presence of a brand (or even the attitudes held toward it) can serve to define a person with respect to others” so that the “brand becomes an extension or an integral part of the self” (Aaker 1996, cited in Jernigan 2010:64). Fleming and Zwiebach (1999) and Klein (1999) have shown that marketers accomplish this by embedding their brands in the lives or lifestyles of the consumers, positioning their product as an important part of culture (including lifestyles and value systems) and sporting events (cited in Jernigan 2010:64).

Due to the fact that SAB’s beer volume held a market share of 87.8% in South Africa by the year end of 2009 (DataMonitor 2010:2), it is clear that SAB has a powerful dominance in today’s market. It is paramount that research be conducted into the audiences’ perceptions of the advertised message in SAB beer advertisements, given both their dominance in the market but also their potential to persuade audiences into believing that drinking beer is part of everyday culture in the South African developing society.

1.4. Justification and significance of the study

In the South African beer industry, a trend is prevalent with certain SAB brands to use social identity and culture to advertise their beer products, namely Castle Lager, Castle Lite; Hansa Pilsener and Carling Black Label. These advertisements are publicly available on the YouTube website.

The respective advertisements are firstly the Castle Lager’s ‘The Journey’, Castle Lite’s ‘The Official Castle Lite’, Carling Black Label’s ‘Champion Men’ and Hansa Pilsener’s ‘Sold Out.’

Prior research into alcohol advertising, in particular television advertising, has revealed that the audiences’ experience of alcohol advertisements lends to the fact that “people make connections between advertisements and the very core issues of their lives” (Parker 1998:107). However, little research has focused purely on beer advertisements in South Africa and the target markets understanding of the themes and symbols present in these advertisements.

To contribute further to the study of alcohol advertising, and particularly beer advertisements in South Africa, researchers will gain a better understanding of how the selected sample perceives these four South African beer brands and their
television advertisements. This study helps to determine which of these four advertisements appeals more strongly to the target audience and why, as well as, to determine which of these four advertisements uses the most references and images to the audiences social identity and life themes, according to the selected samples of this study. This allowed for the focus of the study to be on the beer brand’s methods of using themes of social and cultural identity in the content of their advertisements as a marketing strategy to attract their target market’s attention.

1.5. Research question

Does the target audience’s understanding of the communicated message in SAB’s television advertisements for its beer brands (Castle Lager, Castle Lite, Hansa Pilsener and Carling Black Label) correspond with the actual communicated message from the advertisers?

1.6. Research aim

The aim of this study is to determine whether the SAB advertisements are tapping into a long-standing culture of drinking, or whether they encourage a culture of drinking as a social construct. It also seeks to discuss the role SAB plays in forming identity and sociability in South African culture through its beer advertisements. This is centred on the belief that advertisements have the “potential to affect our daily lives” (Lantos 1987:104).

1.7. Research objectives

- To understand the social and cultural meanings that the target audiences identify with and adopt after viewing the communicated messages in SAB’s television advertisements for its brands Castle Lager, Castle Lite, Hansa Pilsener and Carling Black Label
- To identify the ways in which SAB advertisers communicate messages about issues, masculinity and culture in South Africa
To show that SAB not only communicates messages about their brands in their television advertisements, but also about cultural concepts and socialization.

1.8. Research design and methods

This research study took an interpretive approach focusing on quantitative and qualitative research. It is focused on four television advertisements which were aired in South Africa after the period of the FIFA World Cup 2010, namely the beginning of 2011. The SAB beer brands which were chosen were Castle Lager, Castle Lite, Hansa Pilsener and Carling Black Label. They were chosen because of their prominence on television, as well as their popularity. Castle Lager and Carling Black Label are categorised as mainstream beers, while Castle Lite and Hansa Pilsener are premium beers because of their higher price. The television advertisements of each of these brands were collected and scanned to find one advertisement for each brand which encompassed the brand message and advertising campaign. The advertisements which were chosen were Castle Lager’s ‘The Journey’; Castle Lite’s ‘The Official Castle Lite’; Carling Black Label’s ‘Champion Men’ and Hansa Pilsener’s ‘Sold Out’.

A mixed methods approach is used to address the research objectives, using an online survey and a semiotic analysis of the four advertisements. Firstly, a survey was conducted with the use of online questionnaires. This allowed for both qualitative and quantitative research to be conducted. The online questionnaire was designed using both short and long questions. The short questions began by asking the respondents for information about their drinking habits and brand preferences, as well as other important information that is crucial to understanding what type of consumer they are and where they fit into the target groups of the brands. The long questions were designed in such a way to encourage more elaborate responses in order to gain an understanding of the audience’s perceptions of the brands and beers, after they have been shown the advertisements using an online hyperlink.

The members who voluntarily answered the online questionnaire consisted of university students who fall into the target audiences of the beer brands. Since university life consists of the lifestyle associated with drinking beer, social togetherness and partying, the university students from Nelson Mandela
Metropolitan University mostly identify with the life themes in the advertisements. The audience responses are analyzed according to Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs and Stuart Hall’s model of readings. This research looked to understand the short term effects of the advertisements on the audience. This provided vital information into what the audience understands about the brands, about beer and about drinking in the South African culture.

This part of the research methodology was an electronic survey questionnaire that the selected sample of NMMU students gained access to via NMMU’s Communiqué. NMMU has as online information tool called Communiqué through which emails are sent to staff and students daily, to inform them of any important information or updates that need to know about. Students were able to access this survey through their student email accounts on the NMMU premises. The survey was developed using eSurveyPro.com, which is a free online survey platform that serves as a guideline to develop survey questionnaires that are easy to administer to the selected sample and allowed easy access to the immediate results. The application itself provided for statistical results to be summarized.

The second method of research was a thematic content analysis of four SAB television advertisements, each for different brands, which was conducted to analyze the communicated messages which appear in each of the four SAB television advertisements. Using a combination of Pierce’s model of a sign, namely representamen, interpretant and object; as well as the Media Education Foundations model of deconstructing an alcohol advertisement, this research aimed to identify the ideas and concepts promoted by the advertisers in the advertisements.

While the content analysis was used to fully understand the communicated message in the advertisements, the questionnaires allowed for data to be collected in order to understand whether the audiences identify with the advertisements, and whether they understand and agree with the communicated messages. This allowed for a conclusion to be drawn as to whether the target audience recognized the advertisements as part of an existing culture, or whether the advertisements promoted concepts that are not in line with South Africa’s cultural and social realities.
1.9. Delimitations of the study

Although this study looked to determine SAB and their beer brands’ influence on masculinity, togetherness and culture, the audience reception and understanding of the advertisements was limited to an educated audience. This means that the scope of audience research is limited to only a section of the target audience of the advertisements, and therefore, further research should be conducted in order to gain a full perspective of short term effects from the larger, less educated target audiences.

1.10. Definition of terms

The following section defines useful terms relating to the research study in order to minimize the possible misinterpretation of the terms:

1.10.1. Advertising

Arens et al. (2008:7) define advertising as “the structured and composed nonpersonal communication of information, usually paid for and usually persuasive in nature, about products (goods, services and ideas) by identified sponsors through various media.” Similarly, Bird and Koekemoer (2004:65) explain that advertising is a “means of informing existing and potential customers about a product, and a means of persuading them to buy the product”.

1.10.2. Brand

A brand is “a name, symbol, design, or mark that enhances the value of the product beyond its functional value” (Farquar 1989:24; cited in Orth et al. 2004:99). In other words, a brand is a set of perceptions and images that represent a product.

1.10.3. Culture

Culture can be defined as “the attitudes, feelings, values, and behaviour that characterize and inform society as a whole or any social group within it” (Collins
English Dictionary Online 2012, search word ‘culture’). Therefore, a culture is a way of life for a group of people.

1.10.4. Four South African Beer Brands

The four South African SAB beer brands are Castle Lager, Castle Lite, Hansa Pilsener and Carling Black Label for the purpose of this study.

1.10.5. Gender

Gender refers to the social and cultural difference between the state of being male or female (Oxford Dictionaries 2010).

1.10.6. Identity

Identity can be defined as the “individual characteristics by which a person […] is recognized” (Collins English Dictionary Online 2012, search word ‘identity’). In other words, someone’s identity is the combination of all the unique qualities that make them who and what they are.

1.10.7. Life themes

Life themes are “recurrent ideas [which people have] about themselves in relation to the world” (Parker 1998:98). Life themes include ideas and meanings associated with national belonging, community life, family life and the private self.

1.10.8. Masculinity

Gutman (1997:386) sees that “masculinity holds that it is, by definition, anything that men think and do […] [and] masculinity is anything men think and do to be men”.

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1.10.9. Persuasion

Persuasion is the “process of inducing a voluntary change in someone’s attributes, beliefs or behaviour through the transmission of a message” (Schmidt and Kess 1986:2).

1.10.10. Sex appeal

Sex appeal is the “physical attractiveness” (Collins English Dictionary Online 2012, search word ‘sex appeal’), that someone possesses which appeals to another person.

1.10.11. Sexualize

From the above definition, it can be deduced that sexualize refers to the nature and use of sexual imagery.

1.10.12. Sociability

Sociability can be defined as “the condition of being or the tendency to be friendly or companionable” (Collins English Dictionary Online 2012, search word ‘sociability’).

1.10.13. Socialization

The meaning of socialization comes from a psychology paradigm and can be said to mean “the modification from infancy of an individual's behaviour to conform with the demands of social life” (Collins English Dictionary Online 2012, search word ‘socialization’). Therefore, it could be argued that the way a person is socialized depends on their learned experiences and upbringing. It will depend on their personal identity and the way they learn about the norms, values, behaviours and social skills that are appropriate to their environment.
1.11. Conclusion

Chapter One discussed the nature of this research study. It explained the reason for choosing this topic for research and discussed an introduction to the available literature. The topic was chosen due to the growing use of social and cultural references in beer advertising in South Africa and the growing concerns over the effects of this on the audience. The chapter explained the specifics for this research study, such as the selected sample of 18 to 28 year old NMMU students, the important research methods, the particulars of the research question, and the objectives that were chosen to determine whether this study can be regarded as successful.

The following chapter will focus on an overview of the literature that relates to the topic of advertising, in terms of television, alcohol and self-esteem advertising, and will show how these relate to consumer motivation. It will focus more specifically on the South African beer consumer market, as well as semiotics and media effects.
CHAPTER 2: ADVERTISING, CONSUMERS AND MEDIA EFFECTS

2.1 Introduction

Much of academic research concerning alcohol advertising is focused on the negative ways in which alcohol advertising affects younger audiences. The available research also reflects alcohol advertising on an international scale. While this research can be used for background knowledge into the effects of alcohol advertising in general, for the purposes of this study, the theoretical framework that focuses on how alcohol advertising operates and how consumers perceive and interpret advertising messages will be adapted and tailored to the South African context as a means to understand Castle Lager’s, Castle Lite’s, Hansa Pilsener’s and Carling Black Label’s method of using certain techniques in a South African market.

The literature discussed in this chapter focuses on advertising in general, in terms of its purposes in marketing and the consumer satisfaction. It discusses the consumer perception process and the different ways in which consumer behaviour can be understood and even influenced. Television advertising will be examined in order to outline its powerful and influential nature as a broadcast medium and its role in branding and constituting perceptions of social reality will be discussed.

This section also focuses on alcohol advertising and the many studies which reveal general themes in alcohol advertising strategies. These include the use of images of fun and togetherness, or social identity and culture. The ways in which beer advertising promotes masculinity and the ‘holy trinity’ concept defined by Wenner and Jackson (2009) will also be discussed, in order to bring greater understanding to advertisers strategies in terms of marketing alcohol to specific target audiences. More importantly, a framework for deconstructing alcohol advertisements will be discussed. This framework from the Media Education Foundation (2005) will allow for an effective analysis of images, concepts and ideas present in the four South African beer advertisements. The concept of ‘self-esteem advertising’ is also examined as it outlines the ways in which advertising can be used to alter the consumers’ attitudes and buying behaviours towards products by stimulating positive feelings toward themselves. This will show how advertising often uses concepts of self-worth in order to link products and services with the audience’s
ideas of who they are; in other words how these concepts are used to link brand identity to self identity.

Consumer motivation and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs created a basis of understanding of audience responses. Both Stuart Hall’s model of readings and Charles S. Peirce’s model of semiotics will be examined. These models are used to provide meaning to the responses gained from respondents’ answers in the online survey questionnaire. This is because this theoretical knowledge gives insight into the audience’s response to individual signs and images in the advertisements.

Media effects will also be discussed to acknowledge the power which a media product can have on its audience and society collectively. It examines media and media products as a discourse, and looks at the media tendency to offer the audience a communicated message in the form of a script. This will provide insight into the way the media can affect what people expect from the world and how they experience their world.

Lastly, this chapter will take a look at present day South African culture and its many facets, both in its individual elements as well as its whole. The concepts of national belonging, togetherness and ‘ubuntu’ will be examined in this context.

2.2 Advertising

Advertising, as mentioned in the section 1.10.1., can be defined as:

The structured and composed nonpersonal communication of information usually paid for and usually persuasive in nature, about products (goods, services and ideas) by identified sponsors through various media (Arens et al. 2008:7).

The purpose of marketing, within the context of advertising, is to create exchanges which allow the consumer to believe that the product or service being advertised will satisfy their needs and wants. (Arens et al 2008:141). This will allow for the satisfaction of the customer. The consumer perception process is very important in this process. This refers to the way potential customers "sense, interpret, and comprehend various stimuli" (Arens et al 2008:147). There are five components in this process; namely stimuli, sensory screens, emotional screens, cognitive awareness and memory (2008:147). For example, let’s create a hypothetical scenario: An advertisement appears on television (stimuli), and it is seen and heard (sensory screen) by an audience. The audience evaluates and filters information
according to their personality, self-concept, attitudes, beliefs and/or habits in the advertisement (emotional screens). The audience will then comprehend the advertisement and its claims (mental cognition). All of this information will be evaluated according to audiences’ needs and wants and will either be accepted or rejected by them. Following which, it will then be stored in their mental files (memory). Figure 2.1 demonstrates this model of the consumer perception process (Arens et al 2008:147):

![Figure 2.1: The consumer perception process](image)

It is through this process that meaning is created and maintained about the product and the brand.

Arens, Weigold and Arens extended this theory to acknowledge that advertisers need to use interpersonal influences and non-personal influences on consumer behaviour to their advantage. By understanding these influences, advertisers are able to predict dimensions such as who is buying their product or using their service, how they buy, what influences their choice, where they buy and even when they buy. Interpersonal influences include the consumer’s family, society and culture (Arens et al 2008:156-160). “Culture is the most basic determinant of an individual’s wants and behaviour,” (Meeske 2009:54). A consumer’s culture will influence their preferences as well as the rate at which they consume the product, while family and reference groups will influence the way the consumer acts and behaves in general.

Meeske (2009:63) stated that “consumers choose brands and products that reinforce their reference group roles and status”. The ages and life stages of consumers will also affect their buying decision. This is because the individual consumer’s needs, wants and lifestyle will change over time. Advertisers acknowledge this and are able to use information about their target audiences’
interpersonal influences to make their products and services more appealing, to adapt their advertisements in such a way as to maximize the consumers' identification with the brand and increase their buying motivation.

Time, place and environment are all non-personal influences on consumer behaviour (Arens et al. 2008:161). For example, if the consumer is in a hurry or under time constraints, the customer may not have time to consider all the brand alternatives and this will affect what they purchase. The place of purchase and its surroundings will also affect the consumer’s motivation to buy the product, while environmental factors such as climate, smells and sounds can also increase or decrease the consumer’s motivation and brand preference. For instance, it may become habitual for a consumer to purchase a specific brand of drink when in a bar, surrounded by people interacting with each other. This type of environment is an example of how consumers can be motivated and influenced by nonpersonal factors. As Meeske (2009:63) explained:

Factors in buyer behaviour cannot be controlled, but they can be useful [for] advertisers […] [to] understand what consumers they want to influence.

Advertisers understand that cultural backgrounds, social groups and life stages all affect the consumer’s behaviour, and that the roles that people play in everyday life will express their lifestyle and influence consumer buying behaviour. In this way, the nature of advertising lends to it being regarded as manipulating in its’ motivation and persuasion techniques. By including specific elements of a target group’s interpersonal and non-personal influences in an advertisement, audiences will better identify with each advertisement.

2.2.1 Television advertising

From its beginnings after World War Two, broadcast television grew rapidly in popularity as the only medium to offer sight, sound and motion in one package to the audience in their homes. This is explained by Medoff and Kaye:

Television is considered the most persuasive advertising medium. The combination of audio and visual components captures viewers’ attention more so than other media (2011:140).

For this reason, broadcast television is “ideal for building an image for […] brands” (Arens et al. 2008:511). Because television is a mass medium, it offers advertisers advantages of mass coverage and high impact on audiences. It allows advertisers to
“display […] and demonstrate […] the product with sound, motion, and full colour right before the customers’ eyes” (Arens et al 2008:513).

Arens, Weigold and Arens explain that a study, in 2004, revealed that the average American household views around eight hours of television a day (2008:513). For decades, modern generations have seen television as an authoritative medium, because the medium itself is so dominant in their everyday lives. Younger generations today are so oblivious to the power that television holds over their everyday experiences. For this reason, television is said to “create an illusion of ongoing reality” (McQuail 2005:35). With all of this said, it is easy to understand that advertisers use television as a “credible and trusted” (McQuail 2005:35) medium to reach their target audiences.

The medium of television is one of the most popular for advertisers as it allows them to construct advertisements in such a way that the viewer can see and hear the communicated message in a constructed version of reality. The marketing of products on television is said to “bring people together to share the same experiences in an otherwise fragmented and individuated society and not only in the circle of the family” (McQuail 2005:35). Contemporary audiences view television as an authoritative and influential medium, because of its social dominance in the lives of modern generations. Arens, Weigold and Arens explain that “most people under the age of 35 grew up with TV as a window into their social environment” (2008:513). Furthermore, McQuail (2005:81) has said that

The media to a large extent serve to constitute our perceptions and definitions of social reality and normality for the purposes of a public, shared social life, and are a key source of standards, models and norms.

The way advertising on television often works is by showing the viewer what concepts the advertisers want the viewer to link to their product. Essentially, everything that is displayed on screen is what the advertisers want the consumer to relate to in the product that is being advertised. This makes television an ideal and prominent medium for advertising and marketing.

2.2.2 Alcohol advertising

“The upside of drinking, the fun, the togetherness and sense of social identity is reiterated in countless alcohol advertising and marketing campaigns […]” (Szmigin et al. 2011:25).
As the above quote explains, much of what is seen in alcohol advertising today is the incorporation of target-market-related themes and myths in the advertisements, effectively enabling potential consumers to identify more easily with products and services. Betty J. Parker undertook research in 1998 which revealed at “[a]dvertisers […] simply employ myths of the culture to promote their products” (Parker 1998:99).

In her study, she used a meaning-based model of advertising experiences to explore the life themes and traditions which appear particularly in alcohol advertising. Her study set out to identify and understand the ways university students experience alcohol advertisements in their life circumstances; and her findings highlight advertising’s potential power in terms of using contemporary life themes and ideas to make an impact on consumers’ attitudes, beliefs and cultures. The evidence provided suggests that advertisers and marketers, particularly those in alcohol advertising, have the ability to use themes and ideas which exist in the lives of their targeted audiences.

Another study conducted by Gee and Jackson in 2011, in which a New Zealand beer producer, Speight, was examined to determine how its promotional culture illuminates certain aspects of masculinity. What they discovered was that:

The role of beer in signifying and symbolising masculinity is unparalleled. Beer typically functions as a medium for many men to initiate them into adulthood, demonstrate their masculinity, and form relationships with other men (Gee and Jackson 2011:4).

They describe what Wenner and Jackson (2009) theorise as the ‘holy trinity’: that of the relationship between beer, masculinity and sport (cited in Gee and Jackson 2011:2). These elements are so often seen in beer advertisements. For this reason, it can be said that,

As a cultural field, beer advertising provides insights into the key stories, themes, and values that are relevant within particular social contexts at specific points in time (Jhally 1997, cited in Gee and Jackson 2011:4-5).

A strategic part of advertising is creating a marketing campaign around a central concept which can be related to the brand or product being advertised. Kotler (2000:19) defines the marketing concept as “delivering and communicating value to selected target markets” (cited in Nairn and Berthon 2003:84). This means that once an advertiser has recognized who they want to market to, namely the defined target market, the goal is to construct the advert in such a way that the lifestyle and concepts displayed in the advertisement is imprinted in the brand image. So often, the advertisers do this by displaying constructs which relate to the target audiences’
self-identity in their television advertisements, in order to “make the brand itself an experience and lifestyle - one of a subculture’s defining features” (Casswell and Maxwell 2005:344). This type of advertising is often associated with alcohol advertising.

The Media Education Foundation (2005) provides a framework for deconstructing alcohol advertisements. This framework includes four steps, namely “make observations”, “determine the purpose of the advertisement”, “determine the assumptions the advertisement makes and the message it sends” and “consider the possible consequences of these messages”. These steps will be used to help the researcher understand the various elements of an alcohol advertisement, allowing for the images, concepts and ideas that form the advertisement to be deconstructed.

2.2.3 Self-Esteem advertising

In 1986, Jeffrey F. Durgee wrote about self-esteem advertising and how it attempts to alter the consumers’ attitudes and behaviours towards products by stimulating positive feelings toward them. He hypothesized that the consumers feelings of self-esteem can be leveraged to effect buying behaviour, and that advertising which has positive effects on consumers' attitudes toward themselves has positive effects on their attitudes toward brands. His hypotheses were as follows:

* An ad will produce positive feelings toward self and brand if it challenges viewer’s sense of self and shows a conditional tie to brand usage. […]
* An ad will generate positive feelings toward self and brand to the extent that it generates a warm, positive feeling toward everything. […]
* An ad will generate positive feelings toward self and brand if it positions the brand as a reward for some common achievement. […]
* An ad will generate positive feelings toward self and brand insofar as it generates positive feelings toward the source of a viewer-directed compliment and, by association, the brand (Durgee 1986:27).

His hypotheses allows one to understand that advertising uses concepts linked to the audience’s self-worth in order to link the products or service that is being advertised with the audience’s idea of who they are and what they stand for. In this way, it could be argued that the brand identity and the self identity of the consumer are related in some way. This method used in self-esteem advertising can also be linked to Maslow’s hierarchy of needs (explained in section 2.3 below) and human driving forces with regard to the esteem needs of consumers.
2.3 Consumer motivation

Marketing products and services to a consumer is all about creating exchanges which influence perceptions in order to satisfy the consumer. The consumer must believe that the product or service being advertised will satisfy their needs and wants (Arens et al 2008:141). A need is a “basic force […] that motivates us to do something”, while a want is a need that “we learn during our lives” (Meeske 2009:68). For example, the need for nutritional food is a basic one, but the desire to have a certain brand of chicken breast is a want that a person develops over time as they learn what they like or what is good and bad for them. Abraham H. Maslow developed a scale of categorizing needs in order to understand human behaviour. In his model, he places needs in ascending order of importance: physiological, safety, social, esteem and self-actualization. Figure 2.2 is a pyramid, adapted from Meeske (200: 69) which demonstrates Maslow’s model:

![Maslow's hierarchy of needs](image)

*Figure 2.2 – Maslow’s hierarchy of needs*
What is most important about the categorization of needs is that one needs to understand that “the most basic level needs must be satisfied at least minimally before other motives are engaged” (Meeske 2009:68-9).

This model of human behaviour allows marketers to understand where their product or service fits into human needs and wants. It also allows researchers to understand what motivates people to buy and/or use certain brands and products, as advertisers often use these needs and wants in order to gain customer satisfaction.

2.3.1 Audience response

While the effects of using human motivation and self-esteem advertising can be explained, it is important to acknowledge that because viewers of advertisements are considered to be "active recipients […] [a]dvertising messages are received and understood in the context of the recipients' lived experience" (Casswell and Maxwell 2005:349).

Stuart Hall believed this to be true and saw that the level of audience response depends on their interpretation of the message. He created a model of reading, whereby he categorized different levels of audience response to their understanding of media messages. His model of readings insisted [...] that [...] audience members share certain frameworks of interpretation, and that they work at decoding media texts within these frameworks, rather than being 'affected' in a passive way (Branston and Stafford 2010:391-2).

In other words, Stuart Hall saw that different groups of people and audiences may have a different understanding of the media message and therefore take a specific position in relating to the communicated message and brand as a whole. He “stressed the role of social positioning in the interpretation of mass media texts by different social groups” (Chandler 2007:194). His categorizations of interpretive positions for the reader include the dominant reading, the negotiated reading and the oppositional reading (Chandler 2007:194-5). These three positions of interpretation will determine whether the audience member agrees with, disagrees with or negotiates meaning from the advertisement, according to the preferred reading of the communicated message presented by the advertisers.

The way an audience member understands a message is categorized into these three positions by Hall, with each position assuming a different interpretive
response. A dominant reading will occur when “the reader fully shares the text’s code and accepts and reproduces the preferred reading [...] [so that] the code seems natural and transparent (Chandler 2007:194). A negotiated reading would occur when the reader only partly shares the text’s code, broadly accepting the preferred reading. In this case, the reader “sometimes resists and modifies [the message] in a way which reflects their own position, experiences and interests” (Chandler 2007:195). On the other hand, an oppositional reading occurs when:

[T]he reader, whose social situation places them in a directly oppositional relation to the dominant code, understands the preferred reading but does not share the text’s code and rejects this reading, bringing to bear an alternative frame of reference (Chandler 2007:195).

All of these positions that an audience member may assume reveals that audiences have the chance to interpret the communicated message in a way that applies to them and their circumstances. Understanding this important factor about how audiences understand the advertisement and the brand message will allow for researchers and advertisers to understand the different levels of short term effects on the audience.

Another way of understanding audience response is by looking at the way in which advertisers use different signs to bring meaning to the advertisements. Derived from the study of semiotics, or the study of signs, a sign can be defined as “anything which ‘stands for’ something else” (Chandler 2007:2). Charles Saunders Peirce offered a model of the study of signs in a triadic model, which consisted of the representamen, or the form which the sign takes, the interpretant, or the sense made of the sign, and the object/referent, which is something beyond the sign to which it refers (Chandler 2007:29). Chandler explains that

To qualify as a sign, all three elements are essential. The sign is a unity of what is represented (the object), how it is represented (the representamen) and how it is interpreted (the interpretant) (Chandler 2007:29).

The act of interpretation is bound by habit. In other words, it is a force of habit when someone is attributing certain significance to a certain sign in a certain context with which they are familiar. The reference between the sign and its object, or the representamen and the object/referent, can be iconic, indexical or symbolic. An icon would be classified if the sign resembles the object; for example, a portrait is iconic of the person in the picture. An index can be identified if the sign is affected by the object; for example, a knock on a door is indexical of a visit by someone. And lastly,
a sign is a symbol when it refers to its object by virtue of a law; such as banknotes are symbolic of a monetary value.

This model of understanding signs gives insight into the understanding of the individual components of advertisements. By interpreting a sign, one can begin to understand what the advertiser’s desired message is. As Schroeder and Zwick explain:

To interpret advertising images is to acknowledge their representational power both as cultural artefacts and as bearers of meaning, reflecting broad societal, cultural, and ideological codes (Schroeder and Zwick 2004:45).

2.4 Media effects

McQuail acknowledges that:

The media to a large extent serve to constitute our perceptions and definitions of social reality and normality for the purposes of a public, shared social life, and are a key source of standards, models and norms (McQuail 2005:81).

With this said, it is important to understand exactly what advertisers do and how this affects the audience. Whilst some academics believe that advertising “seems to reflect society, often after a time lapse”, others see that “advertising influences our culture in various roundabout, indirect ways” (Lantos 1987:115). Thus, advertising can be seen to reflect an existing culture while also influencing small changes over time. This is because

The proliferation and the intrusion of various media into the everyday lives of the citizenry make advertising environmental in nature, persistently encountered, and involuntarily experienced by the entire population (Pollay 1986:18).

Important questions must be asked about the media’s role in framing public understanding, and about how the audience uses media texts in creating their identities, pleasures and fantasies (Branston and Stafford 2010:381). Academics Branston and Stafford (2010) explain two models of short term media effects: namely the effects model, and the uses and gratification model. While the effects model is an approach which “emphasize[s] what the media do to their audiences” (author’s emphasis, Branston and Stafford 2010:382), the uses and gratification model “emphasizes what consumers of media products do with them (author’s emphasis, Branston and Stafford 2010:388).
In terms of the *effects model*, the audience is seen as a single mass audience who are relatively uneducated and easily influenced by powerful media messages. It also sees that

Power is assumed to lie solely with the ‘message(s)’. […] This model often implies that meanings are ‘injected’ into the single mass audience by powerful, syringe-like media (Branston and Stafford 2010:382)

However, in modern communication, one is beginning to see a move away from the effects model approach into a more audience-based approach as seen in the *uses and gratification model*. This is because the effects model has started to become outdated and restricted with the advent of Internet, social media and consumer feedback, where audiences are encouraged to engage and interact with other consumers. The uses and gratification model sees more power in the hands of the individual audience member. Here,

Power is argued to lie with the individual consumer of media, who is argued to use TV […] consciously to gratify certain needs and interests (Blumler and Katz 1974, in Branston and Stafford 2010:388).

Often one sees that the individual audience member has a need for diversion and escapism, knowledge, sexual stimulation and even to compare their lifestyle to that of another’s. These are needs that the audience member will search to satisfy from viewing advertisements and television. This relates back to Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs and audience behaviour and motivation based on the search to satisfy certain levels of human needs.

**2.4.1 Discourse Analysis**

It can be said that a television advertisement is a kind of text, constructed by the brand’s advertisers. Discourse Analysis is an approach to studying texts in a sceptical way, meaning that, in advertising terms, the face value of what an advertisement seems to mean may have more depth and hidden motivation behind it. Mean (2010:68) explained that

*Identities are embedded in discourses, hence ideologies. As a consequence, an emotional link exists between identities and the discourses in which they are embedded; that is, we have an emotional commitment to the discourses from which our identities arise.*

This is an indicator of why and how individuals feel emotional connections to characters and concepts in advertisements: ideas of identity are embedded in
advertisements which in turn allow for individuals to feel a sense of self-identity with the brand.

In order to critically analyze a text, such as a television advertisement, one should be able to investigate the hidden purpose for using specific imagery or signs. This is because:

To interpret advertising images is to acknowledge their representational power both as cultural artefacts and as bearers of meaning, reflecting broad societal, cultural, and ideological codes (Schroeder and Zwick 2004:45).

The discourse of advertising is said to both reflect and create social norms, by influencing cultural and individual concepts of identity with their representations (Schroeder and Zwick 2004:24). Taking a critical approach to analyzing the advertising discourse will allow a researcher to recognize the underlying ideologies and identity constructs which advertisers promote. It is important that in order to identify the social conventions which are suggested or depicted in television advertisements, one needs to take a critical approach to analyzing such a discourse. This is because it will provide for a better understanding of the knowledge, attitudes and opinions which advertisers try to impose on the social identities of their audiences and target groups.

With this in mind, it is valuable to consider the media’s tendency to offer the audience what is referred to as a script. A script is used to describe when the media offer images of certain situations and processes. In other words, they may script a scenario about the interaction between men and women in a pub. It is an imagined scenario constructed by the media. “These imaginings can have material effects on how people expect the world to be, and then [how they] experience it” (Branston and Stafford 2010:108). Identifying specific scripts in beer advertising can give insight into the different constructs that the advertisers communicate to their target audiences. Often the media use scripts when they want the audiences to acknowledge or believe something about a particular situation or group. However, there can be problems that arise with regard to the media depictions. For instance, if the media present a group in a particular way, over and over again, using certain images, stories and situations,

[It can] make them seem ‘natural’ or familiar – and thereby marginalize or even exclude other images, making those unfamiliar or even threatening (Branston and Stafford 2010:106).
This is why identifying and analyzing the scripts constructed in advertising texts is so important to understanding what the advertisers’ intentions are, as well as in understanding what the audience perceives the communicated message to be.

2.5 South African Culture

Meeske suggested that, “human behaviour is primarily learnt from the society around us” (Meeske 2009:54). Culture is learnt from the society that surrounds an individual. Marketers use and monitor cultural change so that they can develop new products that are more in line with what people might want at that moment in time.

South Africa presents an interesting case study in terms of culture as there are so many cultures and different language groups that make up the South African public:

South Africa is a mixture of many cultures which have not yet gelled into a unanimous shared South African culture; it is fragmented. Also, there are conflicting interpretations of what constitutes South African nationhood. The closest to this is the (now coined) “rainbow nation” idea (Bezuidenhout 1998).

After the new democratic government took over in 1994, there was a national need for the country to join together as one, in a celebration of the differences between the people of South Africa. Since the above quote in 1998, the South African nation has evolved into a country of many different cultures, religions and races. Citizens strive to live with a mutual respect for one another, trying to overcome a past that encouraged separateness and discrimination. Because of this national movement to make a better South Africa for all, different cultures began to change and merge. New words and concepts were added to the South African vocabulary and language systems. As the vastly differing cultures came into contact with one another, an exchange of thoughts and ideas began to take place.

When different cultures come into contact with each other, the creation and migration of words (lexical items) between languages and cultures take place. Also, when a concept is lacking within one culture and is then taken over from another culture, the word is absorbed into that culture (Bezuidenhout 1998).

What becomes clear is that the South African culture is not one of rigid classifications, but a merging together of many different languages and cultures to form a symbolic whole. The new emerging generation in today’s South Africa is one that is working towards togetherness and mutual understanding which was missing in the past. The identity of the generalized South Africa is not one that can be pin-
pointed, but rather one that is developing along with the multinational culture that one sees in the country.

This can be explained along with the concept of ‘Ubuntu’ which is a construct of perception in the country which influences social conduct. Although it is not an easy term to define, it can be described as:

[A] philosophy of life, which in its most fundamental sense represents personhood, humanity, humaneness and morality; a metaphor that describes group solidarity where such group solidarity is central to the survival of communities with a scarcity of resources, where the fundamental belief is that "motho ke motho ba batho ba bangwe/umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu" which, literally translated, means a person can only be a person through others (Mokgoro 1998).

This concept explains that an individual’s existence is relative to that of the whole group. Its growth in social understanding amongst South Africans highlights the community desire to gain self-fulfilment from collective social ideals and collective unity.

As this change was being seen in the South African society, there was also a change in advertisers target audiences and marketing strategies. Advertisers began to depict black individuals in central roles in their advertisements, directly marketing to the black target groups. Along with this, one saw that many advertisements seemed to support the social and cultural change that was happening in the country, by:

Provid[ing] frames of reference and disseminat[ing] images of social groups. [...] [These] narratives [...] become the secondary sources for ideas that people have about their own society and their place in it (McQuail 2005:499-500).

With more and more media texts beginning to feature empowered black middle class men and women, it is important to question the representation which is being seen and how this is being understood by audiences in South Africa.

2.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, the literature attempted to provide background research in the existing knowledge of advertising, with particular focus on alcohol advertising. It revealed that advertising is powerful by nature, using many methods of persuasion and influence to manipulate audience behaviour. What is clear is that brands often use constructs of social identity in scripted scenarios to make the audience members feel a greater connection and likeness to the values of the brand. It is usual to see
images and signs that reflect certain life themes from the target audience’s life in alcohol advertisements and the messages they attempt to communicate. The research revealed that it is these types of images and signs that can be analyzed in order to provide a deeper understanding of the message put forth by advertisers in television advertisements, as well as of the brand identity and audience identity constructed through the advertisements.

Interesting knowledge was shared that revealed the ways in which an audience member can interpret a communicated message in an advertisement. It has been suggested that audience members will interpret messages differently based on their personal experiences, cultures and general understanding of who they are. It is for this reason that the audience has an ability to reject advertising claims or agree with the communicated message. This knowledge can be used to understand the audience responses from the online survey and reveal their perception of the advertised message of each of the four South African beer advertisements.

In the South African context, it can be suggested that a collective culture has been adapted amongst individuals who seek national belonging and social identity amongst other South Africans.

This research study aims to give valuable insight into the aspects of the South African beer industry and its use of constructs of social identity and togetherness in the communicated messages of its advertisements. Chapter three will cover a detailed description of this study’s research design and methods.
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

3.1 Introduction

The following chapter provides a detailed description of the research framework used to conduct this study. This study uses a mixed methods approach to address the research objectives. Data was captured primarily through qualitative and quantitative research methods and employs an interpretive approach. The first research method used, featured an electronic survey questionnaire which was conducted in order to gauge how the selected sample, NMMU students, perceived the communicated message in the four South African beer advertisements. The second research method was conducted using a semiotic analysis of the same four South African beer brands and their advertisements, namely Castle Lager, Castle Lite, Hansa Pilsener and Carling Black Label.

3.2 Research framework

This section details the framework used to conduct the research for this study. It will include the research question, the research sample, the aims and objectives, the research problem, the context of the study and the details of the four South African beer brands’ advertisements of this research study.

3.2.1 Research question

Does the target audience’s understanding of the communicated message in SAB’s television advertisements for its beer brands (Castle Lager, Castle Lite, Hansa Pilsner and Carling Black Label) correspond with the actual communicated message from the advertisers?

3.2.2 Research sample

18-28-year-old male and female NMMU students who will form a selected sample of the South African beer brand target market.
3.2.3 Aim

The aim of this study is to determine whether the SAB advertisements are tapping into a long-standing culture of drinking, or whether they encourage a culture of drinking as a social construct. It also seeks to discuss the role SAB plays in forming identity and sociability in South African culture through their beer advertisements. This is centred on the belief that advertisements have the “potential to affect our daily lives” (Lantos 1987:104).

3.2.4 Research objectives

- To understand the social and cultural meanings that the target audiences identify with and adopt after viewing the communicated messages in SAB’s television advertisements for its brands Castle Lager, Castle Lite, Hansa Pilsener and Carling Black Label
- To identify the ways in which SAB advertisers communicate messages about issues, masculinity and culture in South Africa
- To show that SAB not only communicates messages about their brands in their television advertisements, but also about cultural concepts and socialization

3.2.5 Context of research

It has been noted that SAB uses nationalism to advertise their mainstream and premium beer products on television. Nationalism can be said to be “a sentiment based on common cultural characteristics that binds a population” or a feeling of “loyalty or devotion to one's country” (Collins English Dictionary Online 2012, search word ‘nationalism’). In the period leading up to, during and after the FIFA World Cup 2010 in South Africa (period 2009 to end 2010), SAB created good quality branding advertisements on television for their four brands, namely Castle Lager, Castle Lite, Hansa Pilsener and Carling Black Label. As if in line with the government’s national agenda to create a sense of togetherness and national pride amongst South Africans during the FIFA World Cup, SAB seems to have become a promoter and symbol of
nationalism, masculinity and unity through its television advertisements during this period.

Because of this, it has also become common-place to see the concepts of drinking beer and sociality intertwined in television advertisements for Castle Lager, Castle Lite, Hansa Pilsener and Carling Black Label. With imagery of groups of men drinking beer in large, friendly groupings, it can be argued that each of the brands’ advertisements attempt to show the audience that a person cannot be sociable without drinking. This raises questions regarding the perceptions that drinking may be entrenched in everyday South African culture.

3.2.6 Advertisements analyzed in this study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>South African Beer Brands Advertisements</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brand</td>
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<tr>
<td>Castle Lager</td>
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<td>Castle Lite</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hansa Pilsener</td>
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<td>Carling Black Label</td>
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Table 3.1: Details of the four South African beer brands’ advertisements

3.3 Research design and methods

This research study takes an interpretive approach focusing on primary data being captured through both quantitative and qualitative methods. A mixed methods approach will be used to address the research objectives, using a semiotic analysis of the four advertisements and an online survey.

Firstly, the data was obtained through the analysis of an online survey to determine the selected sample’s perception of the communicated message of the television advertisements of the four South African beer brands, namely Castle Lager, Castle Lite, Hansa Pilsener and Carling Black Label. This online survey produced both qualitative and quantitative data, and this was used to determine whether the audiences identify with the advertisements, and whether they
understood and agree with the communicated messages. Secondly, a semiotic content analysis examined the four television advertisements individually in order to fully understand the communicated message in the advertisements, as well as to analyze if each advertisement contains the use of cultural concepts and identity. This analysis focused on identifying the representamen, interpretant and object using Pierce’s model of a sign, as well as the Media Education Foundations model of deconstructing an alcohol advertisement.

This section of Chapter three will provide a detailed description of the survey questionnaire, and the semiotic analysis and in addition, the reason why both are strategically important to ensure that the data collected for this study will be valid and useful for future studies.

3.3.1 Selecting the four South African beer brands’ advertisements

This research focused on four television advertisements which were aired in South Africa after the period of the FIFA World Cup 2010, namely the end of 2010 and 2011. The SAB beer brands which were chosen were Castle Lager, Castle Lite, Hansa Pilsener and Carling Black Label. These brands were chosen because of their prominence on television, as well as their popularity. Castle Lager and Black Label are categorised as mainstream beers, while Castle Lite and Hansa Pilsner are premium beers because of their higher price.

The television advertisements of each of these brands were collected and scanned to find one advertisement for each brand which encompassed the brand message and advertising campaign. The advertisements which were chosen were Castle Lager’s ‘The Journey’, Castle Lite’s ‘The Official Castle Lite’, Carling Black Label’s ‘Champion Men’ and Hansa Pilsener’s ‘Sold Out’.

In terms of the South African audiences, Castle Lager’s core market is “25-40 year old black males thereafter come white males and young adults” (DevelopmentTechnology.co.za 2002), while Castle Lite’s target market is “young, aspiring and professional black people, aged 24 to approximately 35” (O’Brien Publicity 2004). The Hansa Pilsener consumer is quoted as being:

[Y]oung urban males who have a strong sense of self, who love life, music and don’t take things for granted. […] [H]e exudes a confidence that makes him approachable to everyone [and] will become [a] leader[…] and backbone of [the South African] nation (DuncanBoxie 2011).
Shawn Katz, marketing manager for Carling Black Label explained the core target market of the brand by describing the brand’s advertising campaign and how it relates to its target audiences:

The new true man is an urban knight who is part of the brotherhood but his individual identity and self-respect is of equal priority. He acts in the interests of the greater good and combines both entrepreneurial and individualistic values. Masculinity is more nuanced and the brand is projecting this through recognizing the winners and champions. They are entrepreneurs, fathers, community builders, sportsmen and leaders. These are men of character who deserve the reward of champion beer (cited in Bizcommunity.com, u.a. 2011).

With this information in mind, it is clear that the four South African beer brands have target audiences that are young, aspiring individuals, mostly male and black. The target audience was narrowed down for the purposes of this research to NMMU students aged between 18-28 years. This is based on the four South African beer brands target audiences as well as the nature of the advertisements. These NMMU students were chosen to represent a sample of the South African audience as a whole, with the study aiming to capture student perceptions of each beer brand which is familiar to this audience.

By incorporating data from respondents that is qualitative and contextual to the respondents’ lives, the outcomes of this research were more thoroughly achieved.

3.3.2 Survey of NMMU students

This part of the research methodology will be performed conducting a survey with the use of online questionnaires. The questionnaire will be presented to the selected sample of NMMU students through the use of NMMU’s Communiqué. Students will be able to access this survey through their student email accounts on the NMMU online student portal. The electronic survey was developed using eSurveysPro.com, which is a free online survey platform that provides guidelines to develop survey questionnaires that are easy to administer to the selected sample and will allow for immediate results that are easily accessible. The application itself will provide for statistical results to be summarized.

Arens et al. (2008:222) explain that a survey will allow the researcher to “gain[…] information on attitudes, opinions, or motivations by questioning current or prospective customers”. It is for this reason that a survey questionnaire was
designed to collect primary research data. This online questionnaire was designed using both short and long questions. This allowed for both qualitative and quantitative research to be conducted. The short questions began by asking the respondents for information about their drinking habits and brand preferences, as well as other important information that is crucial to understanding what type of consumer they are and where they fit into the target groups of the brands. The long questions were designed in such a way to encourage more elaborate responses in order to gain an understanding of their perceptions of the brands and beers, after they have been shown the advertisements using an online hyperlink.

The selected sample of NMMU students were selected according to criteria that followed the targeted age of 18 to 28 years old. The members who voluntarily answered the online questionnaire consisted of university students who fall into the target audiences of the beer brands. Since university life consists of the lifestyle associated with drinking beer, social togetherness and partying, the university students from Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University mostly identify with the life themes in the advertisements. The audience responses were analyzed according to Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs and Stuart Hall’s model of readings. This research attempted to understand the short term effects of the advertisements on the audience. This provided vital information for this research into what the audience understands about the brands, about beer and about drinking in the South African culture.

The email broadcast via NMMU Communiqué went to all the selected sample’s NMMU email accounts on the 20th of October 2012, with a reminder email broadcast again on the 20th of November 2012. The respondents were given from 20 October 2012 till the 20th of December 2012 to complete the electronic survey. Please refer to Addendum B on page 99 to view the email which was sent out to NMMU students.

The email explained certain information to the NMMU students, such as for whom and what reason the survey was being conducted, as well as clearly stating the terms of participation and which advertisements were used. The link to the survey questionnaire was clearly visible and all that the selected sample was required to do was click on the link and answer the questions that followed. Each advertisement would need to be opened in YouTube as the respondent progressed through the questionnaire.
The survey is intended to determine the selected sample’s perception of the communicated message of each of the four South African beer brand advertisements. The survey questionnaire was divided into 6 sections. Before the questions started, respondents were informed of the purpose and participation terms of this study as well as their participation consent. The first section asked the respondents to indicate their age, gender and race. Furthermore, it posed questions which will allow the researchers to understand their drinking habits. This information was to be used for background and contextual data only.

The next four sections asked respondents questions relating to the Castle Lager’s ‘The Journey’, Castle Lite’s ‘The Official Castle Lite’, Carling Black Label’s ‘Champion Men’ and Hansa Pilsener’s ‘Sold Out’ advertisements respectively. In other words, each advertisement was given a section and series of questions. Each of these sections consisted of both open-ended and closed-ended questions.

The final section asked the respondents to answer one closed-ended question, followed by one open-ended question. This is a general section which related to all of the four advertisements and asked the respondents to acknowledge which advertisement caught their attention most and to explain which advertisement best met their needs as a consumer.

The survey results of the close-ended questions were displayed in graphs so that numerical results were easy to understand. The open-ended questions were subject to a thematic analysis by the researcher in order to determine the selected sample’s perception of the four advertisements. The respondents were labelled alphabetically for distinguishing purposes.

Please refer to Addendum C (page 102) to view the survey design.

3.3.3 Semiotic analysis of the South African beer advertisements

The second part of the research section includes a thematic content analysis of four SAB television advertisements, each for different brands. This research method was conducted to analyze the communicated messages which appear in each of the four SAB television advertisements. Using a combination of Charles Saunders Pierce’s model of a sign, namely representamen, interpretant and object; as well as the Media Education Foundations model of deconstructing an alcohol advertisement,
this research aims to identify the ideas and concepts promoted by the advertisers in the advertisements. Peirce’s classification of signs can allow researchers to better understand certain imagery used in advertisements. A sign, also known as a *representamen*, is something that means something to someone. In other words, “it [...] creates in the mind of that person an equivalent sign, or perhaps a more developed sign” (cited in Hartshorne & Weiss 1965:135). Therefore, in order to reveal these hidden signs or meanings, each of the Four South African beer brand advertisements needs to be analysed.

Firstly, the advertisements were selected:

*Castle Lager’s ‘The Journey’*:

![Castle Lager 'The Journey'](Castle Lager 2010, YouTube)

*Castle Lite’s ‘The Official Castle Lite’*:

![Castle Lite 'The Official Castle Lite TV Ad'](CastleLiteSA 2011, YouTube)
These four advertisements were chosen because of their prominence on South African television, and because each stands out amongst the various other beer brand advertisements. The Castle Lager advertisement reached 2972 views, the Castle Lite advertisement had 3852 views, the Carling Black Label advertisement had 2190 views and the Hansa Pilsener had 499 views as of 20 December 2012.

Each advertisement was analyzed separately. The method of analyses was to look at each advertisement as a whole, using the Media Education Foundations model to deconstruct the alcohol advertisement, after which, individual imagery and signs were examined according to Peirce’s model of a sign, namely representamen, interpretant and object, in order to uncover the hidden meanings found in the advertisements.

The data deduced from the analysis will be supplemented with press releases and company documents found online, to fully understand the brand’s campaign message. A final comparative analysis was also made between the four South African beer brand advertisements in order to determine whether any of the...
advertisements shared similarities such as using social identity and togetherness in the conveying of the brand message. This analysis was conducted to understand if all the brands use similar methods to increase awareness about their brand and product and if any ideas or meanings deduced from this analysis can be found in the selected samples responses from the survey analyses.

3.4 Ethical Considerations

Professor Thoko Mayekiso, the DVC Academic of the NMMU, granted permission to conduct the electronic survey on NMMU students as well as to send the request for participation via the NMMU Communiqué email system. Please see Addendum 1A on page 96 for the permission letter from Prof. Mayekiso.

Since this study relies on the participation of an audience, ethical clearance was gained and sensitivity considered. This is because the online survey was conducted in such a way that the above mentioned advertisements will be shown and participants were encouraged to discuss different elements of each advertisement.

3.4.1 Survey

Participation for this study was voluntary. Participants were notified of the nature of the online survey questionnaire in the NMMU Communiqué email that was broadcast on 20 October 2012. The respondents needed to acknowledge the terms of participation and indicate that they were participating voluntarily and that their participation was confidential.

Respondents could have ended the survey questionnaire at any time without any repercussions. The responses were anonymous and if the respondents needed to be identified, they were given alphabetical labels to distinguish between them during the analysis of the open-ended questions.

All personal information for this study was only used for analysis purposes to provide insight into the topic. Thus, all information will remain confidential.
3.4.2 Ethical clearance

Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University RTI Higher Degrees sub-committee of the Faculty of Arts Research, Technology and Innovation Committee approved the ethics clearance for this research study.

Ethics clearance reference: H12-ART-JMS-002

3.5 Conclusion

The data captured from the survey questionnaire helped the researcher determine the selected sample’s perception of the communicated messages in the four advertisements. The thematic and semiotic content analysis of the advertisements in turn helped the researcher identify messages and meanings in each of the advertisements, and whether any of the four shared similar characteristics or similar strategies. It allowed for a conclusion to be drawn as to whether the target audience recognizes the advertisements as part of an existing culture, or whether the advertisements promote concepts that are not in line with South Africa’s cultural and social realities.

The following chapter provides a detailed report of the data and findings. Chapter four helps researchers gain a greater understanding of how the selected sample perceives these four South African beer brands and their respective advertisements.
CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The research findings in this chapter will be reported and analyzed in an attempt to provide insights into the communicated messages in the four South African beer brands’ television advertisements. These brands are Castle Lager, Castle Lite, Hansa Pilsener and Carling Black Label. This research aims to identify SAB’s use of cultural and social concepts in their television advertisements to attract attention to the advertised products and build brand loyalty.

The research findings were obtained through an online survey questionnaire of the selected sample of NMMU students which will be used to gain an understanding into their perceptions of each of the four South African beer brands advertisements. A semiotic analysis of the four television advertisements, namely Castle Lager’s ‘The Journey’ (2010), Castle Lite’s ‘The Official Castle Lite’ (2011), Hansa Pilsener’s ‘Sold Out (2011) and Carling Black Label’s ‘Champion Men’ (2011) examined what each advertisement is trying to communicate, through use of imagery and associations, and whether this interpretation is similar to the selected samples understanding of that message. This examination focussed on identifying the representamen, the interpretant and the object of signs in the advertisements as well as on deconstructing the advertisements as a whole.

The survey questionnaire provided insights into how the selected sample perceived the communicated messages in each of the four advertisements, and if they found the advertised product appealing or felt any emotional connection to that product. This survey helped to identify the messages and assumptions about drinking discovered by the selected sample in each of the advertisements. This allowed the researcher to understand the messages communicated about the product and drinking in general, in each advertisement as it is contextually perceived by a target audience.

Subsequently, the semiotic analysis provided a detailed thematic analysis of the four advertisements. It allowed the researcher to identify and understand the messages that the brands wanted to convey to their target audiences, through meanings and images communicated in their advertisements. This was accomplished by associating the advertisements with situations and life themes in
the target audience’s environment as well as with the messages and meanings that the target audiences (and selected sample from the online survey) were receiving and identifying from the advertisements. These results are useful in determining the use of references to cultural and social identifiers and signs that are used in the four advertisements, and whether the brands are using these concepts to attempt to link their products and the act of drinking with the target audience’s social and cultural identity.

The following results in this section are focused on the raw data that was interpreted from research gathered from the survey questionnaire and the semiotic analysis.

4.2 Structure of the research findings report

The research methodology of the survey of the selected sample and the semiotic analysis of the four advertisements applied to this study are structured as follows:

Survey:
- Biographical information
- Drinking preferences
- Section 1: Castle Lager ‘The Journey’
- Section 2: Castle Lite ‘The Official Castle Lite’
- Section 3: Carling Black Label ‘Champion Men’
- Section 4: Hansa Pilsener ‘Sold Out’
- Section 5: South African beer brands
  Similarities and Differences

Semiotic analysis:
- Castle Lager ‘The Journey’ advertisement
- Castle Lite ‘The Official Castle Lite’ advertisement
- Carling Black Label ‘Champion Men’ advertisement
- Hansa Pilsener ‘Sold Out’ advertisement
- Conclusion
4.3 Research findings

The following section provides a detailed report of the research findings of the online survey and the semiotic analysis.

4.3.1 Survey

The analysis and interpretation of the following survey helped to determine the perceptions of the selected sample (18-28-year-old NMMU students), with regard to the four beer advertisements. The survey was conducted online through the eSurveysPro.com (eSurveysPro 2012) free online survey developing and broadcasting medium. The survey was live from the 20th of October 2012 until the 20th of December 2012. The survey closed with 54 valid responses.

4.3.1.1 Biographical information

Of the valid 54 responses, all 54 chose to answer these questions with regard to biological and personal information. There were more male respondents (36 of the 54) than there were female respondents (18 of the 54). The majority of the respondents (24 of the 54) were aged between 21 to 23 years old. The respondents were also asked to indicate their race on the online questionnaire, as this could provide insight into how many from each race responded to the survey. The majority of respondents were black (36 of the 54) and white (15 of the 54) students.

The following graphs are an illustrative indication of this data.
Graph 4.1: Survey respondents' gender breakdown

Graph 4.2: Survey respondents' age breakdown
4.3.1.2 Drinking preferences

Respondents were also asked to answer questions regarding their drinking behaviors and preferences. Respondents were asked firstly, “How often do you consume alcohol?” to which all 54 respondents chose to answer. They were given a number of options as an answer to this question; namely “never”, “once a month”, “every two weeks”, “once a week”, “numerous times a week”, “every day” and “other (please specify)”. The majority of the respondents indicated “once a week” as their answer (15 of the 54), while “once a month” received 12 of the 54, and “numerous times a week” received 10 of the 54 responses. Those who chose to answer “other” (2 of the 48) indicated with responses such as “now and then” and “very seldom[...]”. The graph below indicates the percentage that each answer received.
The respondents were then given an opportunity in an open-ended question to indicate what their preferred alcoholic beverage was and why. The question read as follows: “What is your preferred alcohol beverage and why?” Only 47 of the 54 (87.04%) respondents answered this question, with the remaining 7 (12.96%) respondents choosing to skip this question. Responses to this question included the following:

- “rose wine because it is a social drink and brings many people together for example, ‘I’m coming over for a glass of wine’”
- “castle lite, I just love it, and the fact that its hangover is not as intense”
- “Sparkling wine, wine, cocktails and ciders. They have a fruity flavor and don’t taste like you are drinking alcohol”
- “Castle Lager Draught. This is a sportsman’s beer it’s dry and tangy. It gives me that thirst quenching taste. It’s just sell out that’s a South African Beer”
- “Carling Black Label has a smooth taste”
- “Castle lager, you get drunk quickly”
- “Castle and Hansa, In think it is the best Beer in the world”
- “Beer- It does not need to be mixed with a soft drink etc... One can also usually consume a large quantity before feeling intoxicated”
- “Hansa pilsener because it doesn’t test too strong and it doesn’t rush you on getting drunk too quickly”
- “Red wine or whiskey - prefer the taste”
- “Bernini blush. It tastes nice and is a ladies drink”
- “Strawberry and Peach Brutal fruit. I like it because it is sweet and colorful”
• “Castle Lite and Dry Red wine. I prefer castle lite due to its distinctive taste and low alcohol percentage”
• “Carling Black label, it tastes better to me and it is also strong when you getting drunk-)”
• “Castle Lite, because he is my preferred choice. Also I regard castle as beer more fitted my style a class”
• “Don’t have one, don’t like alcohol”

The responses, although varied, do indicate that some of the respondents choose to drink one or more of the four South African beer brands in this study. This question helps to bring greater depth in understanding of the answers throughout the rest of the survey.

Lastly, the respondents were asked to indicate on what occasions they like to drink alcohol. The question read as follows: “When do you like to drink alcohol?” they were given the following answers from which they could pick any they felt most relevant to them: “On special occasions”, “after work or college”, “at a braai or house party”, “when going out to eat”, “at a bar or club” and “other (please elaborate)”. Only 4 of the 54 respondents (7.4%) skipped this question. The answer that received the most selection (with 33 of the 54 respondents selecting this option) was “at a bar or club”. Those who chose to select the option “other” indicated responses such as “I do not drink alcohol” and “when the opportunity arises”. The graph below indicates the number of times each option was selected by the respondents:

Graph 4.5: Survey respondents' answer to “When do you like to drink alcohol?”

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The answers to this question, as well as the previous two questions, provide contextual and background insight into the drinking habits and practices of the respondents. These observations help to set the tone for the rest of the questions that followed relating to each of the four South African beer brands.

4.3.1.3 Section 1: Castle Lager ‘The Journey’ advertisement

In this section of the survey, respondents were asked to answer both a closed-ended question and a number of open-ended questions relating to the Castle Lager ‘The Journey’ advertisement. Of the 54 respondents, 39 (72.2%) indicated that they had seen the advertisement, while 15 of the 54 (27.8%) indicated that they had not seen the advertisement. None of the respondents chose to skip this question. However, some of the respondents failed to continue answering all of the remaining close-ended questions in this section, choosing rather to skip to the next advertisement. Shown below is the data gained from the respondents who answered each of the open-ended questions.

Questions 9 and 10

Question 9 of this section asked the question “What, in your opinion, is this advertisement communicating?” The question revealed that of the total 54 respondents, 32 (59.3%) felt the following about the advertisement:

- “in my opinion I think that the advertisement is communicating that a castle beer can bring numerous cultures together as it is enjoyed by various people and it is a proudly South African drink”
- “that with Castle Lager, people can have a good time together, with the spirit of ubuntu”
- “It's communicating that with Castle the fans of South Africa can reach the team anywhere in the world”
- “that it is ok to drinking alcohol”
- “It tells us how proud South Africans r of their own brands. They took it to a place that is really far in order to feel enjoy the moment with proteas”
- “Affordability & diversity among South Africans”
- “Basically the advert is trying to promote alcohol in a good way of which it is wrong”
- “That wherever you go Castle Lager is there and will remind you of your roots and beginnings”
- “The South African sense of "spirit" and belonging. The beer would make you feel at home.”
The advertisement is saying that wherever you go, Castle will be there. And, even if one does not know the people in the area but when there is alcohol (Castle) one is bound to make friends and have fun.

- “Consumption of alcohol to boost your morale”
- “Coming together”
- “Diversity in unity.”
- “That Castle Lager brings people together. No matter what their race, culture or geographic location is.”
- “Alcohol accompanies camaraderie”

The observations made by the survey respondents indicate that 17 of the 32 (53.1%) found that the advertisement communicated concepts of togetherness or belonging and being proudly South African. From these results, it is clear that, as described in Chapter Two, section 2.2.2 of this treatise, “[t]he upside of drinking, the fun, the togetherness and sense of social identity is reiterated in countless alcohol advertising and marketing campaigns […]” (Szmigin et al. 2011:25).

3 of the 32 (9.3%) respondents indicated negative responses to the message in the advertisement, with one respondent saying “Wicked nation and lost South Africans”. However, 9 of the 32 (28.1%) respondents indicated that they felt that the advertisement attempted to portray the act of drinking alcohol and/or beer in a positive light. While this data is valid, the following question directly asked the respondents to give their opinion on how appealing the product is.

Question 10 asked the respondents the following question: “Do you find the product appealing? Why or why not?” There were 36 of the total 54 (66.6%) respondents who answered this question.

Graph 4.6: Survey respondents’ answer to “Do you find the [Castle Lager] product appealing?”
Their responses to the second part of the question revealed that they felt the following:

- "yes, it may not taste good but it is a good way to bring people together and a way to show that no matter what culture you are we all have things in common"
- "Because of the advert my mind thinks the product is appealing but because of experience I know it's not"
- "Yes! Being a South African and all, Seeing you flag flying high and man having fun with a cold one that's the real journey"
- "It looks appealing when you look at the advert. you only see happy people and make one think that drinking is fun"
- "Absolutely not...my morals are in place"
- "Yes, cause after the advertisement I felt like having a beer"
- "yes, it appeals to the consumer on a proudly South African platform"
- "No, the beer would be warm after sitting in a box the entire journey"
- "NO, it's the number one creator of roads accidents, when children start to disobey their parents they do it through alcohol, when parents abuse children they do it because they are propelled by alcohol."
- "Yes because of the friendships formed from something they share in common"

Question 11

Question 11 asked respondents “What feelings and emotions does the advertisement attach to the product?” While only 30 of the total 54 (55.5%) responded, the answers revealed similar responses to the previous two questions. Responses included:

- "it shows that it is a proudly South African drink and it encourages people to get over and move on from their differences"
- "Spirit of ubuntu, with positive feelings"
- "happiness and fun"
- " Excitement"
- "happiness, love and cultural value"
- "Perfectness and thirst"
- "Acceptance and belonging"
- "Feelings of unity and national pride. (The appearance of S.A. cricketers also amplifies these feelings)"
- "To be a real sport supporter and be behind you national side you need to drink castle lager"
- "Patriotism"
- "Nationalism"
• “I feel nothing. An advertisement does not necessarily encourage all the viewers, if you do not like a thing it will not do anything to your emotions.”

These responses show that many respondents feel that concepts of nationalism, patriotism, belonging and fun are all incorporated in the advertisement through use of imagery and sound. This can be useful in the semiotic analysis of the advertisement, but also useful in understanding the selected sample’s response to the advertisement as a whole.

Questions 12 and 13

Question 12 asked “What messages and/or assumptions does the advertisement communicate about drinking?” Only 29 of the 54 (53.7%) respondents answered this question. The following responses were received:

• “that drinking can bring many different people together and that it does not always have to be bad”
• “Drinking is a good thing for those special moments in life and with the warning at the end Just don’t over do it”
• “drink responsible”
• “Alcohol consumption and sports are closely connected in the South African culture.”
• “the message communicated by the advert is that drinking is fun and you can do it anywhere in the world”
• “Drink to have fun and be responsible”
• “that it is ok to drink and if top sports man drink then it is ok for everyone”
• “that drinking is cool”
• “That nobody likes drinking alone and that it is always better when in a group with a Castle in the hand”
• “it is safe and good when you do it under love and peace but not for the sake of willing to disturb others”

What is clear from the responses is that the respondents believe that this advertisement suggests that drinking is good and fun, that it brings people together and that drinking and sport are closely associated with South African culture. What is interesting to note is that many respondents indicated that the advertisement also encourages responsible drinking in moderation.

Question 13 continued to ask the respondents “What messages does the advertisement communicate about what you (the target audience) want and desire?” Only 27 respondents (50%) answered this question. While many responses mirrored
much of the sentiment from the previous questions with regards to drinking for fun and enjoyment, there were other noteworthy responses such as the following:

- “want to get drunk”
- “I want to support my national cricket team and identify with others in the community”
- “a braai with nice meat and a cold one”
- “that it is very south African and you should do it”
- “a love for sport, braai and beer”
- “To enjoy the experience friendship and the excitement of travelling, new adventures”

This shows that some respondents felt that the advertisement suggested that the audience wants to drink, that they do this in support of their country and in their identification with their community, and that they want to drink when around a braai (or at a typical South African social gathering).

Question 14

The last question in this section asked the respondents “What does the advertisement suggest about gender and sexuality?” 24 respondents (44.4%) chose to answer this question. The suggestion that beer “is a man’s drink” or that the advertisement is aimed at a male audience was seen in 15 of the 24 (62.5%) responses. One response stated:

“It depicts man to be more patriotic when it comes to sport and the socialized bit that a cold and proudly SA Beer goes well with those moments is way women are left out.”

It is clear then, that the majority of the respondents’ opinion is that this advertisement is aimed solely at a male audience.

Themes

From the open-ended responses of the online survey, there were prevalent themes that appeared regarding the Castle Lager ‘The Journey’ advertisement.

Firstly, it is clear that, in general, the respondents felt that the advertisement reflected a ‘Proudly South African’ theme. The respondents indicated this in questions 9 and 10 by stating that:

- “The South African sense of “spirit” and belonging. The beer would make you feel at home.”
• “It tells us how proud south Africans r of their own brands. They took it to a place that is really far in order to feel enjoy the moment with proteas”
• “yes, it appeals to the consumer on a proudly South African platform”

This sense of belonging is a social need as described in Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs (Meeske 2009:69). It is important then to determine what this means to the respondents. The following can be said to suggest what the respondents understand this concept to mean:

• “a braai with nice meat and a cold one”
• “ I want to support my national cricket team and identify with others in the community”
• “Feelings of unity and national pride. (The appearance of S.A. cricketers also amplifies these feelings)”
• “Acceptance and belonging”
• “Yes! Being a South African and all, Seeing you flag flying high and man having fun with a cold one that’s the real journey”
• “Diversity in unity.”

➢ Conclusion

From the above analysis and interpretation of this section of the survey, it can be concluded that the majority of the survey respondents understood the communicated message in the Castle Lager ‘The Journey’ advertisement to be that Castle Lager is a proudly South African drink that should be enjoyed along with groups of people who support their nation and feel a sense of unity amongst other South Africans, despite any differences that they may have. Some respondents did not like the advertisement, and this can be said to be due to either the fact that they do not drink alcohol and/or do not support the consumption of alcohol, or due to the fact that they prefer another alcoholic beverage. It can also be argued that some respondents felt no link to the advertisement because they have very different cultural experiences to those displayed in the advertisement. This would be an example of oppositional reading as described by Stuart Hall (Chandler 2007:195). However, the majority of respondents stated positive feelings towards the advertisements, revealing that the advertisement did capture the attention of those who may have similar life experiences or those who enjoy feelings of pride and camaraderie when partaking in a typical South African experience, and this would be an example of a dominant reading as described by Stuart Hall (Chandler 2007:194). This would support B. J.
Parker’s statement that “[a]dvertisers [...] simply employ myths of the culture to promote their products” (Parker 1998:99).

4.3.1.4 Section 2: Castle Lite ‘The Official Castle Lite’ advertisement

In this section of the survey, respondents were asked to answer both a closed-ended question and a number of open-ended questions relating to the Castle Lite ‘The Official Castle Lite’ advertisement. Of the 54 respondents, 32 (59.3%) indicated that they had seen the advertisement, while 16 (29.6%) indicated that they had not seen the advertisement. 6 of the respondents (11.1%) chose to skip this question. However, some of the respondents failed to continue answering all of the remaining close-ended questions in this section, choosing rather to skip to the next advertisement. Shown below is the data gained from the respondents who answered each of the open-ended questions.

Questions 16 and 17

Question 16 of this section asked the question “What, in your opinion, is this advertisement communicating?” 27 of the 32 (84.3%) respondents who viewed this advertisement chose to answer this question. The responses reveal that they felt the advertisement was communicating:

- “That if you drink Castle Lite then you’ll be the main man”
- “it is a funny advert it mean you think that you can make it snow and that it stays cold”
- “A man’s success depends on the beer”
- “that castle lite is ice cold”
- “Catchy and trendy and is made for the sophisticated people....”
- “A guy's guy would drink the product”
- “The advertisement is communicating that Castle lite gives you status and respect. In a way you are like a jack of many trades”
- “Drinking beer makes you cool”
- “The man who drinks Castle Light can do everything and make the impossible happen. Without him it would have been a bunch of guys drinking beers in a bar”
- “Successful men drink Castle Light”

5 of the 27 (18.5%) responses revealed that some respondents felt that the advertisement was “cool” and was communicating the need for Castle Lite to be
served “cold”. Other respondents, 9 of the 27 (33.3%) answered this question in such a way that it revealed that they felt that the advertisement was communicating that this beer was made for “classy” and “successful” men.

When asked “Do you find the product appealing?” in question 17, 28 respondents chose to answer this question. 18 of the 28 (64.2%) respondents did find the product appealing, while 7 of the 28 (25%) did not find it appealing. The remaining respondents expressed a neutral response.

Their responses to the second part of the question revealed that they felt the following:

- “yes, we want cold beer”
- “Yes, because of its green bottle which implies class”
- “No! I'm a simple person, this ad tries too hard to depict that in life or fashion statement to be cool”
- “yeeess!!! It is appealing because my friend will respect me and know that I can do lot of stuff they cannot do!”

**Question 18**

Question 18 asked respondents “What feelings and emotions does the advertisement attach to the product?” While only 25 of the total 54 (46.2%) respondents answered this question, the following responses revealed:

- “that it is a sexy drink for men to attract girls”
- “Your the man and your cool with a castle lie on your side”
- “Pride, Success, High-esteem, etc”
- “happiness”
• “Take it easy, drink Castle lite and you'll be awesome”
• “the feeling of ownership, in charge and respected”
• “that this beer has a certain class to it”
• “longing for success, popularity to pride”

It is clear that similar themes have been attached to the product by the advertisement.

Questions 19 and 20

Question 19 asked “What messages and/or assumptions does the advertisement communicate about drinking?” Only 25 of the 54 (46.2%) respondents answered this question. Here are examples of what the responses revealed:

• “it can be used for socializing and just basically having fun”
• “That when drinking Castle Lite, one can only enjoy themselves wherever they are”
• “it's ok to drink, if you wanna cool down have a beer”
• “Drinking is not really conveyed, merely that this brand of alcohol makes you or gives you confidence”
• “Promotes drinking and making it to be seen as a right thing to do”
• “its cool, make friends, go to nice bars and girls”
• “It does portray a need to drink but then also a caution is given about the effects of alcohol”
• “Drinking sets the pace for successful people”

The responses reveal that the audience perceives the advertised message to be that beer can make you feel more confident, relaxed and cool. Responses also showed that socialising is portrayed alongside the act of drinking beer.

Question 20 revealed similar answers to the previous question, with a few interesting additional ideas and perceptions being expressed. 24 of the 54 (44.4%) respondents chose to answer this question, which read “What messages does the advertisement communicate about what you (the target audience) want and desire?” While the responses reflected previous answers, some revealed the following:

• “That we like being the “star of the show” and that men enjoy being with ladies”
• “nothing much except drinking is good”
• “People would be able to accomplish anything if they've been drinking the product”
• “it says we want to be popular”
• “That you always want your friends with you to have a good time.”
• “Impress everyone, attract attention from the opposite sex”
What is clear from the responses to this question, specifically, is that the respondents felt that the advertisement created an image of their consumer as being a central character amongst their friends, who is a popular and dominant male figure and is attractive to members of the opposite sex. It is also clear that the respondents felt that the consumer of this brand would enjoy social gatherings and going out to bars.

Question 21

This question asked the audience to comment on the gender differences in the advertisement, posing the question “What does the advertisement suggest about gender and sexuality?” 25 of the total 54 (46.2%) respondents answered this question.

- It targets man, and gives the “Uyaphapha artique” aka (you like things) and women are into that acting cool stuff. They should have made this for girls it would have had better market and this ad would have worked
- It is fair. Women and man were put together. And no one was looked down
- that it is for males
- That its more males who drink but if castle lite did proper research instead of assumptions they would have identified the fact that more and more black women drink castle lite as much as men do
- Women want to be with a man who's smooth and in control.
- well not showing woman that are drinking suggests this product is aimed at males
- That mostly men enjoy beer, and women are entertainment or an attraction for men to perve over
- Woman "bow down" and praise the successful drinker

What is important to note from these responses is that the advertisement tended to create the perception amongst those who responded that this beer is for males, with the exception of there being a handful of respondents who felt that the advertisement fairly depicted both genders. It is also interesting to note that at least two respondents revealed that they felt that the advertisement neglected to communicate with its female consumers, focusing more on the man’s point of view.
Themes

From the open-ended responses of the online survey, there were prevalent themes that appeared regarding the Castle Lite ‘The Official Castle Lite’ advertisement.

It is clear that there is a general perception that Castle Lite and, more specifically this advertisement, are aimed at an audience which is mostly male. There were numerous responses that showed that many respondents felt that the central character in the advertisement was meant to look like he was very popular, that he was at ease in the social environment and that he was successful. It is also clear that the idea of the beer being served ‘ice cold’ was reflected in the ‘coolness’ of the people in the advertisement. One respondent’s comment in question 19 depicts the overall perception of the target audience in the advertisement:

If you drink Castle Light then you will woo the girls with your moves on the dance floor, solve a mathematical problem, impress another man’s girlfriend with your smooth and impressive pool shot and as you take a sip of beer then women will start playing sax and guitar for you.

It is clear that this advertisement makes use of esteem needs, as described in Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs (Meeske 2009:69), which include status and recognition needs. It is also important to note that some respondents did not read anything deeper into the imagery and sounds from the advertisement, with some commenting that they found “nothing much except drinking is good” in the message in the advertisement, and another expressed that they felt the that the product was depicted as being “[...] so light in taste and doesn't taste awful”.

Conclusion

From the above analysis and interpretation of this section of the survey, it can be concluded that the majority of the survey respondents understood the communicated message in the Castle Lite ‘The Official Castle Lite’ advertisement to be that Castle Lite is a cool drink for people to enjoy in a social environment such as a bar or club. This would support Stuart Hall’s explanation of dominant readings (Chandler 2007:194). The responses received from the questions regarding this advertisement revealed a lot about the depicted target audience and how a person who drinks the product should act. The majority of responses revealed that the target
audience is mostly males who are successful and popular, and enjoy being the centre of attention.

4.3.1.5 Section 3: Carling Black Label ‘Champion Men’ advertisement

In this section of the survey, respondents were asked to answer both a closed-ended question and a number of open-ended questions relating to the Carling Black Label ‘Champion Men’ advertisement. Of the 54 respondents, 27 (50%) indicated that they had seen the advertisement, while 17 (31.5%) indicated that they had not seen the advertisement. 10 of the respondents (18.5%) chose to skip this question. However, some of the respondents failed to continue answering all of the remaining close-ended questions in this section, choosing rather to skip to the next advertisement. Shown below is the data gained from the respondents who answered each of the open-ended questions.

- Questions 23 and 24

Question 23 of this section asked the question “What, in your opinion, is this advertisement communicating?” The answers revealed that 23 of the total 54 respondents (42.6%) and felt the following about the advertisement:

- “That men who are champions deserve to drink black label”
- “That it is only drank by people who have achieved something. And if you drink it, it means you are an achiever”
- “That its only for men who work hard”
- “It is communicating that Black label is for strong, clever hardcore men.”
- “That it is a beer of high quality”
- “It is making people believe that men who drink black label are heroes”
- “it is showing the traits of what a man is suppose to be”
- “Yes it has a lot of message that it portrays especially to the growing kids who are watching the video may want to be those champions because carling black label has it all.”
- “Men love beer.”

It is clear then that the respondents felt that the advertisement is accurate in its portrayal of its target audience, that of being strong, male figures. With words like “achievement”, “clever”, “heroes” and “champions”, it can also be argued that the message communicated is mostly a positive one.
Question 24 asked the respondents the following question: “Do you find the product appealing? Why or why not?” Again, only 23 of the total 54 (42.6%) respondents answered this question. Only 9 of the 23 (39.1%) respondents who answered said they did not find the product appealing, while 13 of the 23 (56.5%) found the product appealing. The one other respondent reflected a neutral response by saying “it is difficult to say as everyone wants to be a champion whether male or female.” The following graph depicts this data:

Graph 4.8: Survey respondents’ answer to “Do you find the [Carling Black Label] product appealing?”

Their responses to the second part of the question reveal that they felt the following:

- no, I do not drink beer
- Yes! At the end of the day all you want is to enjoy that moment of being a champion with a cold one
- No, I think it is appealing to men though
- yes, it’s got a catch to it, not only the fire men or other people are champions but also the regular guy
- Yes, I liked the juxtaposition of sports and bar-room games
- I don't find it appealing because it gives us the impression that if you don't work hard or don't have long days or tough time at work, you don't deserve it.
- Yes, catchy song gets you wrapped up into a good feel video that promotes their drink, or "reward", for being a champion man.
- Yes. Refreshing visuals and activities that are attached to the lives of Black Label drinkers
Questions 25, 26 and 27

Question 25 asked the respondents “What feelings and emotions does the advertisement attach to the product?” Only 19 of the 54 (35.2%) respondents answered this question. They revealed the following:

- “that it can be deserved after a hard day’s work or practice"
- “being a champion, being in control and loving your beer”
- “Beer gives soccer fans an enjoyable time”
- “reward, accomplishment”
- “Pride, strength”

The next question, Question 26, revealed similar opinions when it asked respondents “What messages and/or assumptions does the advertisement communicate about drinking?” 20 of the 54 (37%) respondents answered this question, explaining that:

- “it is a reward and can still be a drink that brings your best achievements”
- “You need to drink to enjoy recreational sport shows”
- “That it is ok to drink if it only to celebrate an achievement”
- “Drinking goes with sport.”
- “it assumes that Black label drinking men are strong and popular guys”
- “You want to be at the top, be a champion? Drink Black Label”

Question 27 asked “What messages does the advertisement communicate about what you (the target audience) want and desire?” 19 of the 54 (35.2%) respondents felt that:

- “that black label is to be enjoyed and can also be a social drink but is more enjoyed after hard work and success”
- “that we are champions even though we have not done nothing that is considers me a champion, but by choosing to drink the beer you are a champion by association and you recognize "champion drinks" therefore you are a champion in the making”
- “To be a winner”
- “Perfection, to be the best, to beat every man that you compete against.
- “The ad assumes that those who would buy the product are hungry ("thirsty") for leading the way, being the number one performer...”

It is clear then that these answers revealed similar ideas and perceptions. According to the respondents, this beer brand is for men who are hard working and deserve success. Ideas and images about strength and success are juxtaposed with images
of sport and Carling Black Label in such a way that the brand becomes a symbol of reward, success and champions.

➢ Question 28

The last question in this section asked the respondents to comment on what the advertisement suggests about gender and sexuality. Only 20 of the 54 (37%) respondents answered, and all of them agreed that they advertisement is aimed at men. Responses included answers such as:

- “Real men, real beer. It’s pretty obvious”
- “Very poor reference to woman in this advert”
- “Men are competitive and what to be the best at everything, they are always competing against one another to prove what they are made of. Only champion men drink Black Label”.

➢ Themes

It is clear from the above responses that concepts of winning, sport, men and beer are all linked through this advertisement. Respondents revealed that they felt that achievement and reward are what drive the advertisement, with sport also being referenced in a number of responses to the open-ended questions. A response to question 25 explains what one respondent assumed the advertisement was depicting about the brand: “feelings of pride in what you do, and associates that it is drank after a long day of working at something grand”. It is apparent that the respondents felt that the advertisement targeted individual consumers who seek reward for the accomplishments in their lives and for those who feel that they deserve something good. This means that this advertisement seeks to satisfy the consumers self-actualization needs as described in Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs (Meeske 2009:69), as well as esteem needs of recognition and status.

➢ Conclusion

From the above analysis of the respondents answers to the open-ended questions in this section, it can be argued that the Carling Black Label advertisement employs what Wenner and Jackson (2009) theorise as the ‘holy trinity’: that of the relationship
between beer, masculinity and sport (cited in Gee and Jackson 2011:2). With respondents showing clear references to males, beer and sport in their responses to questions, there is evidence that advertisers have used this ‘holy trinity’ concept to create links between the three identities. In this way, Carling Black Label has been associated with the masculine identities of strength and power as well as with the competitive nature of sport. This is how the brand becomes a symbol of reward for champions. This is an example of the dominant reading of this advertised message (Hall, in Chandler 2007:194).

4.3.1.6 Section 4: Hansa Pilsener ‘Sold Out’ advertisement

In this section of the survey, respondents were asked to answer both a closed-ended question and a number of open-ended questions relating to the Hansa Pilsener ‘Sold Out’ advertisement. Of the 54 respondents, 23 (42.6%) indicated that they had seen the advertisement, while 19 (35.2%) indicated that they had not seen the advertisement. 12 of the respondents (22.2%) chose to skip this question. However, some of the respondents failed to continue answering all of the remaining close-ended questions in this section, choosing rather to skip to the next advertisement. Shown below is the data gained from the respondents who answered each of the open-ended questions.

- Questions 30 and 31

Question 30 asked respondents to explain what they felt the Hansa Pilsener ‘Sold Out’ advertisement was communicating. Only 20 of the 54 (37%) respondents chose to answer this question. Some of the responses received included:

- “that it is well liked and people cannot go without it”
- “You need hansa to have major [ac]cess to the whos-who in the country”
- “It communicates a sense of friendship and what can be of a hangout or just a plain joked idea into a successful achievement”
- “You will have fun drinking it”
- “it’s funny”
- “Drinking the product will allow you to become part of a “high-class” social group.”
- “That hansa is very different from other beers”
- “without alcohol there is no fun”
“It is for rich people”
“That Hansa is extremely sought after.”
“Life wouldn’t be the same without Hansa. Everything comes to a stop without it”

From the responses received, it can be said that it is the respondents’ perception that the advertisement is communicating messages about both its product and its consumer. The consumer of the product is someone who is successful and of a high social class. The product itself is framed to be an important part of having fun in a crowd or group of friends.

Question 31 posed the question: “Do you find the product appealing? Why or why not?” There were 19 respondents (35.2%) who answered this question. This data is depicted graphically below.

![Graph 4.9: Survey respondents’ answer to “Do you find the [Hansa Pilsener] product appealing?”](image)

Their responses to the second part of the question reveal that 9 of those respondents (47.4%) who said that they did not find it appealing, revealed the reasons for their answers:

- “No, I don’t like beer.”
- “Not really, they don’t sell it very well, and it looks warm in Vuyo’s house.”
- “Not from this advert. The beer’s advert does not say a lot about the product and what it will do for you”

The remaining 10 respondents (52.6%) answered that they did find the product appealing, explaining that:

- “yes, the hansa brand always has us anticipating for more their ideas are fresh and viby”
- “yeeep. Because it’s funny, so it’s memorable, you would buy a Hansa just to see what’s the big deal to it.”
- “Yes. The ad is humorous, the beer looks good.”
- “Yes. The ad is very persuasive”
• “Yes. Fun characters and the mission to seek and find the last Hansa in a summer friendly location adds to the entertainment”

Questions 32, 33 and 34

Question 32 asked the respondents: “What feelings and emotions does the advertisement attach to the product?” 16 responses (29.6%) were received from this question, and some of these included:

• “sharing, socializing and never take something else just because hansa is finished lol! be loyal”
• “Sense of friendship, Togetherness, Playfulness and those happy moments with the guys, making those story’s and ideas come alive”
• “Feeling of an enjoyable drink even better with great company surrounding you”
• “Joy, desire, want”
• “the luxuries of being wealthy”

One respondent also explained: “I don't know. I didn't understand the advert.” These responses allow one to see that the majority of the respondents, at least 7 (43.75%) who answered this question felt that feelings of togetherness, friendship and fun were all attached to the product through this advertisement.

The next question encouraged the respondents to give their opinion about the messages and assumptions that the advertisement communicates with regards to drinking. 16 of the 54 (29.6%) respondents answered Question 33 in this section. Much of these responses explain that the advertisement makes suggestions about the fun side of drinking:

• “that drinking is something enjoyed by everyone and drinking is a way to get sociable”
• “Drinking is a chill time that can bring about good story’s and ideas that could change your life”
• “Drinking is good. That is the best ingredient of a party”

Question 34 asked “What messages does the advertisement communicate about what you (the target audience) want and desire?” From the 13 respondents (24%) who answered this question, it can be said:

• “that we should get the beer no matter what”
• “Whenever I am hanging out with friends I have to drink”
• “If you want to succeed then go for it.”
• “you need to drink Hansa to be in the "right mix", to be part of the cool crowd”
From these responses, it shows that the respondents felt that concepts of success, friendship and trend-setting are all attached to this product and its target audiences through this advertisement.

Question 35

This question asked respondents, “What does the advertisement suggest about gender and sexuality?” Of the 15 respondents (27.8%) who answered this question, 53% of them (8 respondents) felt that this advertisement was aimed at a male audience, with one respondents commenting, “Everyone can drink it, but it is a drink for unique men (the definition of men in a societal view).” 3 of the respondents felt that the advertisement targeted both male and female viewers, explaining that the product is for both genders, while another 3 felt that there was no specific reference made to gender relations or sexuality in the advertisement. However, one respondent commented:

No strong suggestion, but male friends with good looking women in the background and as part of the outcome-scene of a "happy ending" may suggest sexism in a sense. Women are seen as part of the reward of having found the last Hansas.

Themes

After reviewing the responses gained from this advertisement, themes emerge with regard to the Hansa Pilsener brand and the communicated message the brand sends through this advertisement. Of all the advertisements being examined in this study, this advertisement received the most varied answers when it came to what the advertisement was communicating. One respondent remarked:

“It is difficult to say. The advert only makes sense if you have seen the Vuyo is such a big, big dreamer ad. The advert is communicating that Vuyo drinks legendary beer because he is legendary.”

This can be said to satisfy the self-development need of self-actualization as well as the status and recognition needs of esteem as described in Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs (Meeske 2009:69). The central theme that stood out from all the responses is that the respondents felt that this advertisement communicates that drinking is fun and social, and that the product is unique and for people of a higher class.
Conclusion

This advertisement focuses mostly on the fun aspect of drinking, bringing together social concepts of friendship and class to communicate messages about the brand to its audience. Respondents revealed that they perceived the consumer to be someone who is popular and trend-setting. While the answers gained from the survey showed that the audience perceived the advertisement to construct the act of drinking in a fun and sociable light, it also revealed that concepts of success and wealth were attached to the product and characters in the advertisement. Again, this is a dominant reading of this advertisement, which supports Stuart Hall’s models of reading (Chandler 2007:194).

4.3.1.7 Similarities and differences

The first of the last two questions in the survey asked the respondents to choose which of the advertisements they felt best captured their attention. 39 of the 54 (72%) respondents chose to answer this question. The graph below shows the details of the data obtained from their answers:

![Graph 4.10: Survey respondents’ answer to “In your opinion, which advertisement best captures your attention?”](image)

Graph 4.10: Survey respondents’ answer to “In your opinion, which advertisement best captures your attention?”

It is clear that the respondents enjoyed the Castle Lite advertisement more than the other advertisements. The last question then asked the respondents “Which advertisement best met your needs as a consumer? In other words, can you identify with the main characters in any of the advertisements? Please explain.” 40
respondents (74%) chose to answer this question. The answers to these questions reveal details about why the respondents enjoy each advertisement and can identify with characters in the advertisements. Those who prefer the Castle Lager advertisement said:

- “Yes because the characters in this advertisement look happy and are socializing with different people from different races, and the main purpose of drinking beer is to have fun and enjoy yourself.”
- “Castle Lager...The main characters is representing me as a consumer, i.o.w they do the stuff that reminds me of my last Beer...and when I say my last beer I mean a journey to happiness and satisfaction”
- “Castle Lager The Journey. I like the product the most of them all, so naturally it draws my attention. Plus at my age we all want something like what that advertisement communicates.
- “I love 2 aspects of the advert: cricket and supporting the Proteas and of course braai is every South Africans’ favourite. I am not a beer drink but would love to experience sharing a beer with one of the Proteas”
- “Castle Lager Journey: Friendship plays a large role in my life. To discover new things as being a student also trying to establish a career is part of a personal and success-seeking "journey", but one which is hoped to be shared with others.”

The respondents who felt that the Castle Lite advertisement best met their needs responded:

- “castle light, cool people drink it, it's advertised everywhere, even in clubs so you'd feel left out if drank black label at a club”
- “Castle Lite, advert, makes me want to be that guy who everyone admires”
- “Castle lite defines my personality and the type of person completely.”

The Carling Black Label advertisement was chosen by some respondents because:

- “The Black Label ad did it for me because I believe in being a champion so the fact that they celebrate champions in their glory met my needs”

Lastly, those who felt that the Hansa Pilsener advertisement best met their needs explained that:

- “Hansa Pilsener Sold Out, because it represents how the youth are today, once their alcohol has run out, they go to extreme measures to find more.”
- “Hansa pilsener because their advert its simple and appealing to everyone and I feel like it doesn’t exclude gender”

There were also respondents who felt that none of the advertisements met their needs either because they are female and felt that the advertisements only catered to a male audience, or because they do not drink beer or alcohol.
4.3.1.7.1 Similarities

The data gained from the online survey responses revealed that there are certain similarities between the four SAB beer brands’ advertisements in this study. Firstly, it is clear that respondents perceived the advertisements, particularly the Castle Lager, Castle Lite and Hansa Pilsener advertisements, to have fun and sociable elements in them. They suggested that the products and brands in each advertisement were promoted using social environments and fun activities. This translates into the audiences perceiving that the advertisements’ communicated messages being focussed on the idea that drinking alcohol is good, and even in some cases, necessary in order to have fun.

Secondly, there are a large number of respondents who felt that the advertisements were aimed at a male audience. Some respondents even felt that the female audiences were ignored, with a small number suggesting that the female characters in the advertisements were only placed there for male satisfaction and consumption.

4.3.1.7.2 Differences

It is clear from examining the responses received from the respondents of this survey that the selected sample identifies different themes in each of the four SAB beer brand television advertisements. It is understood that the audience identified that while, Castle Lager and Carling Black Label both employ sports focussed themes in their advertisements, Hansa Pilsener and Castle Lite use elements of fun, friendship and status in their advertisements.

It is also important to point out that, from the selected samples responses, specific traits can be identified as they stand out in each of the advertisements. For example, the Castle Lager advertisement has a clear use of national pride and patriotism linked to the social aspect of the imagery and sound used in the advertisement. However, the Castle Lite advertisement likens the chilled factor of their alcoholic beverage to the trendy and stylish social environment depicted in the advertisement. Whereas, the Carling Black Label advertisement employs concepts of winning, achievement and reward to set apart its product and consumer from
competitors. And finally, the social environment depicted in the Hansa Pilsener advertisement is created with the use of adventure and friendship.

4.3.2 Semiotic analysis

The following section of this study is a semiotic analysis of the four SAB beer brand advertisements. Each advertisement has been analysed and interpreted to decode its messages by looking at the elements of the representamen (how the sign is represented), interpretant (how the sign can be interpreted) and object (what is represented). Each advertisement has been deconstructed according to the Media Education Foundation’s model of deconstructing an alcohol advertisement, allowing each to be separated into a series of screen shots that will be used to explain the evident messages and meanings. As explained earlier in this study,

To interpret advertising images is to acknowledge their representational power both as cultural artifacts and as bearers of meaning, reflecting broad societal, cultural, and ideological codes (Schroeder and Zwick 2004:45).

Therefore, the following analysis will attempt to uncover the broader social and cultural codes that are being not only utilized in each advertisement, but possibly built upon to create new meaning and codes. The analysis of the advertisements will correspond with the interpretation of the survey respondents.

As discussed in Chapter Two of this study, semiotics is the study of signs. The interpretation of these signs is culturally bound. By studying signs, it is assumed that “everything in a culture can be seen as a form of communication [...]” (Hodge and Kress 1991:1). Therefore, this semiotic analysis will attempt to understand what the advertisement is communicating. It will allow for the interpretation of the intended message which the advertisement is trying to communicate to its viewers about its product, as well as the actual meaning that the viewers receive.

4.3.2.1 Castle Lager ‘The Journey’ advertisement

The Castle Lager ‘The Journey’ advertisement was found on the public video-sharing social networking site, YouTube. The video was uploaded on 19 December 2010 by the official Castle Lager YouTube channel (Castle Lager 2010, YouTube). However, no date could be found for when this advertisement was released by the brand.
As previously mentioned, a sign is “anything which ‘stands for’ something else” (Chandler 2007:2). A sign is divided into the representamen, the interpretant and its object. In overall terms of the Castle Lager ‘The Journey’ advertisement, the object being represented is the Castle Lager beer, while the representamen is the advertisement itself. However, the interpretant, or how the beer is interpreted, needs to be examined in order to understand the advertisement as a sign. Within the advertisement there are also individual signs which can be examined to determine the possible meanings of each instance. Therefore, it is the visible and tangible aspects of the advertisement that need to be observed as they represent the advertisement’s use of social and cultural elements.

The Castle Lager advertisement offers its audience a scripted scenario of a group of South African men on a journey through India. There are indicators of the men being South African, through the symbolic reference to the South African nation using the flag. This can be seen in figure 4.1:

![Figure 4.1: Scene from Castle Lager ‘The Journey’ advertisement (Castle Lager 2010, YouTube)](image)

The men journey through the Indian countryside together as a group, referencing solidarity and togetherness, and eventually make it into the heart of an Indian city where they celebrate by opening up the large box they have been carrying. In this scene, the audience is presented with visuals that juxtapose the beer product with items that are representative of South African culture. As seen in figure 4.2:
These are all signs that represent something else (as described by Chandler 2007:2). The beers are indexical of drinking; the ‘braai’ is symbolic of a typical South African pastime; and the South African cricket players featured at the end are iconic of a favorite South African sport. The audible aspect, the song playing in the background, culminates at this point in the advertisement, with words like “I want to be with you everywhere”. This provides clues to the advertisers message, as it is suggestive that this imagery in the advertisement at this point is an important part of a whole South African experience, and that drinking and socializing around a ‘braai’ are meant to be experienced together. As respondents indicated, the communicated message of this advertisement is:

- “That Castle Lager brings people together. No matter what their race, culture or geographic location is.”
- “Alcohol accompanies camaraderie”

The Media Education Foundation (2005) provides a framework for deconstructing alcohol advertisements. The first step is to make observations. After the above semiotic analysis, observations have been made and it is possible to determine the assumptions the advertisement makes and the message it sends. It is clear that the advertisement creates a reference between South African culture and the Castle Lager beer. This can be argued because there are many instances of iconic and symbolic references to South African culture within the advertisement, which is juxtaposed with the advertised product. For example, the South African flag is an
iconic feature of the South African nature, and it appears in scenes throughout the advertisement, on a large box carried alongside the diverse group of males. It is safe to suggest that the idea of coming together is a clear message of this advertisement, since it presents a group of South African men coming together and items of a South African pastime coming together alongside the advertised product.

There are possible consequences of this message. One could argue that the linking between the two signs, namely the Castle Lager beer and South African culture, creates an understanding amongst the audience that they need to be consumed or experienced alongside each other, or that without one, the other cannot be enjoyed. It is clear from the respondents’ answers that they felt that this advertisement suggests that the product is in fact part of South African culture, as some of them express a sense of belonging and national pride after viewing this advertisement. Thus, it can be concluded that this advertisement uses signs of both social and cultural elements of South African culture to gain attention and attraction for its product.

4.3.2.2 Castle Lite ‘The Official Castle Lite’ advertisement

The Castle Lite ‘The Official Castle Lite’ advertisement was found on the public video-sharing social networking site, YouTube. The video was uploaded on 20 April 2011 by the official Castle Lite S.A. YouTube channel (CastleLiteSA 2011, YouTube). However, no date could be found for when this advertisement was released by the brand.

In overall terms of the Castle Lite ‘The Official Castle Lite’ advertisement, the object being represented is the Castle Lite beer, while the representamen is the advertisement itself. However, the interpretant, or how the beer is interpreted, needs to be examined in order to understand the advertisement as a sign. Within the advertisement there are also individual signs which can also be examined to determine the possible meanings of each instance. Therefore, it is the visible and tangible aspects of the advertisement that need to be observed as they represent the advertisements use of social and cultural elements.

This advertisement scripts a storyline about an adult, black male who enters a bar with special privilege and is acknowledge by almost everyone inside as he walks through the building into a special section at the back where he meets his friends
and enjoys a cold Castle Lite beer. There are visual signs throughout this advertisement that suggest juxtaposition between the chilled serving of the beverage with the cool or trendy nature of the central character who is iconic of the brand’s target audience. It is the interpretant, or how this is interpreted, that communicates the overall advertised message. As seen in figure 4.3, the central male character is shown emerging from a car in smart clothing, which is indexical of a higher social class, outside a bar called ‘The Cold Room’:

![Figure 4.3: Scene from Castle Lite ‘The Official Castle Lite’ advertisement (CastleLiteSA 2011, YouTube)](image)

This advertisement bases its communicated message on the interpretation of the man’s social success and his attachment to the product in the advertisement. As he moves through the bar in the advertisement, people notice him and he stands out from the crowd, in a good way. The audience is shown signs of the crowd’s approval of him by their smiles and friendly nature towards him. The importance of the beer is proven when he makes it into the final room at the back of the bar, where a group of his male friends are enjoying Castle Lite and he joins them. This symbolises a type of uniqueness and elite nature. After taking a sip of the beer, the men are rewarded with a group of female musicians who emerge and perform for the group of men. The audible parts of this advertisement, a song played in the background, uses words like “hold on, I’m coming”, which is a sign that the people in the bar and the female musicians are awaiting the arrival of this man who drinks Castle Lite.

As the respondents also acknowledge, the message of the advertisement is that:
The advertisement is communicating that Castle Lite gives you status and respect. In a way you are like a jack of many trades"

“Successful men drink Castle Light”

As a whole, the advertisement communicates this message because of the signs presented to the audience. After making observations about the cool, trendy nature of the main character, and the cold factor of the product, the message formed in the minds of the audience is that Castle Lite makes you socially successful. In terms of the possible consequences of this message, the respondents’ answers provide insight into the ideas about drinking that this message sends:

• “Drinking sets the pace for successful people”
• “Take it easy, drink Castle lite and you’ll be awesome”

Thus, it can be concluded that this advertisement uses signs of social status and social approval to elevate their product in the minds of the audience.

4.3.2.3 Carling Black Label ‘Champion Men’ advertisement

The Carling Black Label ‘Champion Men’ advertisement was found on the public video-sharing social networking site, YouTube. The video was uploaded on 5 September 2011 by the official Carling Black Label S.A. YouTube channel (CarlingBlackLabelSA 2011, YouTube). However, no date could be found for when this advertisement was released by the brand.

In overall terms of the Carling Black Label ‘Champion Men’ advertisement, the object being represented is the Carling Black Label beer, while the representamen is the advertisement itself. However, the interpretant, or how the beer is interpreted, needs to be examined in order to understand the advertisement as a sign. Within the advertisement there are also individual signs which can also be examined to determine the possible meanings of each instance. Therefore, it is the visible and tangible aspects of the advertisement that need to be observed as they represent the advertisements use of social and cultural elements.

The advertisement begins with a clear audible line, of a strong, deep male voice, which says “There is a champion in all men”. It continues to list a number of characteristics which describe a champion man, while displaying visual images of a range of men, of different races, participating in different sports and activities. As each of the men is displayed as winning or thriving in the activities they are
participating in, the male voice says “and they deserve their reward”. Immediately after this, the image of the Carling Black Label beer is shown, directly linking the product with the word reward. From the responses gained through the online survey, it is clear that message of the advertisement is linked to words like “achievement”, “clever”, “heroes” and “champions”.

These observations, along with those made by the respondents allows for one to understand the assumptions being made by this advertisement. It positions the product alongside images of achievement and presents the product as a reward, both symbolically and visually. One respondent said “black label is to be enjoyed and can also be a social drink but is more enjoyed after hard work and success”. As the advertisement concludes, the message is reiterated that “champion men deserve champion beer”, with the beer being the advertised product. As seen below:

![Champion Men Deserve Champion Beer](CarlingBlackLabelSA_2011_Youtube)

In terms of possible consequences of this message, it is important to understand the extent of the characteristics being transferred onto the product by means of using signs and juxtaposing them with the product. The advertisement links visuals of men playing sports and being successful with drinking and achievement. The respondents suggested the following about drinking after viewing this advertisement:

- “it is a reward and can still be a drink that brings your best achievements”
- “You need to drink to enjoy recreational sport shows”

Thus, it can be concluded that this advertisement uses recreational aspects of social interaction and the challenge of a sport to create a precursor for the reward of
drinking the advertised product. The feeling of achievement and the desire for reward has been used in symbolic imagery and sounds to entice the viewer to understand the message of the advertisement, that being that strong, powerful men who are champions at what they do should be rewarded with a Carling Black Label. This effectively constructs beer as a part of the challenge and reward dynamic.

4.3.2.4 Hansa Pilsener ‘Sold Out’ advertisement

The Hansa Pilsener ‘Sold Out’ advertisement was found on the public video-sharing social networking site, YouTube. The video was uploaded on 27 July 2011 by a user (Lowe Cape Town 2011, YouTube). However, no date could be found for when this advertisement was released by the brand.

In overall terms of the Hansa Pilsener ‘Sold Out’ advertisement, the object being represented is the Hansa Pilsener beer, while the representamen is the advertisement itself. However, the interpretant, or how the beer is interpreted, needs to be examined in order to understand the advertisement as a sign. Within the advertisement there are also individual signs which can also be examined to determine the possible meanings of each instance. Therefore, it is the visible and tangible aspects of the advertisement that need to be observed as they represent the advertisements use of social and cultural elements.

The scripted scenario constructed by advertisers in this advertisement follows three men in their quest to find Hansa Pilsener beers so that they can have access to a music concert being promoted by the brand. An audible line spoken by one of the main characters in the advertisement is “No Hansa, no entry”. The look on the men’s faces symbolizes their worry and the sense of adventure they feel because they need to find the product. This seems to be a theme for the whole advertisement. This ‘entry’ has more than one meaning, as it not only refers to entry into the concert, but perhaps entry into a higher social class or unique group of friends. As respondents suggest, the message of the advertisement can be said to be that:

- “Life wouldn't be the same without Hansa. Everything comes to a stop without it”
- “Drinking the product will allow you to become part of a "high-class" social group.”

It is important to understand the extent of the message and the signs that indicate this message. For example, when the men eventually find the product at a friend’s house, they are told by the house owner that he now has "tickets for [his] boys".
Once confronted with a room filled with Hansa Pilsener beer, the group of men show signs of happiness and enjoyment as they sit down together and smile while they enjoy the alcoholic beverage. This moment is symbolic of the suggestion being made by advertisers that fun and friendship is achieved by consuming their product. As seen in this screen shot:

![Image](https://via.placeholder.com/150)

*Figure 4.5: Scene from Hansa Pilsener ‘Sold Out’ advertisement (Lowe Cape Town 2011, YouTube)*

A respondent commented on the feelings and emotions attached to this advertisement as “Sense of friendship, Togetherness, Playfulness and those happy moments with the guys, making those story’s and ideas come alive”. It indicates that the audience believes the storyline of these friends being successful and enjoying fun times together because of the product being advertised.

The advertising company for Hansa Pilsener, which created this advertisement, said that

> [W]e added a brand property called Hansa Legends that celebrates people who have used their special ingredient to carve their own way to success (OilInsight 2012).

The marketing general manager for the brand, Mosidi Seretlo explained the motivation behind the brand’s marketing techniques:

> We hope to inspire others to be confident, engaging and creative, and use their special ingredients to succeed in their own way (SAB press release, 5 August 2011).

This shows that the brand aims to use ideas of success and confidence to boost awareness for the brand.
These observations translate into the understanding of the advertisers intended message. This advertisement encourages its viewers to see that *Hansa Pilsener* gives you access to fun, friendship and happiness. It is based on the social aspect of friends coming together and enjoying a moment of sharing. The consequences of such a message can be explained by looking at the responses from respondents, which include:

- “that drinking is something enjoyed by everyone and drinking is a way to get sociable”
- “you need to drink Hansa to be in the "right mix", to be part of the cool crowd”

Thus, it can be concluded that the message of this advertisement is based on a social setting, where friends need to enjoy each others’ company by consuming a *Hansa Pilsener*. The consumption of the product is directly linked to the happiness and enjoyment felt when socializing with a group of friends. The advertisement presents the product as part of a person’s acceptance into a special group of people, or into an environment with good company.

**4.3.3 Conclusion**

It is clear that the four SA beer brand advertisements do incorporate the use of social and cultural references in order to attract attention to their products and to attempt to create the understanding that the products in each advertisement form a normal part of the activities displayed in each advertisement. The selected sample identified the communicated messages of each advertisement, which corresponded with the semiotic analysis results. All four advertisements were seen to create messages that displayed the products alongside social environments and cultural indicators, as well as encouraged the notion that drinking alcohol is a regular and sometimes necessary part of a person’s participation in such a social environment. It is also important to point out that the mixed methods approach revealed that every advertisement, in most part, targeted a male audience.

The advertisements are considered to use ideological constructs of both masculinity and sociality. Therefore it can be said that not only are men and masculinity central to SAB imaginary, but also the concepts of social belonging and social status.
CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of the research findings in order to conclude this research treatise. It will include the limitations encountered during the research study as well as the primary conclusions drawn from the analysis of both the electronic survey questionnaire and the semiotic analysis of the four SAB beer brands’ advertisements. This chapter will also suggest any additional areas for future research into the study of beer advertising and the field of using social and cultural identities in advertising.

5.2 Limitations encountered during the study

During the course of this research study, minor limitations were encountered. The limitations that occurred were related to the electronic online questionnaire, yet, these did not affect the nature of the study as a whole because it was completed as scheduled.

One limitation which was encountered was due to the fact that participation in the survey was voluntary. Because respondents were able to opt out of responding to the survey at any point, there were a large number of respondents who started the survey but many chose to stop their participation early in the questionnaire. This resulted in many responses not being valid for the purposes of this survey. When the survey was closed in December, there were only 54 valid responses available for the purposes of this research study, with the number changing according to the questions and participation in each section. Adding to the low participation numbers, the channel of broadcast for the selected sample was the NMMU Communiqué, with permission being granted by Prof. Thoko Mayekiso (the DVC Academic of the NMMU), which proved successful as it was able to reach the sample. However, limitations occurred, because many students do not generally read the Communiqué and were therefore unaware of the survey.

Another limitation encountered was due to the fact that the four SAB beer brand advertisements were chosen from the online video sharing portal, YouTube, owing to the nature of the survey being conducted online. This meant that the it was
not possible to send the advertisements directly to respondents, but rather links to the advertisements were added into the survey. This gave the respondents the opportunity to access the advertisements via YouTube. Depending on each respondent’s internet capabilities and resources, this may have caused some to skip sections in order to fill in the part of the survey relating only to the videos they chose to watch.

Although this study looked to determine SAB and their beer brands’ influence on masculinity, togetherness and culture, the audience reception and understanding of the advertisements was limited to an educated audience. This means that the scope of audience research is limited to only a section of the target audience of the advertisements, and therefore, further research should be conducted in order to gain a full perspective of short term effects from the larger, less educated target audiences.

Each of these limitations was acknowledged as a way to improve the research study, and they were effectively managed to ensure that the limitations did not affect the course and results of this study.

5.3 Summary of research

This study provided insights into the field of South African advertising. The research proved that there is a problem with alcohol abuse in South Africa and there is a need for a greater examining of the marketing strategies of alcohol advertisers. The research further suggested that beer consumption in South Africa is high and therefore it is socially and culturally significant to study the short term effects of beer advertising on the target audience. The study focused on the selected sample of NMMU students’ perception of each of the SAB beer brands’ advertisements and the use of social and cultural constructs to attract attention to its products and promote the drinking of beer in social environments.

The study aimed to investigate whether the SAB advertisements are tapping into a long-standing culture of drinking, or whether they encourage a culture of drinking as a social construct. It also seeks to discuss the role SAB plays in forming identity and sociability in South African culture through their beer advertisements. To address these research aims, the following objectives were developed, and these served as a guideline during the course of this treatise:
To understand the social and cultural meanings that the target audiences identify with and adopt after viewing the communicated messages in SAB’s television advertisements for its brands Castle Lager, Castle Lite, Hansa Pilsener and Carling Black Label

To identify the ways in which SAB advertisers communicate messages about issues, masculinity and culture in South Africa

To show that SAB not only communicates messages about their brands in their television advertisements, but also about cultural concepts and socialization

In order to fulfil the research objectives and consequently answer the research question, an electronic survey questionnaire was conducted in order to gain a better understanding of how the selected sample of NMMU students perceived the communicated message in the television advertisements of the four SAB beer brands. Along with the survey results, a semiotic analysis of the four SAB beer brands’ advertisements was conducted to gain insight into whether the advertisements do in fact make use of cultural and social concepts to attract their target audience’s attention.

5.4 Research conclusions and recommendations

The following conclusions and recommendations were compiled from the analysis and results of the survey questionnaire and the semiotic analysis of the advertisements, as well as the literature review. These will serve as a guideline for public relations, media and advertising students for future research into the use of social and cultural constructs in alcohol and beer advertising in South Africa. Recommendations are as follows:

5.4.1 Survey questionnaire and the semiotic analysis

The following section details the conclusions and recommendations of the four SAB beer brands and their respective advertisements.
5.4.1.1 Castle Lager ‘The Journey’ advertisement

The results from the survey of the selected sample indicated that Castle Lager’s advertisement uses concepts of social belonging and national pride to attract their target audience’s attention to their beer. The respondents also suggested that the presence of diversity in unity was communicated in the advertisement’s message, which has been previously discussed as a quality of South African culture. Since a consumer’s culture will influence their preferences and the way they act and interpret messages they receive, it is understandable that over 60% of respondents found the product appealing. The advertisement also made suggestions that drinking is fun, sociable and better when shared in a group, according to the respondents.

The proudly South African theme which was identified by the respondents was also identified through the semiotic analysis of the signs. In the interpretation of the images and sounds in the advertisement, the South African flags and unique South African activities and pastimes stood out in the overall presentation of the advertisement and linked these items to the brand’s product. It is also important to indicate that the concept of Ubuntu and togetherness that is unique to the South African context was reflected in the advertisement, both indicated by the respondents and in the semiotic analysis. The collective sense of enjoyment and the togetherness expressed in signs displayed in the advertisement reflects a uniquely South African experience.

In effect, the advertisement placed its advertised product inside this shared experience and made the suggestion that “alcohol accompanies camaraderie”, as one respondent put it. The interpretant nature of the sign, in the semiotic analysis, refers to the advertisement’s positive suggestions about drinking in a social gathering, which was also highlighted by the survey respondents.

5.4.1.2 Castle Lite ‘The Official Castle Lite’ advertisement

From this study, it can be concluded that the Castle Lite ‘The Official Castle Lite’ advertisement uses concepts such as social status (such as a ‘cool’ or trendy nature) and social recognition and approval to attract the audience’s attention to the advertised product, Castle Lite beer. This was established through the survey responses from the selected sample and was based on the visual and audible
aspects of the advertisement in which the smart, black man walks through a bar and immediately draws attention and social approval from everyone else inside the bar, because he holds a ‘cool-ness’ and confidence that mirrors the beer he drinks, namely Castle Lite. Over 64% of the respondents who answered this question found this product appealing, and this advertisement captured the majority (over 35%) of the respondents’ attention.

Therefore, this advertisement was the most preferred advertisement in this study. From the respondents’ answers to their drinking preferences, it has been shown that over 30 respondents indicated that they drink when at a bar or club. Therefore, this could indicate their overall preference of this advertisement. But it could also be because it is seen as a hip and trendy beer, and the central character is someone that the consumer relates to. The responses from the survey also revealed that the advertisement made the act of drinking beer seem socially acceptable and even necessary, as it gives the consumer confidence.

This can be likened to self-esteem advertising which Jeffrey F. Durgee wrote about. Castle Lite’s advertising, which has positive effects on consumers’ attitudes toward themselves, effectively has positive effects on their attitudes toward brands. Durgee hypothesized that if an “ad […] produce[s] positive feelings toward [the] self and brand […] [i]t challenges [the] viewer's sense of self and shows a conditional tie to brand usage […]” (Durgee 1986:27). This can be seen in the way this advertisement communicated a message to the viewers that showed them that they can have respect and status if they drink the product being advertised. It creates a dynamic where the Castle Lite beer becomes an indicator of the consumer who is of higher social status.

The respondents also noted that this advertisement catered to a male audience again. This was also found in the semiotic analysis which determined that the central male figure was rewarded in some way by the female musicians once he joined his friends and consumed the product. The analysis went further to examine the signs that referenced ‘cold’, ‘cool’ and trendy markers within the advertisement and showed how these are juxtaposed in such a way that the qualities of the chilled beer and the modish (or ‘cool’) nature of the central character were shared and transferred onto one another. All of these observations are based on a social comparison and distinction between social statuses within the storyline of the
advertisement. This effectively develops the idea of a higher status for the brand’s consumer in terms of their social identity.

5.4.1.3 Carling Black Label ‘Champion Men’ advertisement

In conclusion, the results from the survey of the selected sample indicated that Carling Black Label’s advertisement uses concepts of reward and masculine, social identity to attract their target market’s attention to their beer. The research by Gee and Jackson (2011:4) which was reviewed indicated the symbolic importance of the role beer plays in forming masculine identity. Similarly, Mager (2010:48) noted that:

Beer advertisements encouraged drinkers to consumer symbols such as status, powerful male physicality, or reward for success as they consumed the product, beer (Mager 2010:48).

This advertisement, particularly, was seen to communicate these symbols more visually than the other advertisements in this study. However, the respondents showed that this advertisement least captured their attention, and that they felt that the advertisement made the assumption that beer needs to be drank when celebrating an achievement.

From the semiotic analysis, observations showed that this advertisement used symbols and references to reward, competition and sport, along with the overt defining of masculine identity. The characters within the advertisement were all seen in positions where they were compared to others according to their social identity and champion status. The object, the beer, was symbolically linked to a form of reward through visual and audible clues within the advertisement.

5.4.1.4 Hansa Pilsener ‘Sold Out’ advertisement

The study concluded that the Hansa Pilsener advertisement uses social concepts of friendship, fun and class to attract attention to their product. This was established through the survey responses from the selected sample. This is based on their opinions that the Hansa Pilsener beer will allow you to access higher-class social groups, and that the advertisement had a fun and exciting storyline. This advertisement was ranked second in terms of the respondents’ choice of which advertisement best captured their imagination. However, it is important to note that
the respondent’s answers varied the most when it came to their explanation of what
the advertisement was communicating. The responses from the survey explained
that the advertisement was suggesting that drinking is a way to be sociable and the
best factor of a party.

This was reiterated in the semiotic analysis which revealed deeper meanings
and messages hidden in certain signs within the advertisement. The references
between the need to enter the concert and the need to find the product meant that
the beer became a symbol of acceptance into a social group and the important
ingredient to having a good time with friends. Therefore, the product in this
advertisement, or the object of the sign, becomes symbolic of a person’s social
acceptance and enjoyment in a social environment.

5.4.1.5 Socialization of the beer advertisements

In conclusion, as the respondents felt that each of these advertisements made use of
social aspects such as identity and belonging to communicate messages to the
target market, the perceived message in each advertisement will have a great
amount of influence in terms of the viewers understanding and acceptance of the
ideas and brand identity. Just as most of the respondents felt that each of the
advertisements mainly catered to a male audience, so the female audiences and
consumer can feel left out. For instance, it has been shown that the four SAB beer
brands present the male group in a similar ways, over and over again, using certain
images, stories and situations, and

[it can] make them seem ‘natural’ or familiar – and thereby marginalize or even
exclude other images, making those unfamiliar or even threatening (Branston and
Stafford 2010:106).

This was seen in some responses from the selected sample who expressed concern
with the ways in which the female consumer was mostly ignored in many cases. In
terms of what this means for the socialization of audiences, the SAB beer market is
socializing their audiences to see drinking beer as a male pastime and reward for
their daily activities. This, in turn, can alter way the male identity is formed in the
minds of the advertisements viewers, as emotional links are maintained within the
storylines of the advertisements.
Both the survey and semiotic analysis returned results that suggested that drinking beer is presented as being a need for enjoyment, for belonging and for self-satisfaction. As all four SAB beer brands communicated these messages and made these suggestions, again emotional links are created within the audiences understanding of what it means to drink beer. In this way, beer becomes symbolic of much more than what it is in physicality, but rather a means of forming norms, values and behaviors.

With four prominent South African beer brands using similar assumptions and communicating similar messages, the act of drinking beer can said to have become a part of what it means to be South African or part of what it means to take part in a typical male, South African pastime.

5.4.2 Recommendations for the beer advertisements

The four SAB beer brand advertisements were effective in communicating messages about their brands and products as well as about cultural concepts and socialization. The respondents’ comments revealed that each brand created a persuasive advertisement using social and cultural aspects of identity. While many respondents understood the advertisers intended messages in each advertisement, others failed to understand certain messages and suggestions being made by advertisers about their products and consumers. Because of this, the following recommendations can be made:

- Do primary research before producing the advertisements to ensure that target market is clearly and correctly defined.
- Make efforts to ensure that all target audiences and consumers of the brand are included and addressed by the advertisement.
- Ensure that the suggestions and messages made in the advertisement does not marginalize or objectify against women.
- Incorporate both genders into the advertisements to ensure that the target markets do not feel neglected or ignored.
- Ensure that target audiences are correctly portrayed in order to not alienate or offend the consumer’s identity.
• Ensure that the advertisement contains elements of fun, friendship and humour, as it will be more effective at capturing the attention of audiences.

5.5 Opportunities for further research

This study looked at one of the ways in which beer drinking is being promoted as a normal part of social interaction and cultural belonging in South Africa. There is a much wider scope for researchers to focus on in terms of the other ways in which alcohol advertising is communicating messages about drinking and social identity, particularly amongst other producers of alcoholic beverages and beer. The field of advertising is constantly undergoing changes to ensure that their products are attracting the right markets in order to keep consumers purchasing their product.

This study provided an in-depth overview of how the selected sample of NMMU students perceived the communicated messages in the four SAB beer brand advertisements, and whether this corresponded with the message that the advertisers wanted their audiences to receive. This research study is acknowledged as a useful perception into the use of social and cultural identity in the advertising techniques of the South African beer industry, yet further research into this field is required. This may include:

• An analysis of different beer brands in South Africa.
• A study of the perceptions of the beer brands’ older section of the target markets, namely 29 years and older.
• A study of the perceptions of the beer brands target market of uneducated audiences.
• A study of the perceptions of the four SAB beer brands on how successful they felt their advertisements were in terms of the message it communicated and the effects of such messages.
• A study of the perception of the advertising companies that produced the advertisements for the brands in order to understand why they chose and how they felt about choosing to incorporate social and cultural signifiers to attract the brand’s South African consumers.
• A study of the target market’s gender and race to determine which felt the most positive and/or negative towards each detriment.
• A content analysis of any media material that relates to any of the four SAB beer brands.
• A study on the changes in the any of the SAB beer brand advertisement both before and after the 2010 FIFA World Cup and whether these changes had any effects on consumer choice.
• Increase the selected sample to include a broader sample of the South African public.
• An analysis of the use of social and cultural identity to promote products by non-alcoholic drink brands.

5.6 Conclusion of the research study

This research study has observed a section of alcohol advertising, more specifically beer brands, which has so far received limited research conducted in the South African context. These results will be able to encourage further research into this field for companies who aim to incorporate references to social and cultural identity in the advertising of their products, and for researchers and/or students who aim to take this study a step further.

The results of this study revealed that the communicated messages in the four SAB beer brands advertisements were mostly understood by the target markets. The majority of respondents felt that concepts of social and cultural identity and belonging were used to communicate messages about the brand identity and products being advertised. The majority of respondents felt that the four advertisements were aimed at a male audience, with some expressing concern about the objectifying of the female characters in the advertisements. Others just felt that the advertisements failed to speak to them as a female audience member.

The respondents also indicated that this advertising technique created a suggestion that drinking alcohol is a fun and necessary part of socialising with friends. Primary research into the target markets perception about drinking alcohol and/or beer prior to viewing the advertisements is important to ensure that target audiences understand the advertiser’s message and use of social and cultural indicators in the context of the advertisement.
The brands need to consider the relationship between their brand’s product and the social environments in which their products are consumed, and the connections that the audiences make when consuming alcohol in different contexts. The brand should also consider how much of their target audiences' identity is based on the choices they make when consuming the product and must not misuse this dynamic simply to sell products.

Alcohol advertising is controversial in nature, since its persuasive techniques are hard to completely determine. This is why it is important for South African beer brands to carefully decide what message they want to communicate to their audiences about their product and brand, and even about the act of drinking in general. Not all target audiences understand techniques which make use of their personal social and cultural identities to persuade them to buy the advertised product. However, primary research into target audiences and effective advertising techniques can help produce advertisements which allow audiences to fully understand what advertisers are trying to communicate.
REFERENCES


45. SAB press release. 5 August 2011. “Hansa Pilsener gets the Kiss of Approval at the Sunday Times Top Brands Awards”.


Addendum A:

Ref: [H12-ART-JMS-002/Approval]
RECH Secretariat: Mrs U Spies
10 October 2012
Ms J Vermaak
NMMU
Faculty of Arts
01-04-09
Summerstrand South Campus

Dear Ms Vermaak

NELSON MANDELA METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS’ PERCEPTIONS OF TELEVISION ADVERTISEMENTS FOR FOUR SAB BEER BRANDS

PRP: Ms J Vermaak
PI: Ms R Tye

Your above-entitled application for ethics approval served at the Research Ethics Committee (Human). We take pleasure in informing you that the application was approved by the Committee. The ethics clearance reference number is H12-ART-JMS-002, and is valid for three years. Please inform the REC-H, via your faculty representative, if any changes (particularly in the methodology) occur during this time. An annual affirmation to the effect that the protocols in use are still those for which approval was granted, will be required from you. You will be reminded timeously of this responsibility, and will receive the necessary documentation well in advance of any deadline.

We wish you well with the project. Please inform your co-investigators of the outcome, and convey our best wishes.

Yours sincerely

[Signature]

Prof CB Cilliers
Chairperson: Research Ethics Committee (Human)

cc: Department of Research Capacity Development
Faculty Officer: Arts
RE: Request access to NMMU students via NMMU-Communique

Mayekiso, Thoko (Prof) (Summerstrand Campus South) [Thoko.Mayekiso@nmmu.ac.za]

Sent: Friday, October 12, 2012 2:53 PM
To: Tye, Robyn (Miss) (208047237)

Dear Ms Tye

I hereby provide authorization for you to collect data for your research as per the research proposal.

Regards

Prof Thoko Mayekiso
Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research and Engagement

From: Tye, Robyn (Miss) (208047237) [mailto:s208047237@live.nmmu.ac.za]
Sent: 10 October 2012 02:56 PM
To: Mayekiso, Thoko (Prof) (Summerstrand Campus South)
Subject: Request access to NMMU students via NMMU-Communique

Good Afternoon Prof. Mayekiso

Please see the attached document, which provides detailed information, for my request to gain permission to use NMMU students as the participants of my study (16 – 28 year old male and female students) which forms part of my treatise research for my degree (MA: Applied Media). I hope to use NMMU-Communique’s email system to gain access to this group.

I have also composed a preamable letter which would appear in the email sent out to students and I will provide this to you and the necessary people once you have given me permission. This will allow me time to open my survey online for participants to access.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Regards

Robyn Tye

208047237

https://amsprd0104.outlook.com/owa/?ae=Item&t=IPM.Note&id=RgAAAAAeWc5L... 2012/11/15
Attention Prof. Thoko Mayekiso (DVC: R&E)

Project Information Statement/Letter of Permission by NMMU

An investigation into NMMU Students’ Perceptions of Television Advertisements for four SAB Beer Brands.

My name is Robyn Tye, and I am an NMMU MA in Applied Media Studies student. I am conducting research on the nationalism and sociality in beer advertising under the supervision of Ms. Janelle Vermaak. I am primarily seeking to gain permission to use NMMU students as the participants of my study (18 – 28 year old male and female students). Students will be asked to follow a link to an online survey, whereby they will be asked to voluntarily give consent and permission for their responses to be used for research purposes. After giving consent, they will be forwarded through a series of questions which will be used within the context of the research treatise. If they do not wish to give consent, they will be able to quit the survey at any point and their response will not be used in the research treatise.

I also wish to request permission to use the NMMU’s Communiqué email system to draw participants for my target group.

Aims of the Research

The research aims to:

1. Determine the nature of the sociality and nationalism of Castle Lager, Castle Lite, Hansa Pilsener and Carling Black Label adverts, through a content analysis of the adverts themselves from January 1, 2009 to January 1, 2011.

2. Determine which concepts and images are most identifiable with the target audience of each of SAB’s television advertisements for their popular beer brands.
3. Identify which concepts the audience gains or engages with as a result of watching the television advertisements, and whether the ideas promoted in the advertisement are adopted by the audience (in other words, to identify the level of influence each advertisement holds over the audience)

**Participant Profile**

Male and female *Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University* students aged between 18-28 years and of any ethnic background.

**Purpose of survey**

The participants will be required to watch four SAB beer adverts, each from *Lager, Castle Lite, Hansa Pilsener* and *Carling Black Label*, which are publicly available on *YouTube*. The four adverts will be the basis of the online questionnaire.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information.

Robyn Tye  
Researcher  
NMMU  
Contact: 0834400414  
Email: robyntyen99@live.com

Janelle Vermaak  
Supervisor  
NMMU  
Contact: 0415044067  
Email: Janelle.Vermaak@nmmu.ac.za

Ethics Clearance Number: **H12-ART-JMS-002**
STUDENTS REQUIRED TO PARTICIPATE IN MASTERS SURVEY

An investigation into Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University Students’ Perceptions of Television Advertisements for four SAB Beer Brands.

Dear Student

You are being asked to participate in a research study. We will provide you with the necessary information to assist you to understand the study and explain what would be expected of you (participant). These guidelines would include the risks, benefits, and your rights as a study subject. Please feel free to ask the researcher to clarify anything that is not clear to you.

To participate, it will be required of you to follow the link below and provide consent where specified. By agreeing to give consent you verify that you understand and agree to the conditions.

You have the right to query concerns regarding the study at any time. Immediately report any new problems during the study, to the researcher. Telephone numbers of the researcher are provided. Please feel Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, Port Elizabeth, 6031. If no one could assist you, you may write to: The Chairperson of the Research, Technology and Innovation Committee, PO Box 77000, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, Port Elizabeth, 6031.

Participation in research is completely voluntary. You are not obliged to take part in any research. If you do partake, you have the right to withdraw at any given time, during the study without penalty or loss of benefits.

Furthermore, it is important that you are aware of the fact that the ethical integrity of the study has been approved by the Research Ethics Committee (Human) of the university. The REC-H consists of a group of independent experts that has the
responsibility to ensure that the rights and welfare of participants in research are protected and that studies are conducted in an ethical manner. Studies cannot be conducted without REC-H’s approval. Queries with regard to your rights as a research subject can be directed to the Research Ethics Committee (Human), Department of Research Capacity Development, PO Box 77000, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, Port Elizabeth, 6031. The study may be terminated at any time by the researcher, the sponsor or the Research Ethics Committee (Human).

Although your identity will at all times remain confidential, the results of the research study may be presented at scientific conferences or in specialist publications.

The following advertisements will form the basis of the study, and if you agree to take part in this study, and voluntarily give your consent, you will be required to watch the following advertisement and thereafter, answer questions relating to each advertisement.

- Castle Lager’s The Journey
- Castle Lite’s The Official Castle Lite
- Carling Black Label’s Champion Men
- Hansa Pilsener’s Sold Out

Data Use:

Forms part of Robyn Tye’s MA in Applied Media treatise (LMC 511) 2012.

Terms of Participation:

Only participants who are aged between 18- and 28-years-old, and may be male and female NMMU students, may participate in this study

*Link to online survey: http://www.eSurveysPro.com/Survey.aspx?id=3f977981-e717-42e3-bc9b-5aa0035fa362
Kind Regards

Principal investigator:   Robyn Tye

Contact: 0834400414

Email: robynty_99@live.com

Ethics clearance number: H12-ART-JMS-002
Addendum C:

This study forms part of the MA project of Robyn Ty, a student of Applied Media Studies at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, entitled "Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University Students’ Perceptions of Television Advertisements for Four SAB Beer Brands: Castle Lager, Castle Lite, Hansa Pilsener and Carling Black Label." This document contains information regarding the purpose of the research (see section A) and participation consent (see section B) as well as the survey questionnaire (see sections C, D, E, F, G, and H).

Created with eSurveysPro.com Survey Software.
Section A. Purpose of Research:
To determine the overall sample’s (MMU Students) perception of four South African Breweries Beer Brands, namely Castle Lager, Castle Lite, Hansa Pilsener and Carling Black Label in terms of the use of drinking as a social construct of identity and sociability.

The data collected from this survey is in line with Moya’s study in Applied Media Studies (2016) for 2012. The data is made freely accessible to understand student perceptions of the role SAB plays in forming identity and culture in South Africa through the Castle Lager, Castle Lite, Hansa Pilsener and Carling Black Label television advertisements.

Section B. Participation Consent:
Participation in this study is voluntary. Respondents may stop their participation at any time, without any repercussions, by clicking on the 'Quit' button. Respondents' data will be de-identified and all personal information for this study is only used for the purpose of analysis, which provide insight into this topic. Thus, all personal information is 100% confidential.

1. I hereby acknowledge and understand the purpose of this survey and that my personal information obtained by Robyn Tyer will remain confidential. I understand that my participation in this survey is voluntary and upon reading the participant consent, agrees to the confidentiality.
   - [ ] I agree
   - [ ] I disagree

Advertisements
The below-mentioned advertisements are accessible on the following mentioned websites and the participants are encouraged to watch them before completing the survey.

- Castle Lager The Journey: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Gv0f47VeUQ
- Castle Lite The OFFICIAL Castle Lite Ad: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=40l94hTfRfI
- Hansa Pilsener Chomp: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U5JYlb04hHk
- Carling Black Label’s Song: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i0kRQ298Qg8
- Hansa Pilsener’s Soi Dei: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5P39ntjFQok
Section C. Please answer the following questions:

2. What is your age?
   - 18-20
   - 21-23
   - 24-26
   - 27-28

3. What is your gender?
   - Female
   - Male

4. What is your race?
   - Black
   - White
   - Coloured
   - Indian
   - Other (Please specify):

5. How often do you consume alcohol?
   - Never
   - Once a month
   - Every few weeks
   - Once a week
   - Numerous times a week
   - Every day
   - Other (Please specify):

6. What is your preferred alcoholic beverage and why?

7. When do you like to drink alcohol?
   - On special occasions
   - After work or College
   - All at a bar or house party
   - When going out to eat
   - At a club or disco
   - Other (Please elaborate):

[Survey options: Quit, Back, Next]
Section D: Castle Lager The Journey Advertisement

8. Have you watched the Castle Lager The Journey advertisement either on television or on YouTube?
   - Yes
   - No

9. What in your opinion, is the advertisement communicating?

10. Do you find the product appealing? Why or why not?

11. What feelings or emotions does the advertisement evoke in the product?

12. What messages and/or assumptions does the advertisement communicate about drinking?

13. What messages does the advertisement communicate about what you think the target audience want and desire?

14. What does the advertisement suggest about gender and sexuality?
Section II: Castle Lite The Official Castle Lite Advertisement

15. Have you watched the Castle Lite The Official Castle Lite advertisement on either television or YouTube?
   - Yes
   - No

16. What in your opinion, is the advertisement communicating?

17. Do you find the product appealing? Why or why not?

18. What feelings or emotions does the advertisement evoke in the product?

19. What messages, and/or assumptions does the advertisement communicate about drinking?

20. What messages does the advertisement communicate about what you (the target audiences) want and desire?

21. What does the advertisement suggest about gender and sexuality?
Section II: Carling Black Label Champion Men Advertisement

23. Have you watched the Carling Black Label Champion Men advertisement either on television or on YouTube?
   - Yes
   - No

24. What do you think is the advertisement communicating?

25. Do you find the product appealing? Why or why not?

26. What feelings or emotions does the advertisement attach to the product?

27. What messages and/or assumptions does the advertisement communicate about drinking?

28. What messages does the advertisement communicate about what you think target audiences want and desire?

29. What does the advertisement suggest about gender and sexuality?
Section 2: Hansa Pilbeam Sold Out Advertisement

29. Have you watched the Hansa Pilbeam Sold Out advertisement either on television or on YouTube?
   - Yes
   - No

30. In your opinion, is the advertisement communicating:

31. Do you find the product appealing? Why or why not?

32. What feelings or emotions does the advertisement attach to the product?

33. What message and/or assumptions does the advertisement communicate about drinking?

34. What message does the advertisement communicate about what you like target audience expect and desire?

35. What does the advertisement suggest about gender and sexuality?
Section II Please complete

36. In your opinion which advertisement best captures your attention?

- Castle Lager The Journey
- Castle Lite The Official Castle Lite
- Carling Black Label Champion Men
- Hansa Purene Sod Out

37. Which advertisement best met your needs as a consumer? In other words, can you identify with the main characters in any of the advertisements? Please explain.

[Space for answer]