DESIRED SENSORY BRANDING STRATEGIES IN-STORE VERSUS
ONLINE: THE SKINCARE INDUSTRY

By

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DECLARATION

I, Gabriella Kirsty Berman, hereby declare that:

- the work in this treatise is my own original work;
- all sources used or referred to have been documented and recognised; and
- this treatise has not been previously submitted in full or partial fulfilment of the requirements for an equivalent or higher qualification at any other recognised educational institution.
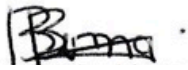
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To whom it may concern

This is to confirm that I, the undersigned, have language edited the introductory pages, edited the language and formatting and cross-checked the references of the thesis, and checked the formatting of the reference list of G Berman's PhD thesis, titled DESIRED SENSORY BRANDING STRATEGIES IN-STORE VERSUS ONLINE: THE SKINCARE INDUSTRY.
The responsibility for implementing the recommended changes rests with the author of the study.

Yours truly

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Modern shoppers are inundated with purchasing options in every product category, with thousands of brands competing for their patronage. It has therefore become increasingly important for organisations to differentiate product offerings in the market if they want to be competitive. It has further been highlighted that an individual's experience of a brand is of paramount importance, as it is directly linked to brand loyalty. A vehicle for creating memorable brand experiences is the utilisation of multi-sensory experiences or sensory branding.

Within the context of traditional or in-store shopping, sensory branding encompasses the use of visual, auditory, olfactory, tactile and gustatory stimuli to adjust consumer purchasing behaviour. However, more and more consumers are opting for online shopping, spurred on by the effects of the global COVID-19 pandemic, and are no less demanding of brands online than they would be in-store. The cosmetics and personal care industry is one of the more predominant gainers from e-commerce. The skincare industry exhibited one of the largest growth rates from 2019 – 2025 and had an estimated market value of $155.8 billion in 2022. When considering the South African skincare industry in isolation, there is no exception, categorised by high average growth rates and many competitive players in the market. This is apparent when considering that the skincare industry within South Africa is expcted to grow annually by 5.48% from 2023 to 2027, translating to an industry value of $788.4 million by 2027 (Statista 2023). With reference to in-store shopping for skincare products, sensory marketing strategies have been known to be heavily relied on. Therefore, with consumers moving towards online shopping, it is essential for skincare businesses to consider how to deliver sensory experiences online as well as in-store.

Whilst the importance of the use of sensory branding and marketing in the skincare industry is notable, both in-store and online, it was established that while there is research available on sensory branding, there is very limited academic research on digital sensory branding and the sensory branding of

skincare products. Moreover, to the researcher's knowledge, no academic literature specifically investigates the digital sensory branding of skincare brands. Therefore, this study will contribute not only by adding academic research to the topic being investigated but also through rreccomendations made based on the outcomes of this study to skincare brands in South Africa.

From the comprehensive literature review, a conceptual model was constructed to investigate the relationship between traditional and digital sensory branding strategies (independent variables) and brand loyalty (dependent variable). Two sets of hypotheses were formulated relating to the identified variables of this study and the empirical research conducted was utilised to deduce whether these hypotheses should be rejected or supported.

To conduct the empirical research needed for this study, certain research methodology was employed. This study made use of a positivistic paradigm and a quantitative approach. The target population of this study constituted consumers who had purchased skincare products in-store as well as online and, as no true sample frame existed, respondents were selected through the use of non-probability sampling, more specifically, convenience sampling. To collect the data, an online survey was used, with the specific data collection instrument being a web-based self-administered questionnaire, which was distributed via social media platforms, such as Facebook and LinkedIn, as well as via email. Section A of the questionnaire focused on the demographic details of the respondents, while Section B – Section F related to the variables of the study. A total of 372 potential respondents started the questionnaire, however only 321 questionnaires were deemed usable after the data had been coded and cleaned, indicating a response rate of 86.3%.

This study made use of both descriptive (measures of central tendency as well as standard deviation and skewness) and inferential (SEM Models, Primary Models, Pearson's correlation coefficients, Chi-Square test of Association, ANOVAs and Welch Robust test, Tukey test and Games Howell Test as well as Cohen's d) statistics to interpret the data, which was graphically illustrated.

The empirical investigation conducted in this study between the variables and sub-variables revealed that significant relationships exist between traditional sensory branding strategies (traditional olfactory and tactile stimuli) and digital sensory branding strategies (digital visual, olfactory and tactile stimuli) and brand loyalty, with refence to the skincare industry. It was further notable that, with specific reference to the skincare industry, the sense of sight, smell and touch are key factors for sensory branding, whereas auditory stimuli were found to only be useful when used in unison with the other senses. Moreover, with reference to in-store shopping, it was deduced that consumers shop for skincare mostly via retail outlets, which could lead to sensory overload. Furthermore, the results of this study suggest that younger consumers are price sensitive.

Based on the pertinent empirical results, and corresponding literature findings, of this study, recommendations were provided to businesses operating in the skincare industry. With reference to in-store trading, it was recommended that because skincare is mostly sold via retail outlets, the brand itself does not have control over all sensory stimuli to which the consumer is exposed. As a result, consumers may be subject to sensory overload and skincare brands should keep their sensory branding in-store simple. Moreover, skincare brands could make use of an in-store aesthetician or beautician, which would facilitate consumer-product interaction. With regards to online trading, a recommendation for skincare brands would be to use moving images or GIFs, which will allow the consumer to more easily imagine the feel of the product. Moreover, skincare brands can make use of brand ambassadors to create "unboxing" videos, which will convey more clearly the sensory information of the product and instil confidence in consumers. Reccomendations were also made with reference to the financial state of consumers, as the financial position of the respondents could influence their decision making.

The limitations of this study comprised the availability of reliable existing sources to support the study as the concept of digital sensory branding is still relatively new and, due to the study being focused on the skincare industry, taste stimuli were excluded as they were found to have no relevance. Finally,

based on all the literature findings and empirical results, recommendations for future areas of study were made.

This study provides evidence that both traditional and digital sensory branding strategies have an influence on, or relationship with, brand loyalty. Through this study, the importance of sensory branding, with specific reference to the skincare industry, is brought to light. Furthermore, skincare brands can utilise the information provided to improve the experience of their consumers when shopping in-store, as well as online, thereby increasing their base of brand loyal consumers.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1   INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Modern shoppers are inundated with purchasing options in every product category, with thousands of brands competing for their patronage (Isoraite 2018:116). Therefore, according to Mbah, Ekechukwu, Ede, Ugorji and Egbudu (2020:6258), it has become increasingly important for organisations to differentiate product offerings in the market if they want to be competitive. Amar (2016:344) asserts that a strategy that can create competitive advantage can be termed "a product differentiation strategy", which, according to Amar (2016:344) and Porter (1985:14), aims to demarcate products in the market according to aspects such as services, quality, technical features and brand image.

Brand image, as defined by Grubor and Milovanov (2017:80), as well as Isoraite (2018:116), is a mixture of both the functional and emotional features that a customer associates with a specific brand. Grubor and Milovanov (2017:80) put forward that a brand image is invaluable to a business and has the ability to facilitate deeper levels of connection between it and its customers. Within a marketing context, it has been of significant interest to researchers to understand how target audiences evaluate a brand and how they are likely to react to branding strategies (Gürhan-Canli, Sarial-Abi & Hayran 2018:96). Kim and Chao (2019:10) explain that how an individual experiences a brand has been highlighted as being of paramount importance to marketers.

A brand experience is one that is intentionally created by a business to attract attention and interact with customers (Pine & Gilmore 1999:2). The importance of brand experience, as noted by Harris, Kluppel-Strobel and Shakhiry (2017:1), along with Kim and Chao (2019:10), can be attributed to its ability to aid in predicting purchase intention, overall satisfaction and consumer behaviour in terms of customer loyalty to the brand, or the effect of brand value on brand loyalty. Kim and Chao (2019:10) recognise that there is a direct

relationship between brand experience and the longevity of a brand. Brand loyalty, as defined by Aaker (1991:39), refers to the degree of attachment felt by a customer to a certain brand.

Therefore, it is key for marketers to gain insight into how their brand is experienced by consumers and what tools can be utilised to build customer relationships. The importance of recognising customer experience as an important factor has roots in the work of Holbrook and Hirschman (1982:1), as well as Hirschman and Holbrook (1982:1), and the notion has grown in popularity ever since. As stipulated by Gao and Lan (2020:2) and Hulten (2017:1), a vehicle for creating memorable brand experiences is the utilisation of multi-sensory experiences.

As explained by Makela (2020:14), prior to conducting an in-depth analysis of the literature on multi-sensory experiences, it is essential to understand what they involve. Mcconnell and Hull (2020:331), along with Miller (2020:660), identify the five human senses as sight (the visual system); smell (the olfactory system); hearing (the auditory system); taste (the gustatory system); and touch (the tactile system). Makela (2020:14) notes that the aforementioned senses collectively work to help individuals form a comprehensible understanding of their environment. Furthermore, individuals can experience senses either externally (associated with the surveyed environment) (Harvey 2021; Hulten 2015:369; Longley 2019; Makela 2020:16) or internally (associated with an experience or product) (Harvey 2021; Hulten 2015:369; Longley 2019; Makela 2020:16). Makela (2020:14) and Velasco (2020:1) add that the phenomenon of a multi-sensory experience occurs when two or more of the five human senses are involved. For example, a consumer might experience a brand through several senses, which would heighten his/her emotional reaction to it and create a desired memorable experience (Makela 2020:15). Makela (2020:15) explains that different senses are capable of stirring different emotions, and multi-sensory experiences can be optimised by learning how the combinations work in unison.

Prior to making use of multi-sensory experiences to differentiate a brand, it is important for a business to establish what its target market would value and what would make them view the brand as unique (Makela 2020:19). With reference to multi-sensory branding, internal senses are key, as they affect the minds of the customers, thereby intensifying their connection with the brand (Makela 2020:19). Thus, after successful multi-sensory branding of various products, multi-sensory marketing would aim to communicate the experience that the brands offer to their customers (Ifeanyichukwu & Peter 2018:156). Moreover, in a market place where consumers are becoming more focused on experiences than on material or tangible goods, multi-sensory marketing would provide marketers with a means to cater for the emotional, intellectual and experience-orientated needs of their customers (Hulten 2017:2; Makela 2020:22). Therefore, sensory branding strategies should be planned and implemented, since individuals are emotionally and intellectually influenced by both positive and negative sensory experiences (Hulten 2017:3).

Within the context of traditional or in-store purchasing, sensory strategies should include visual, auditory, olfactory, tactile and gustatory strategies (Hulten 2017:3). However, as declared by Djordjevic (2021) and Yean (2022), more and more shoppers are opting for online shopping in preference to making in-store purchases, with an increase from 1.66 billion global digital buyers in 2016 to over 2.14 billion in 2021 (Coppola 2020) and in 2022 there were approximately 2.30 billion digital buyers (Fokina 2023). Currently (2023) there are approximately 2.64 billion digital buyers, which is estimated to reach 2.77 billion by 2025 (Oberlo 2023).

The popularity and growth of the online shopping industry has been attributed to its association with affordability and convenience (Arora & Aggarwal 2017:92; Djordjevic 2021), and the COVID-19 global pandemic has not only fast-tracked the rise of online shopping globally but also initiated changes in consumer online behaviour that are predicted to be everlasting (UNCTAD 2020). Since the rise of the global COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a 6%-10% increase in online shopping in most product categories, with one of the

more predominant gainers being cosmetics and personal care products (rising by 6%) (UNCTAD 2020).

Of the cosmetics and personal care industry, skincare accounts for the second largest portion, earning more than 23% of the industry's revenue (Dobric 2021). Furthermore, as the market has become more and more saturated with skincare merchandise, consumers have formed higher expectations of their personal care products (Cosmetics Business 2020). The cosmetics and personal care industry relies heavily on sensory marketing for conventional in-store shopping, by considering factors such as the texture, fragrance and packaging of the products (Cosmetics Business 2020; Whitehouse 2017). The importance of sensory experience in skincare is emphasised by the Datamonitor report "Sensory Ingredients in Personal Care", which found that 37% of females and 28% of males felt that their decision to purchase skincare was influenced by the sensory benefits offered by the product offered (Cosmetics Business 2020; Matthews 2015). However, as consumers are moving towards online shopping, it is essential for cosmetic businesses to consider how online shopping platforms will affect their ability to make use of sensory marketing in the sale of their skincare products. Strategies for digital sensory branding will be briefly discussed in Sections 1.4.3 to 1.4.7 of this Chapter.

1.2   PROBLEM STATEMENT

At the foundation of any study is a research problem, which justifies and gives perspective to the necessity of the research being conducted, as well as identifying the research objectives (Pardede 2018:1; Forister & Blessing 2019:28). As explained by Bairagi and Munot (2019:65), along with Flamez, Lenz, Balkin and Smith (2017:111), a well-written research problem statement should explain the circumstances that gave rise to the need for a study. Miles (2017:6) adds that by defining the problem statement, a researcher can simultaneously develop the research questions of the study.

The research problem for the study was linked to the fact that while there is research available on sensory branding, there is very limited academic research on digital sensory branding and the sensory branding of skincare products. Moreover, to the researcher's knowledge, no academic literature specifically investigates the digital sensory branding of skincare brands, as stipulated above in Section 1.2 of this chapter.

Customers have migrated to online shopping platforms that they may prefer to traditional in-store purchasing (Kinda 2019:3; Sabanoglu 2021). Furthermore, consumers have become more sophisticated, and they expect more than just functionality from their skincare products (Cosmetics Business 2020). Although the skincare industry has always relied heavily on sensory marketing for traditional in-store shopping (Cosmetics Business 2020; Whitehouse 2017), it is now essential for skincare brands to adapt their sensory marketing strategies both for their in-store and online shops in order to form positive and memorable brand experiences (Gao & Lan 2020:2; Hulten 2017:1), which will lead to brand loyalty (Harris et al 2017:1; Kim & Chao 2019:10). Therefore, it can be deduced that the use of digital sensory branding by skincare brands is an important concern, and more research is needed in this regard. The following paragraphs provide evidence for the necessity of this study.

There is a large collection of literature on the topic of sensory branding (Akarsu, Melewar & Foroudi 2019; Alaxander & Nobbs 2016; Castillo-Villar & Villasante-Arellano 2020; Chathuranga & Lakshika 2019; El-Sherbiny 2019; Hulten 2017; Kim & Sullivan 2019; Rodrigues 2018; Rubio & Vidal 2019; Tanasic & Tanasic 2019; Thatte 2019; Tia-Elina 2019; Wala, Czyrka & Fraz 2019; Viktoriia 2019). However, research on online sensory marketing is limited (Abdullah, Hassan, Raza & Jeon 2018; Petit, Velasco & Spence 2019), and only a very limited amount of research has been conducted on the sensory branding of skincare products (Almomani 2020; Grandin, Jonsson & Kessen 2020; Huang & Lu 2020; Levrini & Jeffman dos Santos 2021; Sakhawat 2019).

No academic literature specifically investigates the sensory branding of skincare products via online platforms (as far as could be determined by the

researcher). Therefore, it would be of interest to determine the difference between the sensory branding strategies aimed at consumers who purchase skincare products in-store and those that target online customers. Petit et al (2019:12:14) acknowledge the lack of research on the sensory branding of skincare products via online platforms, and thus call for research on the use of digital tools to develop and facilitate online multi-sensory experiences in the industry.

Further than the lack of academic literature on the topic, the researcher was also drawn to it due to her career background in the skincare industry as well as her passion for marketing. The researcher realised that there is a definite shift towards online shopping, which has been intensified by the effects of the global COVID-19 pandemic and that there was a gap in the capabilities of businesses to implement sensory branding in physical stores versus digital stores. However, specifically from experience in the skincare industry, it is apparent that consumers are persuaded by sensory attributes of the products. These factors led to the researcher selecting "desired sensory branding strategies – in-store versus online: the skincare industry" as the topic for this study.

1.3   AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The research question of this study was: what sensory experiences are desired by customers when purchasing skincare products in-store, as opposed to online? This research question led to the aim of the study being to conduct an investigation into the sensory experiences desired by customers when purchasing skincare products in-store, as opposed to online. To accomplish this aim, the following primary, secondary and methodological objectives were formulated.

1.3.1 Primary objective

The primary objective of the study was to investigate the sensory experiences desired by customers, when purchasing skincare products in-store, as opposed to online.

1.3.2 Secondary objectives

The secondary objectives of the study were to:

SO_1: determine how multi-sensory branding lends support to the creation of positive and memorable brand experiences for consumers, thereby increasing their brand loyalty;

SO_2: explore the possible traditional and digital sensory branding strategies that brands can utilise;

SO_3: investigate the relationship between the various traditional sensory branding strategies and brand loyalty;

SO_4: investigate the relationship between the various digital sensory branding strategies and brand loyalty; and

SO_5: investigate consumer loyalty in the skincare industry.

1.3.3 Methodological objectives

The methodological objectives of the study were to:

MO_1: conduct a comprehensive literature review into the relationship that exists between the various traditional and digital sensory branding strategies and brand experience, and the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty, with specific relation to skincare products;

MO_2: develop a conceptual model of the identified variables' relationship with brand loyalty;

MO_3: determine the appropriate research design and methodology to empirically test the relationships as proposed in the conceptual model;

MO$_4$:   undertake an empirical investigation by means of an online questionnaire to test the relationship between the identified independent variables and dependent variable;

MO$_5$:   analyse data through various statistical methods; and

MO$_6$:   provide recommendations, based on the results obtained in the empirical research of this study, to skincare brands that have both online and offline presences.

1.4   LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUALISATION

As previously discussed, sensory branding is the use of the five human senses to create a memorable brand experience for consumers (Gao & Lan 2020:2; Hulten 2017:3; Upadhyay 2017:352), whereas sensory marketing is the communication of those experiences to the public or potential future consumers. The combination of sensory branding and sensory marketing is utilised as a method to enhance brand loyalty (Harris et al 2017:1; Kim & Chao 2019:10).

1.4.1   Brand experience

In a marketing context, brands go to great lengths to understand what consumers want from the products that they purchase and how they will respond to different branding strategies (Gürhan-Canli et al 2018:96). In the sales and marketing of goods and services, as discussed by Kim and Chao (2019:10), consumers' perceptions of their brand experience are highlighted.

Before defining the concept of brand experience, the concept "brand" must first be understood. According to Durmaz and Yasar (2016:48), a brand comprises all aspects that define a product, service or business and differentiate it in the market. Beig and Nika (2022:157) maintain that the value of a brand lies in its ability not only to differentiate a product, service or business in the market but also to generate continuous and dependable income. Das, Agarwal, Malhotra and Varshneya (2019:479), Iglesias, Markovic and Rialp (2019:343) and Yu, Yuan, Kim and Wang (2020:426) add

that in modern and dynamic market places, which are completely saturated with competitors, experiential marketing is essential in building a brand and establishing its place in the market.

Brakus, Schmitt and Zarantonello (2009:53) claim that the concept of a brand experience can be understood as "subjective, internal consumer responses, sensations, feelings, cognitions and behavioural responses evoked by brand-related stimuli that are part of a brand's design and identity, packaging, communications and environments." Based on Schmitt's (1999:53) study of experience, brand experience has been divided into four dimensions: affective, behavioural, intellectual and sensory experience (Beig & Nika 2022:158). The study focuses on the sensory dimension.

Iglesias et al (2019:343) and Brakus et al (2009:53) explain that brand experiences occur when consumers are exposed to brands. Furthermore, brand experiences differ in that some may be positive, while others are negative, and some may be intentional, while others not, which influences their effect on consumers (Beig & Nika 2022:158). Smilansky (2017:3) adds that a brand should communicate brand experience through all available touchpoints (interactions). Moreover, when consumer-brand relationships improve, consumers' satisfaction and loyalty towards a brand grow stronger (Beig & Nika 2022:158; Hussein 2018:2; Ong et al 2018:755). Therefore, it can be deduced that a positive brand experience strengthens brand-customer relationships, customer satisfaction and overall brand equity.

1.4.2   Brand loyalty

Brand loyalty, which can be behavioural or attitudinal, refers to the degree of attachment that a customer feels towards a brand (Beig & Nika 2022:160). Behavioural loyalty is the observed loyalty of a customer to a particular brand, whereas attitudinal loyalty is the consumer's intention to be loyal to a brand (Beig & Nika 2022:160). Brand loyalty, as explained by Beig and Nika (2022:160), is important for brands, as it reduces the threat of competitors in the market and allows brands to increase the price of their products. As

discussed in the previous section, brand loyalty can be achieved through positive brand experiences.

Brand loyalty can be increased when the stimuli that consumers associate with a brand result in pleasurable experiences, although it will be decreased if brand experiences are negative (Beig & Nika 2022:160; Hussein 2018:2). Ong et al (2018:756) attribute the influence of positive brand experience on brand loyalty to the fact that it creates superior value, which will result in increased brand loyalty. Loyalty consists of two perspectives, namely customer loyalty and brand loyalty. Customer loyalty, according to Ong et al (2018:758), refers to loyalty derived from saving the consumer's money, whereas brand loyalty is based on positioning the brand as an asset in itself. Brand loyalty is known to be an important aspect of brand equity (Hussein 2018:1; Ong et al 2018:758) and is a measure of the success of a brand's marketing strategy (Ong et al 2018:758). However, Hussein (2018:2) argues that the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty is inconsistent, and therefore requires further study. Figure 1.1 below depicts a model of the influence of brand experience on brand loyalty.

While brand experience comprises many different facets, as depicted in Figure 1.1, the study focuses on the influence of sensory experience on brand loyalty, as sensory experience has been highlighted as one of the predominant dimensions of brand experience, and brand loyalty has been emphasised as the predominant determinant of brand equity.

FIGURE 1.1

A MODEL DEPICTING THE INFLUENCE OF BRAND EXPERIENCE ON
BRAND LOYALTY
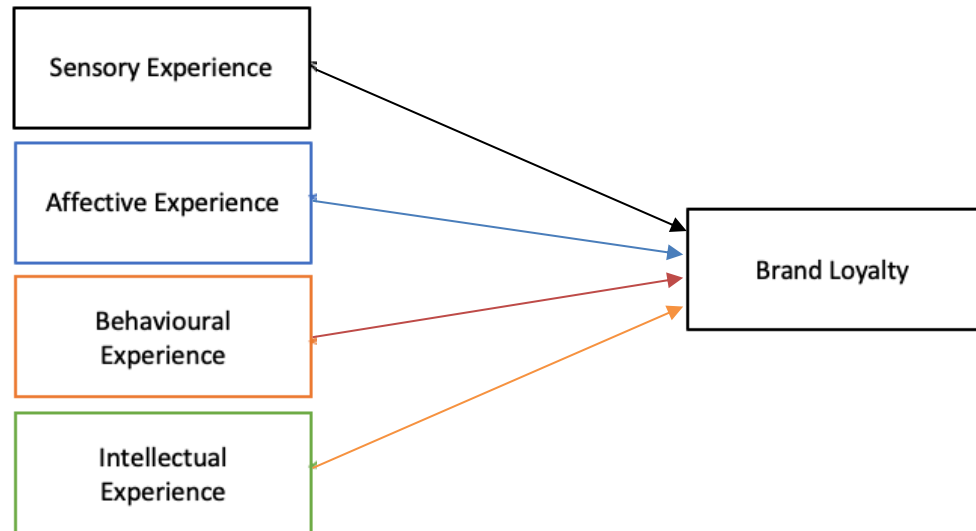
Source: Adapted from Beig & Nika (2022:161)

Sensory experiences, as stated previously, refer to the use of the five human senses to create memorable interactions for the consumer (Beig & Nika 2022:158) and when two or more of the five human senses are stimulated simultaneously, a multi-sensory experience occurs (Makela 2020:14; Velasco 2020:1). As stipulated by Gao and Lan (2020:2) as well as by Hulten (2017:1), the creation of multi-sensory experiences and the use of sensory branding are efficient strategies for building brand experiences in traditional brick-and-mortar stores. However, as the world becomes more technologically inclined, it is necessary to consider the role of sensory branding via online platforms.

In the sections that follow, both traditional and digital sensory branding are discussed in relation to visual, auditory, olfactory, tactile and gustatory branding strategies. It is important to note that while individuals may experience a particular sense in isolation, it is more likely that they will experience numerous senses simultaneously, and have multi-sensory experiences (Hulten 2017:9).

1.4.3   Visual branding strategy

When making use of a visual branding strategy in an in-store context, the brand's identity is visually portrayed (Hulten 2017:3; Wala et al 2019:112). Harvey (2021), Hulten (2017:5), Upadhyaya (2017:353) and Wala et al (2019:112) explain that vision is the dominant sense and can include aspects, such as colour, design, graphics and lighting, all of which can have an influence on purchase decision. However, Upadhyaya (2017:357) maintains that it is important for a brand to standardise its ambiance. Furthermore, visual perception is influenced by an individual's culture, meaning that he/she will have a visual preference (Hulten 2017:5).

In the context of online platforms, visual branding strategies are similar in that they include colour, design, lighting and graphics. In fact, Sarathy (2020) declares that such visual cues are important sensory branding strategies, which online retailers should consider, because consumers rely heavily on what they see on the screen to make their purchase decision. However, Griffith (2020), supported by Harvey (2021) and Sarathy (2020), argues that as the digital market space is becoming more competitive, brands need to go beyond the traditional use of colours, website design and videos and consider the integration of new technologies, such as augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR). As a result, it is hypothesised that there are significant relationships between both traditional and digital visual sensory branding strategies and brand loyalty (Table 1.1).

1.4.4   Auditory branding strategy

A brand may express its identity using sound (Hulten 2017:3). According to Griffith (2020), Harvey (2021), Hulten (2017:6) and Wala et al (2019:112), auditory branding strategies include stimuli such as music, jingles, people's voices and specific words, which have been noted to have an influence on the level of credibility and trust associated with a brand, as well as the amount of time consumers spend in the store. While visual cues are the dominant sense, auditory cues have the ability to stir individuals at a deeper emotional level

(Hulten 2017:6). According to Hulten (2017:6), individuals have different auditory preferences associated with their social class. Upadhyaya (2017:357) adds that in stores, the sound level, tempo and rhythm of music, for example, should be considered.

When adopting auditory branding strategies via online platforms, brands need to consider not only sound but also haptic vibration (any physical stimuli from technology) (Sarathy 2020; Weir 2021). Griffith (2020), Harvey (2021), Sarathy (2020) and Wala et al (2019:112) explain that if music is used as part of an auditory branding strategy, it should portray the right mood in relation to the brand's image with regard to genre and tempo, for example. Another aspect of an auditory branding strategy via online platforms is the embedded sounds used in animation (Sarathy 2020), digital ads, social media or videos (Griffith 2020), all of which can be used to enhance online auditory branding experiences. From the literature provided, it is hypothesised that there are significant relationships between both traditional and digital auditory sensory branding strategies and brand loyalty (Table 1.1).

1.4.5   Olfactory branding strategy

An olfactory branding strategy involves creating a particular atmosphere associated with a brand by using appropriate odours (Hulten 2017:3). Olfactory stimuli, as indicated by Hulten (2017:7), have an influence on quality perception, the amount of time the consumer spends in the store and the decision to purchase. Furthermore, individuals have personal olfactory preferences, and fragrances are associated with moods, with positive emotions being associated with pleasing smells and negative emotions being associated with unpleasant odours (Hulten 2017:7). The strength of olfactory branding strategies is that the memory of an olfactory experience such as a perfume lasts longer than that of other sensory experiences such as an image (Griffith 2020; Harvey 2021; Hulten 2017:7; Wala et al 2019:112). In addition, Upadhyaya (2017:357) highlights that a brand's particular fragrance should be uniform and not differ across products and places.

With respect to online platforms, olfactory stimuli are somewhat limited, as consumers do not have the ability to smell through a computer or cell phone screen (Sarathy 2020). Therefore, as explained by Griffith (2020), along with Sarathy (2020), brands make use of words and images that depict and suggest odours, in an attempt to create internal sensory experiences for consumers. Moreover, Harvey (2021) advises brands to instil their own particular fragrance in the minds of their customers to create a strong association. As a result, it is hypothesised that there are significant relationships between both traditional and digital olfactory sensory branding strategies and brand loyalty (Table 1.1).

1.4.6   Tactile branding strategy

Tactile branding involves the use of touch to distinguish a brand (Hulten 2017:3; Wala et al 2019:114). As detailed by Hulten (2017:8) and Upadhyaya (2017:358), the sensation of touch has the ability to influence feelings of ownership, physical interaction, quality perception and a consumer's willingness to pay higher prices. Moreover, it includes stimuli, such as texture, weight, material and form. According to Hulten (2017:8), consumers are either inclined towards having a higher or lower need for touch (NFT), and those with the latter are more motivated by sight. In addition, it has been found that consumers make use of touch to evaluate products and may not be comfortable making a purchase before evaluating how the brand feels (Hulten 2017:9).

Touch, like smell, is more difficult to incorporate into digital sensory branding. Therefore, once again, brands include descriptive and emotive language to create internal tactile experiences, and Harvey (2021) claims that this means that brands need to amplify other senses online, such as sight and sound. Wala et al (2019:114) add that an important feature is packaging, which can be seen as well as felt, indicating the coherence between tactile and visual senses. Based on the literature relating to tactile branding strategy, it is hypothesised that there are significant relationships between both traditional and digital tactile sensory branding strategies and brand loyalty (Table 1.1).

1.4.7   Gustatory branding strategy

To create memorable experiences, brands can also make use of taste, which includes gastronomical experiences (Hulten 2017:3). Hulten (2017:9), along with Wala et al (2019:113), explains that taste is completely personal, meaning that there is no universal perception of taste and that an individual's perception is strongly influenced by his/her origin. Taste is closely linked to smell, sight and touch, all of which have the capacity to alter an individual's taste experience (Hulten 2017:9). Therefore, a gustatory branding strategy should not be considered in isolation, but rather as a whole with the other senses.

Harvey (2021) and Sarathy (2020) both recognise the importance of taste stimuli in creating memorable brand experiences. However, they note that, as with olfactory and tactile branding strategies, online customers cannot taste, which makes gustatory branding difficult. Therefore, Harvey (2021) suggests that brands should adopt a hybrid approach to sensory marketing and make use of testimonials and brand ambassadors. Moreover, the brand should use images and descriptive language to help the consumer imagine what the taste might be (Sarathy 2020). Based on the above literature on sensory branding strategies and their influence on brand experience and, in turn, brand loyalty, a conceptual model is developed. However, as this study relates specifically to the skincare industry, gustatory stimuli were excluded as it was not found to be relevant in the evaluation of skincare products by consumers.

1.5   CONCEPTUAL MODEL

By means of a hypothesised framework, a researcher can graphically depict the direction of the research and potential relationships between the identified variables of the study (Adom, Hussein & Agyem 2018:438). Adom et al (2018:438), as well as Lederman and Lederman (2015:594), add that a hypothesised framework emphasises the feasibility of a study. The conceptual model of the study indicates the relationship between the independent variables (traditional and digital sensory branding strategies) and the

dependent variable (brand loyalty), which are based on the literature review conducted (Section 1.4).

The formulated hypotheses for this study are presented in Table 1.1 and will be discussed in more depth in Chapter 4 of this study. Figure 1.2 contextualises the hypothesis with reference to the proposed conceptual model of this study.

TABLE 1.1

NULL AND ALTERNATIVE HYPOTHESES

	Hypotheses	
#	H_a	H_o
Relationship between the independent and dependent variables of this study		
Traditional sensory branding strategies		
H_1	There is a significant relationship between traditional sensory branding strategies and brand loyalty.	There is no significant relationship between traditional sensory branding strategies and brand loyalty.
H_{1a}	There is a significant relationship between traditional visual sensory strategies and brand loyalty.	There is no significant relationship between traditional visual sensory strategies and brand loyalty.
H_{1b}	There is a significant relationship between traditional auditory sensory strategies and brand loyalty.	There is no significant relationship between traditional auditory sensory strategies and brand loyalty.
H_{1c}	There is a significant relationship between traditional olfactory sensory strategies and brand loyalty.	There is no significant relationship between traditional olfactory sensory strategies and brand loyalty.
H_{1d}	There is a significant relationship between traditional tactile sensory strategies and brand loyalty.	There is no significant relationship between traditional tactile sensory strategies and brand loyalty.
Digital sensory branding strategies		
H_2	There is a significant relationship between digital sensory branding strategies and brand loyalty.	There is no significant relationship between digital sensory branding strategies and brand loyalty.
H_{2a}	There is a significant relationship between digital visual sensory strategies and brand loyalty.	There is no significant relationship between digital visual sensory strategies and brand loyalty.
H_{2b}	There is a significant relationship between digital auditory sensory strategies and brand loyalty.	There is no significant relationship between digital auditory sensory strategies and brand loyalty.
H_{2c}	There is a significant relationship between digital olfactory sensory strategies and brand loyalty.	There is no significant relationship between digital olfactory sensory strategies and brand loyalty.
H_{2d}	There is a significant relationship between digital tactile sensory strategies and brand loyalty.	There is no significant relationship between digital tactile sensory strategies and brand loyalty.

FIGURE 1.2

TRADITIONAL AND DIGITAL SENSORY BRANDING STRATEGIES FOR
SKINCARE BRANDS: CONCEPTUAL MODEL

Independent Variables   Dependent Variable

Traditional Sensory Strategies	H_1
Visual Sensory Strategy	H_{1a}
Auditory Sensory Strategy	H_{1b}
Olfactory Sensory Strategy	H_{1c}
Tactile Sensory Strategy	H_{1d}

Brand Loyalty

Digital Sensory Strategies	H_2
Visual Sensory Strategy	H_{2a}
Auditory Sensory Strategy	H_{2b}
Olfactory Sensory Strategy	H_{2c}
Tactile Sensory Strategy	H_{2d}

The conceptual model consists of two types of hypotheses, a null hypothesis (H_0) and an alternative hypothesis (H_a). For the current study, alternative hypotheses were developed to test the possible influence of the independent variables on the dependent variable.

1.6   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology can be defined as the particular techniques that a researcher utilises to identify, select, collect, sort and interpret information on a specific topic (Sileyew 2019:1). The research methodology conveys the validity and reliability of the study. A detailed discussion on all aspects of the reserch methodology relevant to this study is provided in Chapter 5.

1.6.1 Research paradigm, approach and design

In the study, the positivistic research paradigm and the quantitative approach were followed (Chapter 5: Section 5.2 & 5.3). The quantitative approach explores the relationships between variables, thereby testing the hypotheses of the study (Creswell & Creswell 2017:4). As the researcher wished to make use of a structured questionnaire and statistical calculations, as well as making generalisations about the population, the quantitative approach was appropriate (Leavy 2017:19; Oflazoglu 2017:5).

Furthermore, as the study analysed the relationship between the independent and dependent variables, a descriptive research design was selected (Achari 2014:14; Boudah 2019:155; Collis & Hussey 2014:42). As explained by Wiid and Diggines (2015:67), a descriptive research design is used when the researcher wants to answer questions, such as the following: Who are the respondents of the study? What is the topic of the study? When and where will the study be conducted? What methodology should be utilised to conduct the study? According to Burkholder, Cox, Crawford and Hitchcock (2019:310), when making use of a descriptive research design, there should be a clearly defined research problem from which a research question should be formulated.

This study made use of a structured questionnaire to collect data. Moreover, various statistical techniques were used to analyse and interpret the data to ascertain the relationships between the independent variables (traditional and digital sensory branding strategies) and the dependent variable (brand loyalty). McCombes (2020a), Mishra and Alok (2017:3), as well as Novikov and Novikov (2013:60), note that these techniques are associated with a descriptive research design.

When there is already a little knowledge about a topic, but not sufficient to answer the research question, descriptive research is appropriate (Burkholder et al 2019:310; Kumar 2019:171). In the context of the current study, there was insufficient research conducted on the topic of digital sensory branding in

the skincare industry to answer the research question: What sensory experiences are desired by customers when purchasing skincare products in-store, as opposed to online?

1.6.2   Target population

Murphey (2016:6) and Umair (2018:3) maintain that the target population of a study is the population that the study targets in order to acquire information. The target population of the study included individuals who had purchased skincare products, in-store as well as online, who were between the ages of 18 and 60 years, of any race, gender and nationality during the time of the study (Chapter 5: Section 5.4.1). Umair (2018:3) explains that in the majority of cases, it would not be possible to reach an entire population. Therefore, researchers must make use of a sample of the population for a study, the results of which can be generalised to the entire population. The number of respondents included in the sample of a population is referred to as the sample size of the study (Taherdoost 2017:237; Vasileiou, Barnett, Thorpe & Young 2018:2). Lavrakas et al (2019:8), along with Allen (2017:1523), add that it is essential for the sample size to be large enough so that the study results may be generalised to the entire population. When there is no known sample frame (the list of all the individuals in the population who can be sampled), as in the current study, setting an appropriate sample size can prove a challenge (Rahi 2017:3). In the event of the lack of a sample frame, sample size guidelines should be followed (Comrey & Lee 92013:217; Rahi 2017:4). The recommended guidelines can be found in Table 1.2 below.

TABLE 1.2

RECOMMENDED SAMPLE SIZE GUIDELINES

Sample Size	Quality
50 Respondents	Very poor
100 Respondents	Poor
200 Respondents	Reasonable
300 Respondents	Good
500 Respondents	Very good
1000 Respondents	Excellent

Source: Adapted from Comrey and Lee (2013:217) as well as Rahi (2017:4)

Based on the above guidelines, the study set a minimum sample size of 300 respondents.

1.6.3   Sampling

Once the target population of a study is defined, the researcher must then decide which portion of the target population will be selected to represent the entire population, which will lead to efficient and cost-effective research. This process is known as sampling (Allen 2017:1523; Lavrakas et al 2019:8; Sekaran & Bougie 2016:235).

1.6.4   Sampling procedure

Non-probability sampling was utilised in the study, which made use of a non-random method to collect data (Chapter 5: Section 5.4.1). In non-probability sampling, not all individuals who constitute the population are given the opportunity to take part in the study (Akinkunmi 2019:122; Nardi 2017:37). This sampling method was selected because of the benefits associated with it, which include time efficiency, convenience and cost effectiveness. Moreover, it allows for an understanding of the topic through different people's perspectives (Akinkunmi 2019:122; Crossman 2018; Wolf, Joye, Smith & Fu 2016:342). Furthermore, not all individuals make use of skincare and would therefore not be included.

More specifically, the study made use of convenience sampling, which is a sub-category of non-probability sampling. As explained by Elfil and Negida (2017:2), along with Etikan, Musa and Alkassim (2016:2), convenience sampling allows for relatively quick and cost-effective gathering of data because respondents are selected based on convenience. Additionally, convenience sampling was appropriate because there was no sampling frame available for the study. It was also determined that convenience sampling was appropriate as, while a mailing list was utilised, the link to the questionnaire was also distributed via social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram

and LinkedIn. Therefore, there was no actual list of respondents, which lends support to the use of convenience sampling rather then quote sampling.

1.6.5   Data collection methods

A data collection method is the way that a researcher plans to collect primary data (Rose, McKinley & Baffoe-Djan 2019:12). The data collection method used in this study was an online survey (Chapter 5: Section 5.5.1), which allowed the researcher to collect data from a large group of people (Ruel 2018:3). As noted by Toepoel (2015:2), as well as Gournelos, Hammonds & Wilson (2019:127) and Struwig and Stead (2015:106), online surveys consisting of questionnaires completed on online platforms are popular because of the increased use of technology worldwide.

The researcher wanted a data collection method with a fast turnaround time, which is a characteristic of an online survey (Shalin 2019:1; Struwig & Stead 2015:106). Further motivations for making use of an online survey included the following: the target audience of this study was technologically inclined; an online survey is conducive to non-probability sampling; and the researcher had the means to create an online survey. In addition, an online questionnaire was appropriate because of the COVID-19 pandemic that has led to a need to minimise personal contact.

1.6.6   Measuring instrument

A measuring instrument is the specific data collection tool used to obtain information from the respondents participating in a study (Kabir 2016:208; Trigueros, Sandoval & Juan 2017:5). Rose et al (2019:21), as well as Paradis, O'Brien, Nimmon, Bandiera and Martimianakis (2016:263), point out that a researcher needs to select an appropriate measuring instrument to ensure the collection of reliable and relevant data, which can later be analysed.

A questionnaire, which was the measuring instrument utilised in this study, is defined as a series of items, relating to a topic, that allow the researcher to

acquire insight and statistically useful information from the respondents (Brace 2018:2; McLeod 2018; Pahwa 2019:1). The study made use of a web-based self-administered questionnaire because of the technological nature of this study and the popularity of online questionnaires due to the increased access to, and usage of, technology (Dudovskiy 2018; Struwig & Stead 2015:106; Toepoel 2015:2). Additionally, making use of a web-based self-administered questionnaire meant that a larger number of respondents could be reached and that the data collection process would be more time-efficient and cost-effective, while still producing accurate data (Debois 2019:1; Dudovskiy 2018:1) (Chapter 5: Section 5.5.2).

The web-based self-administered questionnaire used in the study consisted of six sections, whereby Section A gathered demographic information and Sections B - E gathered information relating to the independent variables, and sub-variables thereof (Chapter 5: Section 5.5.3). Collecting information from the respondents about their desired sensory branding strategies separately in a uniform manner allowed the researcher to conduct a comparison. Finally, Section F of the questionnaire gathered information relating to brand loyalty with specific reference to the skincare industry.

Section A of the questionnaire made use of dichotomous or closed-ended questions, while Sections B to F made use of Likert scale questions. The Likert scale questions required answers that ranged from 1 (Strongly Agree) to 5 (Strongly Disagree), where 3 indicated that the respondent felt "indifferent" regarding how the factor influenced their experience of a brand. For reporting purposes, answers of 1 and 2 were grouped and termed a "positive response", whereby respondents agreed that the factor had an influence on their experience, while answers of 4 and 5 were grouped and termed a "negative response", whereby respondents agreed that the factor had a negative influence on their experience. There were also screening questions prior to the questionnaire to ensure that respondents met the requirements to take part in the study.

1.6.7 Data collection procedure

The study made use of a web-based self-administered questionnaire to collect primary data (Chapter 5: Section 5.5.7). A link to the questionnaire was posted on social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn, as well as by distributing the questionnaire via email to an existing mailing list, as individuals who are technologically inclined can be assumed to be present on these online platforms. The data collected via the mailing list abided by the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPI Act) When consumers subscribed to the skincare companie's mailing list, they provide consent for their email address to be used for the distribution of marketing and research material.

To ensure that respondents were between the ages of 18 and 60 years, a question was included in the demographics section of the questionnaire. Further screening questions ensured that respondents met the requirements to take part in the study, which were that they had purchased skincare both in-store and online. On clicking on the link, the respondents were re-directed to the web-based self-administered questionnaire, where the cover letter was displayed. Prior to the start of the questionnaire, the respondent was asked to provide written/implied consent by clicking the tick box that stated, "Yes, I consent to taking part in this study", or the one that stated, "No, I do not consent to taking part in this study". Had the respondents indicated that they did not provide their consent, they were redirected to the end "Thank you" page and the survey was terminated.

1.6.8 Data preparation

Once collected, the primary data needed to be organised to allow for accurate analysis and interpretation (Simion 2016:52). Abdallah, Du and Webb (2017:1) maintain that the primary data should be manipulated so that they can be analysed in a structured manner. Harris (2020) adds that the process of preparing data for analysis includes editing and coding the information to ensure their accuracy. In this study, once gathered, the primary data was

edited, coded and captured in an excel spread sheet which could then be analysed (Chapter 5: Section 5.5.8).

1.6.9   Validity of the measuring instrument

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was utilised to validate the measuring instrument as well as to test the hypotheses of the study (Bastos 2021; Frey 2018) (Chapter 5: Section 5.5.6). When interpreting the CFA calculations, the basic measures of goodness-of-fit were considered, as well as the absolute fit indices, which include the Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) and the Standardised Root Mean Residual (SRMR). In this study, statistical, language and content experts were consulted to ensure face validity, and content validity was addressed by utilising previously tested items from questionnaires.

1.6.10   Reliability of the measuring instrument

Cronbach alpha coefficients were calculated for each of the remaining variables (Leppink 2019:60), and those that presented acceptable Cronbach alpha scores ($\alpha \geq 0.7$) were deemed reliable (Namdeo & Rout 2016:1374; Taber 2018:1274) (Chapter 5: Section 5.5.5).

1.6.11   Additional data analysis used

In order to process and analyse the primary data of this study, IBM SPSS Statistics version 28 was utilised. The descriptive statistics that were calculated to summarise the results included frequency distributions, means and standard deviations. Inferential statistics calculated to interpret the data included the following (Chapter 5: Section 5.5.9).
- SEM Models were used to determine whether or not relationships existed between the independent variables of the study, namely traditional and digital sensory branding strategies, and the dependent variable of the study, namely brand loyalty.

- Primary factor models were used to determine whether or not relationships existed between the sub-variables of the study, namely traditional and digital visual, auditory, olfactory and tactile stimuli, and the dependent variable of the study, namely brand loyalty.

- The Pearson's correlation coefficient test was used to measure the correlation between variables (Goftay & Thatte 2017:78).

- Chi-square test of association was used to determine whether or not there was a relationship between the age of the respondent and their monthly average budget for skincare. This statistic was calculated as literature suggested that these two demographic factors may be related. Additionally, the outcomes of the ANOVA's calculated for budget as well as age group of the respondents (Chapter 6: Section 6.6.8.3 & Section 6.6.8.2), suggested that there may be a relation between the two. Therefore, the researcher made the decision to conduct the additional Chi-square test for the two demographic variables.

- Analysis of variance (ANOVA) as well as the Welch Robust Test were conducted to identify statistically significant differences in the means of groups, as different genders or ages (Holmes, Moody, Dine & Trueman 2017:274; Sawyer 2009:27);

- The Tukey test and Games-Howell test were used to identify means that were significantly different from one another (Gravetter & Wallnau 2016:394; Sun 2016:1).

- Cohen's d was calculated for the researcher to quantify the relationship between two groups (Goulet-Pelletier & Cousineau 2018:243), thereby allowing the researcher to identify practical significant variances on $p < 0.1$ and $p < 0.05$.

1.7 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The first delimitation of the study is that there was limited academic research on digital sensory branding at the time of the study. Therefore, access to relevant journal articles on this topic was limited. Furthermore, the study only included institutions that operate within the skincare industry, and therefore excluded institutions in other industries. Additionally, the data was collected

solely via online questionnaires, which could lead to questionnaire fatigue by respondents. However, this data collection method was appropriate due to the respondents needing to have purchased skincare online to meet the requirements of this study (Section 1.6.5).

1.8   ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The concept of ethics in research includes responsibility, accountability, confidentiality, anonymity and consent (Dooly, Moore & Vallejo 2017:351). Ethics ensure that research is conducted in a responsible manner (Das & Tripathi 2017:1) and hold researchers accountable for their work, which in turn aids in the avoidance of error when reporting (Dooly et al 2017:352). Research ethics are not only for the benefit of the researcher but also for the participants of a study, as they ensure that the dignity and rights of the participants are protected (Das & Tripathi 2017:1). The World Health Organization (2020:1) goes further and declares that all research should be reviewed by an ethics board.

The researcher obtained full ethical clearance by the Research Ethics Committee of Nelson Mandela University. Furthermore, to ensure that the respondents of the study understood why the information was being collected and for what it would be used, the questionnaire was accompanied by a detailed covering letter. The letter clarified that the respondents' participation was completely voluntarily and that they could opt out of the study at any point at no cost to themselves. The questionnaire included a question within the demographic section to ensure that the respondents were over the age of 18 and under the age of 60 to ensure that minors or vulnerable groups were not included in this study. The researcher explained in the covering letter attached to the questionnaire that the respondents' names would not be required to assure them that they would remain anonymous. The researcher acknowledged that because information would be collected via online platforms, tampering from an outside source might threaten the confidentiality of the respondents. Therefore, the respondents would be informed that they could choose whether to answer all the questions.

On clicking on the link for the questionnaire, the respondent was redirected to the web-based self-administered questionnaire, where the covering letter again appeared. Prior to the start of the questionnaire, the respondent was asked to provide written consent to taking part in the study. There was no foreseeable risk to the respondents of this study, and the data collected contributed to an understanding of the topic of sensory marketing. Moreover, accurate recommendations could be made to institutions operating within the skincare industry who sell their products via in-store and online platforms. The proposal was presented to the Research Ethics Committee of Nelson Mandela University to ensure that the study adhered to all ethical considerations and guidelines.

1.9   CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

Although the research study was based on the proven relationship between brand experience and the longevity of a brand (Kim & Chao 2019:10), it contributed to this knowledge by delving into the field of sensory marketing to enhance consumer experiences (Scott & Uncles 2018). Furthermore, it has already been established that within a marketing context, multi-sensory experience should be utilised to enhance a brand, thereby creating a brand image and awareness (Makela 2020:15-19). However, Hussein (2018:2) is of the opinion that the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty is inconsistent. This study will therefore aid in bridging this gap in knowledge.

Due to the growth of technology, as well as the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, online shopping has increased rapidly (Coppola 2020; Djordjevic 2021). The more predominant gainers from online shopping are cosmetics and personal care products (UNCTAD 2020). Moreover, in both online and offline market spaces, customer engagement with ethical brands is constantly under discussion (Yoganathan, Osburg & Akhtar 2018:386).

There was limited research about the sensory branding of skincare products (Almomani 2020; Grandin et al 2020; Huang & Lu 2020; Levrini & Jeffman dos Santos 2021; Sakhawat 2019) and, to the researcher's knowledge, there was

no research conducted on the online sensory branding of these products. Thus, the significance of the study was that it would add to the academic literature on sensory branding. Moreover, the study aimed to contribute to the field of experiential marketing. Existing literature in this field is summarised as follows.

- There is ample research on the topic of sensory branding (Akarsu et al 2019; Alaxander & Nobbs 2016; Castillo-Villar & Villasante-Arellano 2020; Chathuranga & Lakshika 2019; El-Sherbiny 2019; Hulten 2017; Kim & Sullivan 2019; Rodrigues 2018; Rubio & Vidal 2019; Tanasic & Tanasic 2019; Thatte 2019; Tia-Elina 2019; Wala et al 2019; Viktoriia 2019).
- Research on sensory marketing online is scarcer (Abdullah et al 2018; Petit et al 2019).
- There is also limited research done on the use of virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) in marketing (Griffith 2020; Petit et al 2019:44; Huang & Liao 2017:449).
- There is only a limited amount of research on the sensory branding of skincare products (Almomani 2020; Grandin et al 2020; Huang & Lu 2020; Levrini & Jeffman dos Santos 2021; Sakhawat 2019).

In light of the abovementioned literature summary, the study:

- addressed the shortage of previous research on the sensory branding of skincare products both in-store and online (since no research, as far as could be determined, specifically investigates the sensory branding of skincare products via online platforms);
- conceptualised a model based on the literature review, which was conducted, to demonstrate the difference between the desirable sensory branding strategies for skincare products sold in-store and those for products sold online;
- contributed to the field of experience marketing by using a relatively large sample size and advanced statistical analysis techniques; and
- stimulated thinking, and influenced the decision making, of institutions who operate within the skincare industry that distribute their products via brick-and-mortar stores as well as online platforms.

As clarified in the above paragraphs, in the past, the focus of research on sensory branding strategies has been on those that involved traditional in-person (face-to-face) interaction. However, despite the global shift towards technology, only a few studies have been conducted on digital sensory branding strategies. Therefore, the study contributed to academic research not only by conducting an investigation into digital sensory branding strategies but also by comparing desired sensory branding strategies for skincare products sold in-store versus those sold online.

1.10   DEFINITIONS OF KEY CONCEPTS

For this research study, a number of concepts were identified (Table 1.3 below), which underpin the research question: What sensory experiences do customers desire when purchasing skincare products in-store, as opposed to online?

TABLE 1.3

DEFINITIONS OF CONCEPTS RELATED TO THE STUDY

Concept	Definition	Reference
Brand Experience	An experience, which is intentionally created to gain attention and interact with customers "subjective, internal consumer responses, sensations, feelings, cognitions and behavioural responses evoked by brand-related stimuli that are part of a brand's design and identity, packaging, communications and environments"	• Brakus et al (2009:53) • Pine & Gilmore (1999:2)
Sensory Branding	The use of the five human senses in branding to differentiate a brand from its competitors	• Hulten (2017:3) • Upadhyay (2017:352)
Sensory Marketing	The communication of the sensory experience created through sensory branding to customers, thereby allowing the brand to cater for consumers' emotional, intellectual and experience-orientated needs	• Ifeanyichukwu & Peter (2018:1560) • Hulten (2017:2) • Makela (2020:22)
Digital Sensory Branding Strategies	Sensory branding strategies that exist for online platforms or in a digital context	• Griffith (2020) • Sarathy (2020)

Concept	Definition	Reference
Brand Loyalty	The degree of attachment that a customer feels towards a brand based on positioning the brand as an asset in itself	• Beig & Nika (2022:160) • Ong et al (2018:758)
Multi-Sensory Experience	Occurs when two or more of the five human senses are stimulated to create brand experiences.	• Makela (2020:14) • Velasco (2020:1)
Skincare Products	Skincare products are products that are developed with the aim of improving the look and feel of one's skin. Skincare products can be classified based on their functionality and purpose and can either remain on the skin, such as moisturisers, anti-aging creams, tanners and over the counter drug products, or be designed to remove something from the skin, such as cleansers, body soaps, toners, bubble bath and exfoliation products.	• Cosmetics Europe (2021) • Romanowski (2020) • FDA (2020)
Skincare Industry	The skincare industry is a sector or branch within the larger beauty industry.	• (Roberts 2021)

1.11   OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS

This study is divided into seven chapters as seen in Table 1.4 below.

TABLE 1.4

OUTLINE OF THE THESIS

Chapter	Contents
1	<u>Introduction and Background of the Study</u> This chapter provides an introduction and orientation to the research and focus on the research problem; problem statement; research question; the aim and objectives of the study; the significance of the study; and the conceptual model.
2	<u>The Concept of Brand Experience and Brand Equity</u> In Chapter 2, an overview of the literature on brand experience and the creation thereof is presented. Additionally, the chapter provides a discussion on the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty.
3	<u>Sensory Branding Strategies and the Skincare Industry</u> In Chapter 3, an overview of the literature on sensory branding strategies for both in-store and online sales is provided and then contextualised to the skincare industry.
4	<u>Conceptual Model</u> Chapter 5 explains and discusses the elements of the conceptual model.
5	<u>Research Methodology</u> This chapter includes an in-depth description and discussion of the research design; research paradigm; data collection techniques and instruments; the

Chapter	Contents
	questionnaire construction and format; sampling; data analysis; and the problems encountered during the study.
6	<u>Reporting the Results</u> This chapter presents the results of the statistical analysis of the data collected in the empirical study in the form of figures and tables. Moreover, the results are interpreted and discussed.
7	<u>Synopsis, Conclusions, Implications and Recommendations</u> This chapter provides the synopsis of the study. Following this, the researcher draws conclusions based on the results of the study; discusses the implications for institutions within the skincare industry; and makes recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 2
THE CONCEPT OF BRAND EXPERIENCE AND BRAND EQUITY

2.1   INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, Chapter 1, an overview of the study was provided. The chapter commenced with an introduction to the topic, including a short synopsis on brand image, brand experience, multi-sensory branding, multi-sensory experience within a traditional and digital context and finally an application to the skincare industry. Following this, the research problem was outlined and the specific research aims and objectives provided. Hereafter, a literature review was conducted, which included a discussion on brand experience, specifically sensory branding, and the influence thereof on brand loyalty. Once the variables of the study had been identified, the conceptual model of this study was proposed. The second portion of Chapter 1 was dedicated to the research methodology that the researcher utilised to complete this study, including a discussion on the research design and paradigm, sampling, data collection method, measuring instrument, data preparation as well as validity and reliability, data collection procedure and data analysis used. In the final section of the chapter, delimitations of the study were noted, definitions of key concepts provided and an outline of the study presented.

In Chapter 2, an in-depth literature review pertaining to brand experience and brand loyalty is provided. The literature conceptualised in Chapter 2 sets the foundation upon which this study is built, focusing on key literature, including brand positioning or differentiation; brands; brand equity and the components thereof; the relationship between e-commerce and brand loyalty; marketing or consumer experiences, as well as brand experiences, including the dimensions thereof, and the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty. This chapter is vital to this study, as it will make clear the relevance of sensory branding.

2.2   LITERATURE REVIEW

Within every product or service category there are hundreds of competitors all grappling for the attention of consumers (Janiszewska & Insch 2012:9; Paunovic 2018; ZoriBari-Nwitambu & Kalu 2019:37), and it is therefore important for brands to implement differentiation strategies to achieve their desired brand position in the market. Blankson (2016:163), Fayvishenko (2018:245) and Koelzer (2020) define brand positioning as the idealistic image that the brand would like to portray to their consumers, including distinctive qualities and positive attributes, to create a sustainable brand and consumer attachment to the brand. Whereas, in early literature, differentiation was defined as, "meeting human wants more accurately than the competition" (1912:719), differentiation has more recently been defined by Davcik and Rundquist (2012:94) as, "creating differences to distinguish a business's offerings to consumers". Davcik and Sharma (2015:766), Kotler and Keller (2016:392), as well as Lau (2018:6), concur with this definition. Frambach, Prabhu and Verhallen (2003:381) add that differentiation strategy focuses on product attributes rather than price, which is supported by Davcik and Rundquist (2012:94). Therefore, it can be concluded that the difference between differentiation and brand positioning is that brand positioning is how the marketer would like the brand to be seen and thought of by their target audience, whereas differentiation constitutes the strategies implemented to achieve the desired brand position.

While the results of brand positioning or differentiation do not directly influence a business's profit, they are directly linked to the ability to build a brand that is notable from the perspective of a target audience (Blankson 2016:162; Davcik & Sharma 2015:766; Paunovic 2018).

2.2.1   Brands

In the modern world of marketing, branding has become a norm in the attempt to differnciate oneself in the market. However, branding itself goes back as far as the 1500's, where a brand or symbol was often burned on property, such

as cattle, to indicate ownership (Cantor 2020; Geider 2021; O'Neill 2015). However, in the 19th century the ideology behind branding began to advance, which aligned with the rise of mass production of goods (Cantor 2020; Geider 2021). Due to the rapid increase in competitors in the market, companies needed to differenciate themselves and so the trademark was developed, which relates to words, phrases, symbols and designs used to represent a company or product being legally registered (Cantor 2020; Geider 2021). Cantor (2020) explains that it was only in the 20th century when the use of technology in branding started and companies emerged to more innovative and creative ways of using branding. Although, it was only after the second world war that a culture shifted created neccisity for the act of brand management, spurred on by stronger competitiors entering the market (Cantor 2020; Geider 2021). This culture shift was also the start of the use of emotional branding, which included more in-depth analysis of the brands target audience (Geider 2021; O'Neill 2015). The branding strategies developed had to shift and change with the changing needs and wants of the target audiences as well as technology advances, which has ultimately led to the modern branding known today.

A brand, as defined by Dube and Rossi (2019:293), Bii and Kiptoo (2019:23) and ZoriBari-Nwitambu and Kalu (2019:37), adds value to a product, surpassing the functionality of the product, and takes the form of a name, symbol or design. Furthermore, it should be noted that a brand allows consumers to distinguish competitors in the market (Bii & Kiptoo 2019:26) and Beig and Nika (2022:156) contribute in stating that brands are no longer just placeholders in the market, but are rather representative of everything the brand stands for and creates the ability for customers to form emotional attachments. Waller (2020:1) supports Beig and Nika (2022:156) in the statement that modern branding can be seen as humanising an inanimate object.

Creating a strong memorable brand allows for a differential advantage in the market (Beig & Nika 2022:156); it provides the opportunity to legally protect brand owners through its role as intellectual property (ZoriBari-Nwitambu &

Kalu 2019:37) and it has the ability to impact the behaviour and attitude of consumers (Zhang 2015:59; ZoriBari-Nwitambu & Kalu 2019:37). The brand itself is therefore considered a key marketing tool. Knowles (2001) developed a brand model which noted three dimensions that consumers measure when making the decision to purchase from a specific brand, namely what you get, how you feel and who is it from.

From Knowles' (2001) WYG-HYF-WIF model, "what you get" refers to the physical product offering. "How you feel" relates to the emotional and psychological needs that the product satisfies for consumers, and "who is it from" makes reference to the credibility of the supplier itself (Alirezaeslambolchi & Erfanalhoseynihamedani 2017:45; Liegeois & Rivera 2011:15). How the product offering makes the consumer feel is becoming more predominant as consumers are being exposed to mass marketing and an influx of options when making purchases.

It can therefore be concluded that the importance of creating a strong and successful brand is that it will make the product offering preferential to customers, thereby achieving a competitive advantage and aid in building brand equity. There are six brand building blocks that contribute to the creation of brand equity, and therefore, the decision to purchase, which include:

- brand salience - the extent to which the brand is at the forefront of the consumer's mind;
- brand performance - the extent to which consumers are satisfied with how the brand meets their functional needs;
- brand imagery – the extent to which the brand meets the consumer's psychological needs;
- consumer judgements - the consumer's own personal opinions and evaluations of the brand;
- consumer-brand feelings - the consumer's emotional responses to a brand or a brands' product; and
- consumer-brand resonance - the nature of the relationship that consumers feel they have with a specific brand (Ande, Gunasekaran, Murugesan &

Natarajan 2016:1492; Keller 2020:451; Khanna, Jacob & Chopra 2019:339; Steenkamp, Herbst, de Villiers & Terblanche-Smit 2020:65; Steenkamp, Herbst, de Villiers & Terblanche-Smit 2016:4).

2.2.2 Brand equity

The concept of brand equity was first introduced by Srinivasan (1979), who proved that a strong brand resulted in an increase in perceived value of a product. However, a weak brand can result in the opposite, as seen in the definition provided by Aaker (1991:13) whereby brand equity consists of a number of brand assets or liabilities that can either add value to, or take away value from, a product offering.

In more recent studies, it has been suggested that brand equity can be defined from either a financial or marketing perspective (Anderson 2011:1; Beig & Nika 2022:159; Narteh 2018:381; Tasci 2020:36). Specifically referencing the marketing perspective of brand equity, two broad definitions are accepted, namely firm-based brand equity (FBBE) and consumer-based brand equity (CBBE) (Algharabat, Rana, Alalwan, Baabdullah & Gupta 2021:8; Beig & Nika 2022:159; Chatzipanagiotou, Christodoulides & Veloutsou 2019:328; Narteh 2018:381; Tasci 2020:36). FBBE refers to the financial benefit that resonates from a brand for a business (Beig & Nika 2022:159; Zahari, Esa, Rajadurai, Azizan & Muhhamed Tamyez 2019:272; Wang 2010:336), which was initially stipulated by Farquhar, Han and Ijiri (1991). In contrast, CBBE is defined as the effect of consumers' awareness and knowledge of a brand on their response to marketing of a product offering from a brand (Algharabat et al 2021:8; Chatzipanagiotou et al 2019:328; Koay, Ong, Khoo & Yeoh 2019:55; Narteh 2018:381), which is considered to be the most widespread accepted definition, originally proposed by Keller (2003:2).

The seminal work of Aaker (1991; 1992; 1996), along with Keller (1993; 2003) sets the foundation of the CBBE theory. Aaker and Keller shared similar views with regard to consumer-based brand equity in terms of being in agreement that brand awareness and association facilitated the strengthening of CBBE.

However, Aaker (1991; 1992) went further to include perceived quality and brand loyalty to the list of influencing factors, from which the five components of CBBE were conceptualised. When discussing consumer-based brand equity, there are many conflicting views as well as models that have been developed, which are presented in Table 2.1.

TABLE 2.1

CUSTOMER-BASED BRAND EQUITY MODELS AND DIMENSIONS

Author(S)	Dimensions
Aaker (1991; 1996)	Brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality, brand loyalty
Keller (1993)	Brand knowledge (brand awareness, brand image)
Cobb-Walgren, Ruble & Donthu (1995)	Perceived quality, brand awareness, brand association
Berry (2000)	Brand awareness, brand meaning
Vazquez, Del Rio & Iglesias (2002)	Product functional utility, product symbolic utility, brand name functional utility, brand name functional utility
Christodoulides, de Chernatony, Furrer & Abimbola (2006)	Online experiences, willingness for bilateral communication, trust, satisfaction
Nam, Ekinci & Whyatt (2011)	Physical quality, personal behaviour, ideal-self-image, brand identity, lifestyle

Source: Adapted from Çınar (2020:283)

While there are many different proposed models relating to CBBE, there are three generally accepted models, created by Aaker (1991), Kapferer (1992) and Keller (1993). However, the five components of CBBE posited by Aaker (1991) are the most commonly utilised, as they consider the effect of brand value on brand loyalty and monetary benefits. The five components, as determined by Aaker (1991), that constitute the brand equity model include brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality, brand loyalty and other proprietary assets (Aaker & Joachimsthaler 2000:31; Crescitelli & Figueiredo 2009:103).

As explained by Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000:31) and Beig and Nika (2022:159), the first four components listed make reference to consumers,

whereas the final component, other proprietary assets, refers to the financial value of brands. However, when debating brand equity from a marketing perspective (CBBE) only the first four components are relevant.

2.2.2.1 Brand awareness

As posited by Aaker (1991:61), Beig and Nika (2022:159), Narteh (2018:383), Shabbir, Khan and Khan (2017:418) and Tasci (2018:147), brand awareness refers to the consumer's ability to recognise a brand and differentiate it in the market. Throughout many of the proposed CBBE models, brand awareness has been identified as important (Aaker 1991; 1996; Berry 2000; Cobb-Walgren et al 1995; Keller 1993), which could be attributed to the fact that brand awareness, along with brand associations, are what form the brand's image, without which brand equity would not exist (Algharabat et al 2021:8; Narteh 2018:383; Tasci 2018:147). Many researchers, however, prefer to refer to brand awareness as "familiarity", as this concept is more dynamic in nature (Adams 2020; Jallad 2019; Lambert 2017; Tasci 2018:147).

The definition of familiarity, as expounded by Chinomona and Maziriri (2017:71), Huang (2016:666), Tasci (2018:147) and Yang, Zhang and Zou (2015:109), goes further than just the consumers' knowledge of the brand, and includes their experience of the brand. Therefore, familiarity can be classified as either informational familiarity, which arises from advertising efforts and media sources, or experiential familiarity, which stems from an individual's own experiences (Chen, Chen & Wu 2015:283; Tasci 2018:147; Yang et al 2015:109). From the above discussion on brand awareness and familiarity, it can be concluded that brands with more positive awareness and familiarity amongst consumers will receive higher loyalty.

2.2.2.2 Brand association

Brand association refers to any aspect of the product offering that resonates within the minds of consumers when they think of a certain brand, such as a colour, feature, quality level or image (Aaker 1991:109; Aaker &

Joachimsthaler 2000:31; Algharabat et al 2021:8; Beig & Nika 2022:159; Narteh 2018:384; Tasci 2018:148). It stands to reason that should a consumer have positive associations with a brand, then that brand will have a strong brand image. However, as posited by Algharabat et al (2021:8), along with Yoo, Donthu and Lee (2000:201), brand association is closely linked to brand awareness as they are both imperative in forming brand image and should therefore, be combined to form one component, namely brand awareness/associations (BAS).

Algharabat et al (2021:9), as well as Narteh (2018:384), further explain that due to brand associations being linked to consumer experiences, they have the strongest impact on consumer decision making. Additionally, as stipulated by Keller (1993:4), brand associations constitute three separate forms, namely attributes, benefits and attitudes. Following the work of Keller (1993), should a brand be able to create positive associations for consumers with reference to attributes, benefits and attitudes, then they will be able to increase their brand equity and financial status.

2.2.2.3   Perceived quality

Aaker (1991:85), Algharabat et al (2021:10), Beig and Nika (2022:159) and Narteh (2018:384), as well as Tasci (2018:148), explain that perceived quality is to what extent consumers perceive a product offering to be superior to alternatives in the market, with reference to quality. Beig and Nika (2022:159) add that perceived quality is not necessarily a true representation of the quality of a product, but rather is based on the perception of individual consumers. Therefore, it can be said that perceived quality is subjective, as it will differ between consumers based on personal preferences. Zhao, Yao, Liu and Yang (2021:21) further posit that consumers' expectations, in terms of quality and service, are heightened when they spend an increased amount on a product.

Brands that are perceived as having higher levels of quality often experience higher levels of consumer loyalty, as well as increased support in terms of positive recommendations (Keller 2013:187; Kotler & Armstrong 2010:243;

Narteh 2018:384). Many studies have been conducted in an attempt to analyse the relationship between perceived quality and performance measures of a brand (Abdullah & Tari 2012; Buzzell & Gale 1987; Duarte, Brito, Serio & Martins 2011; Hendricks & Singhal 1996; 1997; 2000; Idris 2011; Klingenberg, Timberlake, Geurts & Brown 2013; Lakhal, Pasin & Limam 2006; Lin, Chow, Madu, Kuei & Yu 2005; Phan, Abdallah & Matsui 2011; Prajogo & Brown 2006; Prajogo, Chowdhury, Yeung & Cheng 2012; Sadikoglu & Zehir 2010; Sila 2007; US Government General Accounting Office 1991). However, the importance of perceived quality in building brand equity can be explained in the statement by O'Neill, Sohal and Teng (2016:390), that there is a direct relationship between perceived quality and financial performance of a business. One could assume that the relationship between perceived quality and financial performance may be due to the impact that perceived quality has on brand loyalty.

2.2.2.4 Brand loyalty

Loyalty, with specific reference to marketing, is a topic that has received vast attention, which can be attributed to its role in facilitating competitive advantage and financial benefits (Tartaglione, Cavacece, Russo & Granata 2019:1). As defined by Aaker (1991:39), Algharabat et al (2021:9), Beig and Nika (2022:160), Narteh (2018:385) and Tasci (2018:149), brand loyalty is how attached a customer is to a certain brand, which can be either attitudinal or behavioural. From an attitudinal perspective, loyalty refers to the consumer's intention to remain loyal to a brand (Beig & Nika 2022:160), whereas behavioural loyalty is the physical purchase choice of the consumer (Beig & Nika 2022:160). Tartaglione et al (2019:1) adds that a successful brand loyalty building strategy should result in repurchase intention (RI), the generation of positive word of mouth (WOM), as well as consumers being willing to pay more (WPM), which is agreed upon by Alexandra and Cerchia (2018:423), Foroudi, Jin, Gupta and Foroudi (2018:10), Giovanis and Anthanasopoulou (2016:2), Haung, Liao, Wang and Lin (2018:2132), as well as Saif, Ahmed, Shareef and Khalid (2018:67). Peek (2022) agrees and adds that loyal customers are known to buy from brands more regularly.

In the past, customer loyalty has been measured as a single variable; however in studies by Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001), Fullerton (2003), Lin (2010), Ong, Salleh and Yusoff (2015) and Zeithaml, Berry and Parasuraman (1996,) as well as Zhang and Bloemer (2008), brand loyalty is measured through the use of RI, WOM and WPM, with WOM and WPM constituting attitudinal loyalty and RI constituting behavioural loyalty. Furthermore, as argued by Ong et al (2018:758), as well as Kandampully, Zhang and Bilgihan (2015), the information that could be collected is of much more interest when considering customer loyalty as a three-part variable, rather than as a singular variable.

The importance of brand loyalty lies in its link to pricing and to the reduction of threat by competitors (Aaker 1991:39; Beig & Nika 2022:160). Furthermore, as discussed by Narteh (2018:385), with reference to brand equity, increased consumer loyalty will lead to a surge in sales, thereby increasing the profit or financial status of a business. Therefore, brands can utilise brand loyalty to increase their profit margins as well as to guard against, or gain a competitive advantage in the market. However, as observed in the study of Robertson (2020), of late, there is a definite decrease in consumer devotion to brands, which is attributed to an increase in online shopping or e-commerce. Melnyk, Osselaer and Bijmolt (2009:83) and Ndubisi (2006:50) add that there is a distinct difference in consumer loyalty to a brand between men and women, with the latter being more inclined to be loyal. However, Borgna (2018) insists that due to changing gender roles, men are increasingly shopping for and utilising cosmetic products. This is apparent in the work of Infante, Calixto and Campos (2016:137) who found that with specific regards to skincare, women were more likely to try varying brands. However, Burke (2021) states that women are still 9% more loyal then men towards skincare brands when shopping online. Klopotan, Buntak and Drozdjek (2014:488), McDougall (2015) and Paricha (2019) concur and add that there is a difference in brand loyalty based on age, where the older the consumers are, the more likely they are to be loyal to a brand (Marketing Charts 2018). This is also suggested by Gudat (2018) who clarifies that consumer loyalty peaks between the ages of 55 – 65 years. This is also true for the level of education of the consumer, whereby the more highly educated an individual is, the more likely they are to

be brand loyal (Klopotan et al 2014:488; McDougall 2015; Sun, Foscht & Eisingerich 2021:2; Vince 2021). However, brand loyalty is being influenced by e-commerce (Morris 2020; Robertson 2020).

2.2.3   E-commerce and brand loyalty

As opined by Anuj, Fayaz and Kapoor (2018:59), the human race has become highly dependent on technology, and along with many other industries, retail has transformed as a result of the internet (Coppola 2021). In 2018, it was recorded that 4.4 billion people made use of the internet, constituting more than half of the world's population (Internet World Stats 2018; McDonald 2018; World Economic Forum 2019), and as stated by Kinda (2019:3) and Sabanoglu (2021), online shopping, or e-commerce, is one of the most popular forms of online activity.

Electronic, or e-commerce, is defined by Anuj et al (2018:60), Kinda (2019:3) and Moriset (2018:2) as the sale of goods and services via the internet, or any other digital platform, where payment may or may not be made online. In the last decade, e-commerce has seen large growth in support, with e-commerce sales equalling 3.5 trillion US dollars in 2019 (Coppola 2021), which has grown to 4.28 trillion US dollars in 2020 and is projected to increase to 5.4 trillion US dollars in 2022 (Sabanoglu 2021). Nyrop, Nathan, Lindquist and Karlsen (2020:1) add that the rise in e-commerce is being fuelled by the effects of the global COVID-19 pandemic (Ecommerce News 2021).

As stated by Kashuba (2021), the global COVID-19 pandemic has altered the way consumers live their lives; specifically, it has caused a growth in e-commerce as human needs and wants are endless (Bouzenita & Boulanouar 2016:60; Fallatah & Syed 2017:19; Hoeschele 2016:1; McLeod 2020) and therefore, individuals will never cease to purchase goods and services. This is supported by the finding that in 2020, 90% of businesses experienced an increase in online sales (Ecommerce News 2021), which can be attributed to the fact that during the COVID-19 pandemic some level of lockdown was enforced in all countries around the world (Onyeaka, Anumudu, Al-Sharify,

Egele-Godswill & Mbaegbu 2021:1). One repercussion of lockdowns was the restrictions placed on shopping in-stores (Heiberg & Winning 2020; OECD 2020). Moreover, Morris (2020) and Murphy (2020) opine that many consumers will not return to shopping in traditional brick-and-mortar stores (The wise marketer 2020), which may be due to consumers fear of contracting the virus when shopping in-store (McCandless 2020).

Businesses can reap many benefits from e-commerce, including an enlarged reachable target audience, decreased costs, the elimination of supply issues and the improvement of supply chain strategies (Kinda 2019:3; Kumar & Nagendra 2018:14). Furthermore, Hanson, Hitt, Ireland and Hoskisson (2016:11) explain that e-commerce presents businesses with the opportunity to enhance their competitive advantage through ease of information sharing. However, Li, Jiang, Cheng, Yang, Yan and Wang (2018:3023) argue that this can also pose a challenge to businesses as consumers experience information overload. Morris (2020), along with Robertson (2020), adds that as online shopping increases, consumer commitment to brands decreases. Scarpi, Pizzi and Visentin (2014:258), further note that brand loyalty is influenced by a consumer's motivation when shopping online, or offline, where those shopping for fun are seeking experiential activities and those shopping based on necessity are seeking efficiency.

According to Afrashteh, Azad and Hanzayy (2014:2080), as well as Bhaskar and Kumar (2015:489), e-loyalty also includes the consumer's attitude to the online store itself and Al-Adwan, Kokash, Aldwan, Alhorani and Yaseen (2020:281), along with Bhaskar and Kumar (2015:489), opine that customer loyalty is especially difficult to achieve online, resulting in lower levels of customer loyalty, which Robertson (2020) attributes to the fact that there are more avenues for error to occur. However, Al-Adwan et al (2020:280), Charm et al (2020), as well as Morris (2020), report that the loss of brand loyalty that is being observed with e-commerce is due to consumers having less disposable income, intensified by the economic crisis brought on by COVID-19. Additionally, convenience (Charm et al 2020; Morris 2020) and an increase in competition both online and offline (Bhaskar & Kumar 2015:489) have been

identified as driving forces behind the decrease in consumer loyalty with reference to e-commerce. Another theory that is posited by Foster (2020) and Morris (2020), is that prior to the internet, consumers relied on the brand itself to inform them of quality of the product offering. However now they have access to other consumers who may have different information (Anastasiei & Dospinescu 2019:1; Herrera, Leon & Vargas-Ortiz 2018:78; Li & Du 2017:338; Li, Yang, Wu, He & Zhao 2018:512). However, a conflicting view is that consumers have altered their brand preference based on necessity, and will therefore transition back when they have the opportunity to do so (Foster 2020; Morris 2020).

Given the ever-increasing importance of branding (Section 2.2.1), as well as creating brand equity (Section 2.2.2) and the consideration of the shift to the digital age, it becomes essential for brands to adapt their marketing approach, and it should also be noted from Table 2.1 that only one study, executed by Christodoulides et al (2006), focuses on digital dimensions in their CBBE model. It was concluded by Christodoulides et al (2006:814) that emotional connection, online experience, responsive service nature, trust and fulfilment were all determinants of brand equity in a digital environment and noted the importance of consumers' role as cocreators of brand value. From the literature above, it can be deduced that brands need to realise the difference that exists between traditional and digital market spaces and adapt to ensure success. Table 2.2 provides a brief summary of the differences that exist between traditional and digital marketing.

TABLE 2.2

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TRADITIONAL AND DIGITAL MARKETING

Traditional Marketing	Digital Marketing
A closed system	An open system
Not transparent	Transparent
Mass communication	Communication is on-to-one
Orientated to the product	Focused on the consumer
The message is created by a professional	Consumers are co-creators of messages
Formal communication	Informal communication
Paid	Free

Source: Adapted from Boric, Stanisavljev, Kavalic, Vlahovic & Tobolka (2016:378)

Beig and Nika (2022:157) explain that brands should place emphasis on creating memorable experiences if they wish to successfully create a loyal customer base, which is supported by Kim and Chao (2019:10), who state that, in a marketing context, how an individual experiences a brand is of paramount importance.

2.2.4   Marketing or consumer experiences

Suardi (2019:15) asserts that consumers are no longer satisfied with the tangible benefits of a product, but are rather becoming more persuaded by the intangible benefits that they stand to gain when making a purchase. This sentiment is supported by Beig and Nika (2022:157) who deliberate that efforts to create memorable experience for consumers by businesses has increased over the past decade. It can therefore be reasoned that consumers are looking for consumer-centric experiences. Experiential marketing was first introduced by Hirschman and Holbrook (1982),but is specifically rooted in the work of Pine and Gilmore (1999:102), who proposed a model, the experience model, that offered a way to understand and interpret the experiences that a person has when purchasing and consuming a product, based on the interactions that they have with that brand.

2.2.4.1 Pine and Gilmore's Experience Model

As explained by Cassel, Jacobs and Graham (2021:79), experiences are intangible and involve the creation of interaction on both an emotional and sensory level. In the seminal work of Pine and Gilmore (1999:102), it is posited that experiences can be made to be lucrative when they achieve all four realms of experience, namely entertainment, educational, esthetic and escapist. Through enriching the consumers experiences, it is possible to create loyalty with a specific store or brand (Cassel et al 2021:79). In Figure 2.1, it can be seen that the four realms of experience run along two dimensions of consumer involvement, namely participation and connection (Cassel et al 2021:81).

FIGURE 2.1

THE EXPERIENCE MODEL
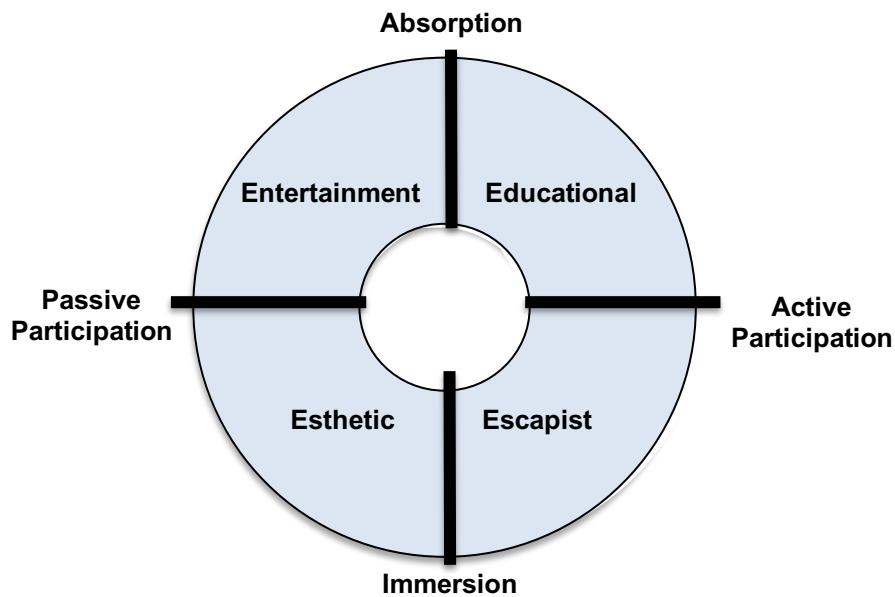
Source: Adapted from Healy (2016)

Cassel et al (2021:81) go further to explain that passive participation does not require the active involvement of an individual, whereas active participation refers to events which require the individual to be actively involved in the creation of their own experience. The second dimension of experience is divided into absorption, which relates to situations where an individual views an event or experience remotely, and immersion, which relates to the extent to which the individual is submerged into an experience (Cassel et al 2021:81). While experiences can form part of any one, or more, realms the most memorable experiences will constitute all four. In the sections that follow, the experience of shopping for skincare products will be utilised to conceptualise the four realms of experience.

(a)   The entertainment realm

An entertaining experience is defined by passive consumer participation and absorption (Bolton et al 2018:783; Cassel 2015; Cassel et al 2021:80; Dieck Jung & Rauschnabel 2017:47; Mastery 2017; Thanh & Kirova 2018:30) and encompasses to what extent the consumer feels fulfilled and connected by the activity (Cassel et al 2021:80). In the case of shopping for skincare products

in-stores, this could be linked to the atmosphere of the store where the product is being sold or to any interactive activity being offered, such as a sales representitive applying a sample to the consumer. With regards to shopping for skincare online, this could include activities such as the use of virtual technology to upload images of yourself to "try on" or establish which product may be appropriate or including fun background noises.

(b)   The educational realm

An educational experience is one where the consumer participates actively and absorbs knowledge or learns something (Cassel 2015; Cassel et al 2021:80; Dieck et al 2017:47; Hwang & Lee 2019:316; Kastenholz, Carneiro, Marques & Loureiro 2017:189; Sipe & Testa 2018:182; Suntikul & Jachna 2015:309; Thanh & Kirova 2018:30). With reference to the experience of shopping for skincare in-store, this could relate to the information printed on the product packaging or to the opportunity to sample the product. Whereas when making reference to the experience of shopping for skincare online, this could refer to the description of the product and on how the product should be used.

(c)   The esthetic realm

The esthetic experience refers to one where the consumer is passively partaking in the activity but is completely immersed (Cassel et al 2021:80; Cassel 2015; Dieck et al 2017:47; Hwang & Lee 2019:317; Mastery 2017; Thanh & Kirova 2018:30) and encompasses all aspects of the physical environment surrounding the consumer (Cassel et al 2021:80; Radder & Han 2015:457). With regards to the experience of shopping for skincare products in-store, this could be the design and layout of the interior of the store as well as the design of the exterior of the store. When shopping online or skincare, this can include the layout and design of the website or the user friendliness thereof.

(d)   The escapist realm

An escapist experience refers to one where the individual is actively taking part in an activity and is completely immersed therein (Cassel et al 2021:80; Kastenholz et al 2017:189; Sipe & Testa 2018:182; Suntikul & Jachna 2015:309). Consumers seek out escapist experiences as it allows them to escape their usual reality (Cassel 2015; Dieck et al 2017:47; Hwang & Lee 2019:317; Mastery 2017; Thanh & Kirova 2018:30), often through interacting with a product or with other people (Cassel et al 2021:80). With regards to the experience of shopping for skincare in-store, the escapist realm may refer to the act of searching for a new product that may fit into the consumers desired lifestyle, whereas with reference to online shopping, may include virtual malls or gamification of the website (Newman 2020).

2.2.4.2 Experiential marketing

As defined by Carù and Cova (2016:272), Ferreira and Sousa (2020:572), Homburg, Jozić and Kuehnl (2017:378) and Suardi (2019:15), experiential marketing is any form of marketing effort that is customer-centric in nature, and aims to create value through connection with consumers. Beig and Nika (2022:157) add that the level of differentiation achievable through the use of experiential marketing results in increased brand equity.

Beig and Nika (2022:157), along with Ferreira and Sousa (2020:572), go further in stating that consumer connections can stem from a multitude of different sources, including the product offering itself and the packaging, as well as any form of interactions and communications by the business. As explained by Beig and Nika (2022:158) and Eshelby (2019), as well as Zorfas and Leemon (2016), experiences give rise to emotional involvement in the shopping process through the utilisation of emotions, imagination and sensation. Furthermore, experiences can be direct, such as through the interaction with a physical product, or indirect, such as being exposed to an advertisement (Beig & Nika 2022:157; Pogrebniak 2019), and while direct

experiences are more powerful, a combination of the two experiences is needed to influence consumer behaviour.

Rather (2020:16) explains that experiences, unlike product features and benefits, are internal and are subjectively formed in the minds of consumers based on their own personal interaction with the product and brand. Experiential marketing builds relationships with consumers by combining both logic and emotion to generate desirable responses by consumers to the product offering (Beig & Nika 2022:157; Le, Scott & Lohmann 2018:220; Suardi 2019:15), thereby creating a competitive differentiation that cannot easily be imitated (Suardi 2019:17). Furthermore, it has been found that experiences, both positive and negative, will remain in the mind of consumers, thereby influencing their purchasing behaviour (Murphy 2016; Rather 2020:16). Managing customer experiences is therefore of high concern if organisations wish to gain a competitive advantage in the market. However, Suardi (2019:5) contends that consumer experiences are inevitable, as when making a purchase, it is impossible for the consumer to avoid coming into contact with touch points, such as price, environment and staff, which will all generate experiences. Therefore, there is a need to differentiate between the term "consumer experiences", which are unavoidable and may not be intentional, and brand experience.

2.2.5   Brand experiences

As explained by Hollebeek and Macky (2019:163), Hollebeek et al (2019:2019), Islam, Hollebeek, Rahman, Khan and Rasool (2019:7), Lemon and Verhoef (2016:70) and Rather (2019:19), brand experiences are the result of a number of consumer experiences. Ong et al (2018:5) clarify in stating that brand experience considers the influence of a number of experiences that constitute one dimension, whereas consumer experiences consider an individual experience. Therefore, brand experience is a key concern for this study as it will be an indicator of a sustainable competitive advantage.

In the seminal work of Hirschman and Holbrook (1982) it was hypothesized that customer-centric experiences consist of three attributes, namely fun, fantasies and feelings. However, more recently, Schmitt (1999:60) proposed an experiential marketing framework (Strategic Experience Modules – SEMs), which categorises experiences into five dimensions, namely feel-related experiences, cognitive experiences, act experiences, relate experiences and sensory experiences.

2.2.6 Feel-related experiences

Feel-related strategies target a consumer's deepest feelings, thereby creating affective experience (Beig & Nika 2022:158; Rather 2020:18; Suardi 2019:16). Suardi (2019:16) explains that affective experiences are those that result in positive feelings towards a brand that enhance pleasure and pride for consumers, and Rather (2020:18) adds that affective experiences can range from slightly positive to very positive.

2.2.7 Cognitive experiences

As discussed by Beig and Nika (2022:158), Rather (2020:18) and Suardi (2019:16), cognitive experiences are those that ask a consumer to interact on an intellectual level. Cognitive experiences are often in the form of visual, verbal and conceptual stimuli (Suardi 2019:16), and encourage the consumer to practice problem solving (Beig & Nika 2019:3; Rather 2020:18).

2.2.8 Act experiences

Act experiences simply aim to alter the lifestyle of consumers in some way by creating interaction (Beig & Nika 2022:158; Suardi 2019:17). Suardi (2019:17) notes that act experiences encompass the individual as a whole and Rather (2020:18) adds that act experiences further aim to show consumers new ways of doing things. This form of experience is often one which is inspirational or motivational (Rather 2020:18).

2.2.9   Relate experiences

Relate experiences are formed through a combination of the other dimensions of experience and target the consumer's basic need for self-improvement, socio-economic status and image (Beig & Nika 2022:158; Rather 2020:18; Suardi 2019:17). As discussed by Rather (2020:18), relate experiences include aspects that are outside of the consumer's own feelings.

2.2.10   Sensory experiences

Lastly, sensory experiences refer to the use of the five human senses (sight, smell, hearing, taste and touch) to create memorable interactions for the consumer (Beig & Nika 2022:158; Ong et al 2018:5; Suardi 2019:16). Sensory experiences have been highlighted as one of the strongest dimensions of experience as for humans, senses are essential for engaging with the world around them (Gao & Lan 2020:2; Hulten 2017:1). However, Harvey (2021), along with Gao and Lan (2020:3), suggests that for sensory branding to be effective, the brand stimuli should match those of the consumers in terms of their gender, race and social class.

Experiences can range in intensity, with some being good and others being negative in nature, however, as posited by Beig and Nika (2022:158), the experiences created remain in the minds of consumers, thereby influencing their commitment to a brand. Sensory branding and sensory marketing is utilised to create positive and memorable brand experiences (Gao & Lan 2020:2; Hulten 2017:1), thereby enhancing brand loyalty (Harris et al 2017:1; Kim & Chao 2019:10). Sensory branding is essential in controlling how consumers feel when purchasing or consuming a product (Section 2.2.10). Sensory experiences are powerful as they make use of the human sensorium to create preference for a brand (Hulten 2020:14). Furthermore, Hulten (2020:14) adds that because sensorial marketing is targeted at stimulating a number of different senses simultaneously (multi-sensory marketing) (Section 2.2.11), it appeals to a large variety of consumers and has an influence on

consumers' attitudes, learning and behaviour. Figure 2.2 depicts a model for sensory marketing.

FIGURE 2.2

A MODEL OF SENSORY MARKETING
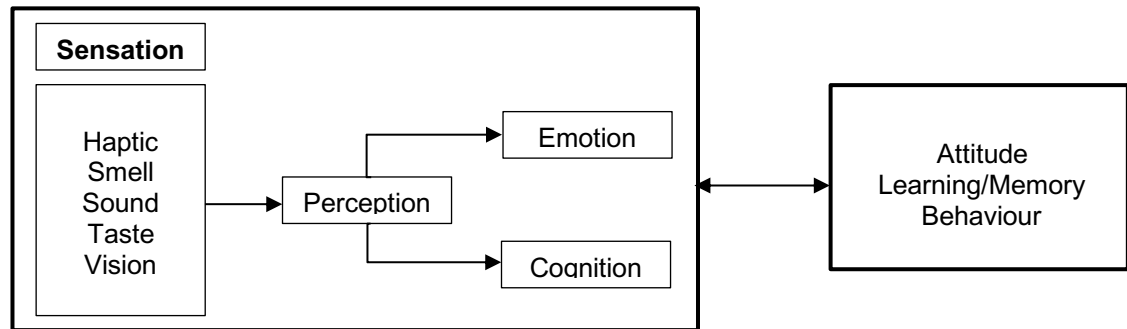
Source: Hulten (2020:14)

The sensory marketing model presented in Figure 2.2 signifies that based on the perceptions made by individuals as a result of the sensory stimuli of a product or brand, they will have certain emotional and cognitive reactions, which in turn influence their overall attitudes, learning and behaviour. However, as already mentioned, the most effective use of sensory marketing and branding is when a number of the human senses are stimulated simultaneously or throughout an experience to achieve a multi-sensory experience.

2.2.11   Multi-sensory experiences

Kofka (1935) developed a theory that stated that the sum of a whole is not necessarily equivalent to the parts which constitute it, but rather the whole may take on a nature of its own, known as the Gestalt theory (Amanatiadis, Kaburlasos & Kosmatopoulos 2018:1; Fang, Zhang, Yuan, Imamoglu & Liu 2019:4; Komura, Nakamura & Ohka 2021:2). The Gestalt theory, in a marketing perspective in retail, translates to various sensory stimuli coexisting and interacting to create memorable brand experiences (Hulten 2020:13). Helmefalk and Berndt (2018:1081) and Hulten (2020:13), along with Imschloss and Kuehnl (2017:931), explain that multi-sensory experiences facilitate the ability to adjust individuals' perceptions and purchasing decisions through

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tapping into more than one human sense at a time. Multi-sensory experiences, as stated by Hulten (2020:11), consist of three essential parts, namely participation, emotions and cognition, and attendance. Furthermore, multi-sensory marketing portrays that an experience does not occur in isolation, but rather encompasses different aspects to create an overall holistic perception of an experience, such as a shopping experience (Hulten 2020:16). Figure 2.3 presents a graphical representation of this.

FIGURE 2.3

A FRAMEWORK FOR MULTI-SENSORY EXPERIENCE AND SHOPPING BEHAVIOUR
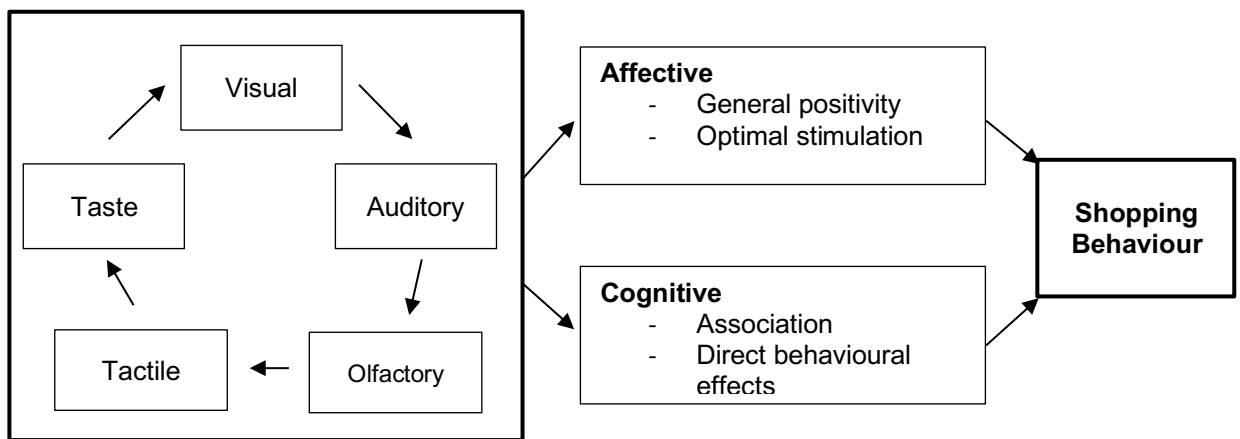
Source: Hulten (2020:16); Spence, Puccinelli, Grewal & Roggeveen (2014:473)

From Figure 2.3 it can be seen that the interplay of sensual stimuli will result in both affective and cognitive behaviour outcomes for an individual, which in turn will influence their overall shopping behaviour, which is also depicted in Figure 2.4.

FIGURE 2.4

A GRAPHICAL DEPICTION OF A MULTI-SENSORY EXPERIENCE
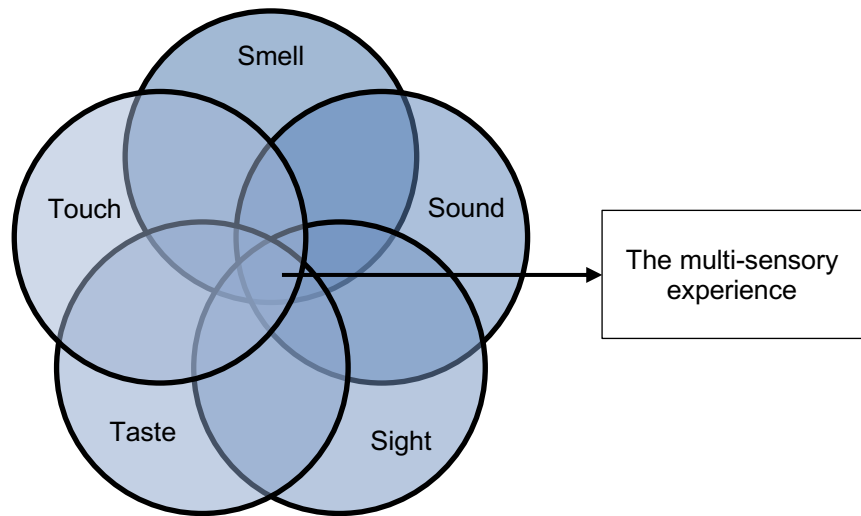
Source: Hulten (2020:16)

Table 2.3 presents a summary of the marketing, strategic marketing and tactical marketing approaches that stem from the use of multi-sensory experiences.

TABLE 2.3

SENSORY MARKETING APPROACHES

	Sensory Marketing
Marketing	Experience logic
	Brand perspective
	Identity creation
Strategic Marketing	Sensory focus
	Sensory experience
	Sensory strategies
Tactical Marketing	Dialogue and interactivity
	Multi-dimensional communication
	Digital technology

Source: Adapted from Hulten (2020:18)

Brand experiences, especially sensory experiences, are being used more and more, which can be attributed to their relationship with brand loyalty. Specific sensory strategies are discussed in Chapter 3: Section 3.5 - 3.9.

2.2.12 Brand experiences and brand loyalty

As reported by Brakus et al (2009:54), brand experience is directly related to brand loyalty, which is supported by Ramaseshan and Stein (2014). It was further determined by Mittal and Kamakura (2001) that brand experience has the long-term effect of brand loyalty, which was agreed upon by Mascarenhas, Kesavan and Bernacchi (2006). Figure 2.5 presents a graphical representation of the proposed model of the influence that brand experience has on brand equity.

FIGURE 2.5

A MODEL DEPICTING THE INFLUENCE OF BRAND EXPERIENCE ON BRAND EQUITY
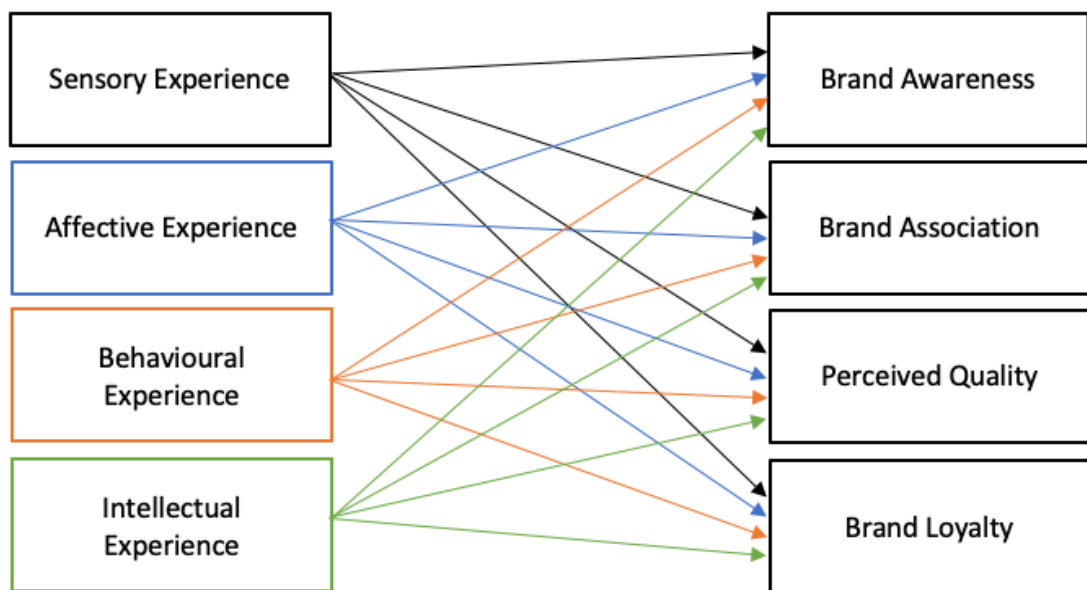
Source: Adapted from Beig & Nika (2022:161)

However, for the purpose of this study, the influence of brand experience, specifically sensory experiences (discussed in Chapter 3), on brand loyalty is focused on, as sensory experience has been highlighted as one of the predominant dimensions of experience (Section 2.2.10) and brand loyalty as the predominant determinant of brand equity (Section 2.2.2.4).

2.3   SUMMARY

From the above literature review there are various findings. In this section, the literature findings are indicated with the abbreviation "LF" and the number of the finding. From the above literature review, the following is indicated.

Within every product or service category there are hundreds of competitors (LF1) and it is therefore important for brands to implement differentiation strategies to achieve their desired brand position in the market (LF2). The difference between differentiation and brand positioning is that brand positioning is how the brand would like to be seen and thought of by their target audience, whereas differentiation constitutes those strategies implemented to achieve the desired brand position (LF3). Furthermore, brand positioning or differentiation are directly linked to the ability to build a strong brand (LF4) which allows consumers to distinguish competitors in the market (LF5). Additionally, brands create the ability for customers to form emotional attachments (LF6).

Creating a strong memorable brand is of the utmost importance, allowing for a differential advantage in the market (LF7), as it provides the opportunity to legally protect brand owners (LF8) and has the ability to impact consumer behaviour and attitude (LF9), all of which contribute to building brand equity (LF10). It has been found that a strong brand resulted in an increase in perceived value of a product, and vice versa (LF11). Consumer based brand equity is defined as the effect of consumers' awareness and knowledge of a brand on their response to marketing of a product offering from a brand (LF12). There are five components for CBBE, namely brand awareness (LF13), brand association (LF14), perceived quality (LF15), brand loyalty (LF16) and other proprietary assets (LF17).

Brand awareness refers to the consumers' ability to recognise a brand and differentiate it in the market (LF18), whereas brand familiarity goes further than just the consumers' knowledge of the brand, and includes their experience of the brand (LF19), classified as either informational familiarity (LF20) or

experiential familiarity (LF21). Brand association refers to any aspect of the product offering that resonates within the minds of consumers when they think of a certain brand (LF22) and positive associations result in strong brand image (LF23). Brand associations constitute three separate forms, namely attributes (LF24), benefits (LF25) and attitudes (LF26). Perceived quality is to what extent consumers perceive a product offering to be superior to alternatives in the market with reference to quality (LF27) and is subjective, as it will differ between consumers based on personal preferences (LF28). It is also accepted that as the price of an item increases, so do consumer expectations of the product and brand (LF29). Moreover, brands that are perceived as having higher levels of quality often experience higher levels of consumer loyalty and it has further been proven that there is a direct relationship between perceived quality and financial performance of a business (LF30).

Brand loyalty is how attached a customer is to a certain brand (LF31), which can be either attitudinal (LF32) or behavioural (LF33) and the successful creation of brand loyalty should result in repurchase intention (RI) (LF34), the generation of positive word of mouth (WOM) (LF35) as well as a consumer being willing to pay more (WPM) (LF36). Brand loyalty should be measured through the use of RI, WOM and WPM (LF37) as they can be utilised to increase their profit margins as well as to gain a competitive advantage in the market (LF38). Loyal customers are also known to purchase more regularly than those consumers who are not loyal to a brand (LF39),

There is a definite decrease in consumer devotion to brands as online shopping trends increase (LF40), which has become one of the most popular forms of online activity (LF41). Brand loyalty is further influenced by gender, where females are known to be more brand loyal (LF42), age, where older consumers are known to be more brand loyal (LF43) and education level, where more highly educated individuals have been found to be more loyal (LF44). E-commerce is the sale of goods and services via the internet, or any other digital platform, where payment may or may not be made online (LF45), and the rise thereof is being fuelled by the effects of the global COVID-19

pandemic, due to financial implications as well as consumers being restricted with regards to shopping in-store (LF46). However, it is predicted that consumers will not return quickly to shopping in traditional brick-and-mortar stores, which could be linked to the heightened risk of exposure to COVID-19 when shopping in-store (LF47). Benefits of e-commerce include an enlarged reachable target audience (LF48), decreased costs (LF49), ease of information sharing (LF50), the elimination of supply issues (LF51) and the improvement of supply chain strategies (LF52). It is further notable that brand loyalty is influenced by a consumer's motivation when shopping, whereby those shopping for fun are seeking experiential activities and those shopping based on necessity are seeking efficiency (LF53).

As with traditional marketing, e-loyalty refers to the consumers' attitude towards the online store itself (LF54), but the loss of brand loyalty that is being observed with e-commerce is due to consumers having less disposable income (LF55), convenience (LF56), consumers are deterring other consumers (LF57) and there are more avenues for error to occur (LF58). Therefore, it is essential for brands to adapt their marketing approach for their online platforms (LF59) to place emphasis on creating memorable experiences (LF60) as consumers are looking for consumer-centric experiences (LF61).

Modern consumers are more likely to be persuaded by the intangible benefits that they stand to gain when making a purchase (LF162), which has given rise to the need for consumer-centric experiences (LF63). Experiential marketing is not a new concept and the experience model offers a way to understand and interpret the experiences that a person has when purchasing and consuming a product, based on the interactions that they have with that brand (LF64). Within the experience model, four realms are identified, namely entertainment, education, esthetic and escapist (LF65). These four realms run along two dimensions of consumer involvement, namely participation and connection (LF66) and while experiences can form part of any one, or more, realms the most memorable experiences will constitute all four (LF67). It is

posited that memorable consumer experiences have the power to create loyalty with a specific store or brand (LF68).

Experiential marketing is any form of marketing effort, that is customer-centric in nature, and aims to create value through connection with consumers through the interactions they have with a brand (LF69). The successful implementation of experiential marketing results in increased brand equity (LF70), which stems from consumer connections that can stem from a multitude of different sources (LF71). Furthermore, experiences give rise to emotional involvement in the shopping process through the utilisation of emotions, imagination and sensation (LF72) and unlike product features and benefits, are internal and are subjectively formed in the minds of consumers, based on their own personal interaction with the product and brand (LF73). Moreover, experiential marketing creates a competitive differentiation that cannot easily be imitated, which explains why brands are attempting to differentiate themselves by positioning the brand itself as an experience (LF74). Brand experience constitutes the influence of a number of interactions that interact to create one entire memorable experience (LF75), which can be categorised into five dimensions, namely feel-related experiences (LF76), cognitive experiences (LF77), act experiences (LF78), relate experiences (LF79) and sensory experiences (LF80).

Feel-related strategies target a consumer's deepest feelings, thereby creating affective experience (LF81), whereas cognitive experiences are those that ask a consumer to interact on an intellectual level (LF82). Act experiences aim to alter the lifestyle of consumers in some way by creating interaction between different consumers (LF83) and relate experiences target the consumer's basic need for self-improvement, socio-economic status and image (LF84), while sensory experiences refer to the use of the five human senses (LF85).

Sensory experiences have been highlighted as one of the strongest dimensions of experience for humans (LF86) and the use of numerous sensory stimulations simultaneously, or multi-sensory marketing, appeals to a

large number of different consumers (LF87). Based on the perceptions made by individuals as a result of the sensory stimuli of a product or brand, they will have certain emotional and cognitive reactions (LF88), which in turn influence their overall attitudes, learning and behaviour (LF89). It has been noted that multi-sensory experiences are the most effective use of sensory marketing and branding (LF90).

The Gestalt theory explains that the sum of a whole is not necessarily equivalent to the parts which constitute it, but rather the whole may take on a nature of its own (LF91). In a marketing perspective, the Gestalt theory means that various sensory stimuli interact to create memorable brand experiences (LF92). Sensory marketing is utilised to create positive and memorable brand experiences (LF93), thereby enhancing brand loyalty (LF94), and brand experience is directly related to brand loyalty (LF95).

In the chapter to follow (Chapter 3), sensory experience, or sensory branding, will be conceptualised and the above discussed literature will be applied to the topic of this study; namely, desired sensory branding strategies in-store versus online, with specific reference to the skincare industry.

CHAPTER 3

SENSORY BRANDING STRATEGIES AND THE SKINCARE INDUSTRY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, Chapter 2, an in-depth literature review pertaining to brand experience and brand loyalty was provided. Chapter 2 focused on key literature, which included a discussion on brands and how they differentiate themselves; brand equity and the components thereof; the relationship between e-commerce and brand loyalty; both consumer and brand experiences, and, finally, the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty.

Within Chapter 3, an in-depth literature review of branding strategies is provided. The chapter starts by providing an introduction to the beauty industry, with a focus being placed on the skincare industry in South Africa. Thereafter, the effects of the global COVID-19 pandemic on the skincare industry are discussed and consequently, the growing online presence thereof highlighted. Following this, it is explained that sensory branding and marketing are imperative to brands within the skincare industry and both traditional and digital sensory branding are deliberated. The next sections of Chapter 3 identify and discuss the independent variables of this study, namely sensory branding strategies for the five human senses. Included in this discussion, examples of sensory strategies utilised for each of the senses are provided in the context of both traditional brick-and-mortar stores, as well as in the digital marketspace. Lastly, the negative effects of sensory overload are emphasised. The following section expands upon the literature relating to this study.

3.2 SKINCARE INDUSTRY IN SOUTH AFRICA

Over the years, despite the effects of economic depressions, the global beauty industry has been exceptionally resilient, evident from the growth observed throughout the industry from 2012 – 2019 (Figure 3.1). More recently, there

was a 5.8% growth from 2020 ($483 billion) to 2021 ($511 billion), which is expected to reach $716 billion by 2025 and $785 billion by 2027 (Roberts 2021). The beauty industry comprises of four branches of industry, namely cosmetics, skin care, personal care and fragrances (Roberts 2021). As depicted in Figure 3.2, personal care constitutes the largest branch of industry globally; however, the skincare industry presented one of the largest growth rates from 2019 – 2025 (+24.3%) (Roberts 2021).

FIGURE 3.1

GROWTH STATISTICS RELATING TO THE BEAUTY INDUSTRY
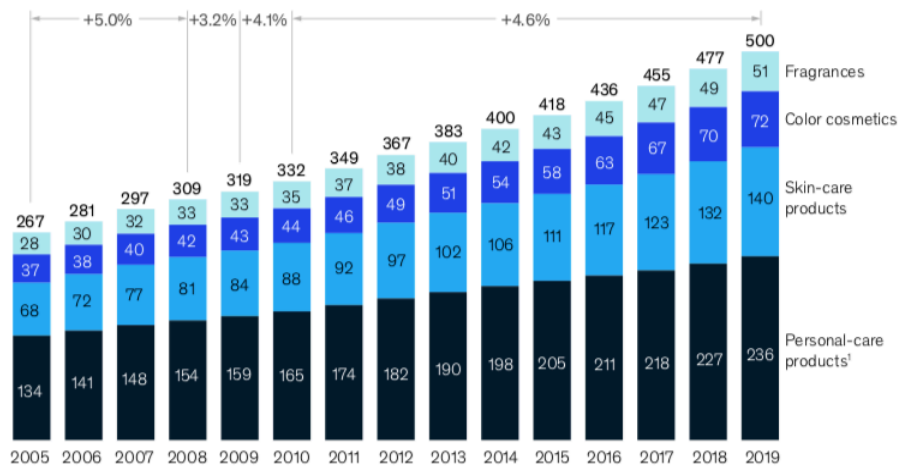
* Amounts represent global beauty industry retail sales in $ billions.

Source: Gerstell, Marchessou, Schmidt & Spagnuolo (2020:3)

FIGURE 3.2

SEGMENT REVENUE AND GROWTH RATE OF THE BEAUTY INDUSTRY (2019 – 2025)
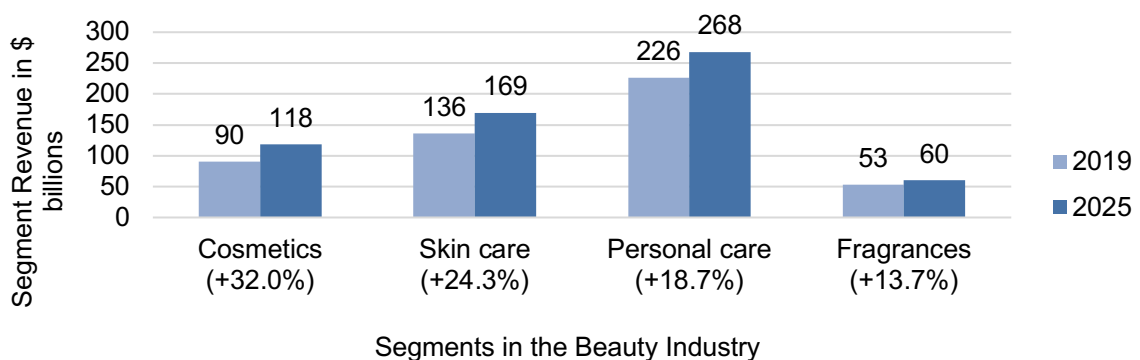
Source: Roberts (2021)

As reported by Statista (2022), the global skincare industry alone has an estimated current market value of $155.8 billion, which has been forecasted to reach $189.3 billion by 2025. Within the skincare industry, the largest target audience is consumers between the ages of 18 years and 30 years and are predominantly female (Djurovic 2021; Global Cosmetic Industry 2021). When considering the South African skincare market in isolation, there is no exception, with a calculated average growth rate of 7.4% from 2021 – 2026 (Mordor Intelligence 2021). Furthermore, the skincare industry in South Africa is characterised by being highly competitive with many players (Mordor Intelligence 2021).

Kestenbaum (2018) explains that the growth of the skincare industry can be attributed to the generational shift whereby youth are opting to move away from large commercial brands and are rather seeking out smaller artisanal brands. Ridder (2021a) supports the claims by Kestenbaum (2018), stating that there is an increase in demand from a younger consumer base, indicative of the fact that people are starting to use skincare products at a younger age. Furthermore, the surge in growth can be linked to the multitude of fads on "how to get and stay beautiful" that arise (Kestenbaum 2018). Ridder (2020) adds that by the year 2023, the skincare industry in South Africa will have a market value of $839.2 million.

Skincare products are products that are developed with the aim of improving the look and feel of one's skin (Cosmetics Europe 2021) and according to Ridder (2021b), skincare products are the predominant category within the cosmetic industry, constituting 30% of beauty products sold (Romanowski 2020). As explained by Romanowski (2020), products that constitute the skincare industry can be classified, based on their functionality and purpose. The products can either remain on the skin, such as moisturisers, anti-aging creams, tanners and over the counter drug products, or be designed to remove something from the skin, such as cleansers, body soaps, toners, bubble bath and exfoliation products (FDA 2020; Romanowski 2020). Due to the rapid growth rate and competitiveness of the skincare industry, competitors are

under much pressure to be innovative, which has only been magnified by the effects of the global COVID-19 pandemic.

3.2.1 The skin care industry and the global COVID-19 pandemic

While it has been noted that the global COVID-19 pandemic will have a larger influence on retailers than any other economic recession recorded, evidence has been presented that indicates that the skincare industry will remain relatively resilient (Gerstell et al 2020:2). An example of this can be seen in China, where sales declined by 80% in February 2020, but by March 2020 they had again increased to only a 20% decline (Gerstell et al 2020:2). Additionally, Gerstell et al (2020:5) report that while individuals said that they planned to spend less on personal skincare for the foreseeable future, they were even more unwilling to spend money on other luxuries, such as apparel. This indicates that consumers view skincare as an affordable luxury, with consumers indicating that they spend between R200 and R800 per month on skincare in South Africa (Rootman, Oosthuizen & Mabuyana 2019:452; Stiehler & Jordaan 2019:75). Bowling (2020) adds that consumer spending on skincare increases as they get older, which may be attributed to more noticeable effects of aging.

Many segments of the beauty industry have suffered as a result of the COVID-19. Contradictorily, skin care products may be benefiting from home selfcare and pampering, with many stores reporting that their yearly sales of skincare products have not declined. This has been attributed to the fact that salons and beauty stores were closed in many parts of the world, and Gerstell et al (2020:6) note that even when the stores opened, many individuals could no longer afford the luxury. It should also be considered that while many of the changes being seen in purchasing trends in the skincare industry may be temporary, there are long-term impacts, such as where the products are being bought.

3.2.2 The shift of sales from in-store to online for skin care products

Prior to the global COVID-19 pandemic, 85% of sales of beauty products were in-store; however, in 2020 it was recorded that 30% of these stores closed down, most of which will not be reopening. Therefore more consumers are moving to online shopping (Gerstell et al 2020:2). Djordjevic (2021) agrees and further reports that consumers are opting for online shopping over in-store shopping, with a rise from 1.66 billion global digital buyers in 2016 to over 2.14 billion global digital buyers in 2021 (Coppola 2020). Gerstell et al (2020:3) further emphasise that while there has been an estimated 20% - 30% growth in recorded online sales of skincare products, online sales do not offset in-store purchases. This may be linked to the fact that consumers are skeptical when shopping online for skincare products (Beck & Jensen 2019) and Wylie (2018) adds that consumers are especially partial to in-store shopping or browsing when looking for a new product with reference to the beauty industry. However, it is surmised that the migration back to in-store shopping will be slow and differentiated (Gerstell et al 2020:2) and will differ based on age groups. Figure 3.3 provides a comparison of shopping habits between age groups with specific reference to skincare.

FIGURE 3.3

SALES IN-STORE VS ONLINE FOR SKIN CARE PRODUCTS BY DIFFERENT AGE GROUPS
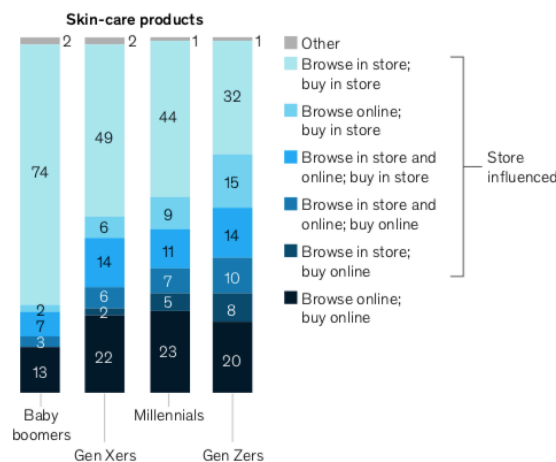
* Amounts represent the percentage (%) of consumers

Source: Gerstell et al (2020:6)

The popularity and growth of the online shopping industry have been attributed to its association with affordability and convenience (Arora & Aggarwal 2017:92; Djordjevic 2021) and Roberts (2021) adds that with regards to online shopping, consumers who place high value on the quality of the product will shop directly from a brand's website. This was also found by Donati (2020), where 64% of consumers in the beauty industry who place high value on quality, preferred to shop directly from a brand's website when shopping online. Furthermore, Duvall (2019) reports that consumers are more likely to buy larger quantities when shopping online, attributed to the cost of shipping.

With the rise of online shopping, an already saturated skincare industry has become even more inundated with products, which has led to consumers having higher expectations of their personal care products (Cosmetics Business 2020). As discussed in Chapter 2: Section 2.2.1, brands are relying more on how their products make the consumer feel, which can be achieved through the creation of memorable brand experiences (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.5). Aidnik (2013:4), Roberts (2022), Statista (2022b) and Zulqarnain, Zafar and Shahzad (2015:1167) add that skincare products are often sold via retail outlets, where low-end or cheaper skincare products are sold in different types of stores than high-end or more expensive skincare products and based on where a consumer shops they will have different expectations for their experience. For example, artisan brands that are associated with higher prices are normally sold via specialised stores, whereas lower end products, such as mass market skincare products, would be sold in supermarkets or chain stores.

However, within the skincare industry, regardless of the purchase being made in-store or online, sensory experiences have been highlighted as being of paramount importance (Cosmetics Business 2020; Whitehouse 2017) and Singh (2020) adds that fragrance is a key factor in the buying decision made by consumers when shopping for personal care products. Moreover, with specific reference to the skincare industry, how the product packaging, as well as the product itself, feels signifies quality to the consumer (McCormick 2014:4; Mohamed, Medina & Romo 2018:63; White 2020). Moeglin (2015)

adds that European consumers identify sensory branding aspects of beauty products as highly important.

3.3   TRADITIONAL SENSORY BRANDING

While, for the most part, purchasing decisions made by consumers are conscious processes, there is also an aspect of unconsciousness, which is driven by inner motivations (Dani & Pabalkar 2013:300; Liegeois & Rivera 2011:16). Liegeois and Rivera (2011:16) further explain that inner motivations, which govern buying behaviour, are linked to the five human senses (smell, sight, hearing, touch and taste) (Foroudi & Palazzo 2019:136; Liegeois & Rivera 2011:16; Upadhyaya 2017:353). The conscious purchasing decisions made by consumers can be viewed as rational. However, Liegeois and Rivera (2011:16) emphasise that humans are not solely rational beings, but are also influenced by their emotions or feelings and will therefore favour a brand based on the personality and experience it portrays.

Beig and Nika (2022:158), Cowen-Elstner (2018:18), Foroudi and Palazzo (2019:131), Galande (2019:47), Hulten (2020:18; 2017:2), Manojkumar, Vasavada and Sharma (2021:655), Ong et al (2018:5), Pogorzelski (2018:84), Suardi (2019:16), Upadhyaya (2017:353) and Wala et al (2019:109) define sensory branding as the use of the five human senses to engage consumers with the brand in such a way that creates positive emotions, perceptions and memories, ultimately resulting in favourable brand preference. However, experiences can range in intensity and can be both positive and negative in nature (Beig & Nika 2022:158), and once an individual makes a sensory association to a product or brand, it is almost impossible to reverse it (Foroudi & Palazzo 2019:132).

It can therefore be said that sensorial marketing and branding create long-term experiences for consumers that remain in their minds well after the encounter. Gao and Lan (2020:2) and Hulten (2020:19; 2017:1) attribute this to the fact that the human senses are responsible for conveying the stimuli that an individual is exposed to into perceptions. Hulten (2015) developed the sensory

marketing model to explain how brands can make use of sensory strategies to distinguish themselves from competitors in the market (Figure 3.4).

FIGURE 3.4

SENSORY MARKETING MODEL

| Service processes and sensory strategies and the five human senses |

Sensors

| Sight sensor | Sound sensor | Smell sensor | Touch sensor | Taste sensor |

Sensations

| Visual | Auditory | Olfactory | Tactile | Aesthetic/ gastronomic |

Sensory cues and stimulus
In relation to vision, sound, smell, touch and taste

Multi-sensory brand-experiences

Consumer value, consumer experiences and brand as image

Source: Hulten (2020:27)

Other than sensory branding providing a brand with the opportunity to differentiate themselves in the market, there are numerous other advantages to implementing sensory strategies, including building brand associations; forming emotional bonds with consumers; enhancing the familiarity that consumers have with the brand; generating positive word of mouth; and increasing the perceived quality and value of a product, thereby allowing for higher pricing (Upadhyaya 2017:354). It stands to reason then, that the more senses that a brand can positively stimulate, the more likely it is that a consumer will differentiate and give preference to the brand. As Kovacevic (2022) explains, GenXers (individuals born between the year 1965 and 1980, which would make them between the ages of 42 and 57 years at the time of this study) are a group of consumers who mostly shop in-store and while they do make purchases online, they do not exhibit the same enthusiasm for online

shopping when compared to millennials (individuals born between 1981 and 1996, which would make them between the ages of 26 and 41 years at the time of this study) (Beresford Research 2022).

In traditional marketing, sensory banding has been associated with the interaction with in-store shoppers; however as digitalisation is expanding, fuelled by the effects of COVID-19 (Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3 & Chapter 3, Section 3.2.1), brands are having to embrace a whole new shopping platform and create innovative ways to deliver sensory branding online (Griffith 2020; Sarathy 2020).

3.4   DIGITAL SENSORY BRANDING

Technology is advancing at an exponential rate (Pathan 2018:189; Ricker & Thatcher 2017:368) and individuals are spending more and more time online (Deyan 2021; Koetsier 2020), indicating the importance of technology as a communication tool (Hulten 2020:9). As the world has progressed, especially in the digital space, people are becoming more mobile, both physically and socially (Hulten 2020:9). Hulten (2020:9) adds that any time that individuals make use of online or digital platforms to communicate or exchange information, it should be considered a multi-sensory experience. However, there is a lack of sensory branding being implemented online, which can be viewed as a forgone opportunity in a marketing context (Kaushik & Gokhale 2021:5377; Petit et al 2018:42).

Sarathy (2020) adds that consumers are no less demanding of brands online, and are still expecting engaging sensory experiences that they would receive in-store. Hulten (2020:9) agrees and opines that with the array of new online platforms, such as social media sites and smart phones, it is no longer sufficient for businesses to practice traditional marketing techniques only. Furthermore, Kaushik and Gokhale (2021:378) and Sarathy (2020) opine that in order to do this, brands need to find creative ways to mimic the in-store experience online, which will instil confidence and solidify the credibility of the

brand. Technology does not only influence shopping patterns and purchasing behaviour online, but also in physical retail environments (Hulten 2020:9).

Another aspect of the online market-space that needs to be considered, according to Hulten (2020:9), is that the number of consumers reached has increased vastly and while this can lead to positive outcomes, it also amplifies the possibility for negative feedback, such as negative ratings or comments. It can therefore be concluded that while implementing sensory branding online is perceived as being more difficult, it is necessary.

Most commonly, marketers make use of sight and hearing when utilising digital sensory branding strategy (Griffith 2020; Petit et al 2018:42; Sarathy 2020), however there are new interactive and sensory-enabling technologies being developed that brands can use to create cohesion between their in-store atmosphere and their online "webmosphere" (Petit et al 2018:42). To date, there is no technology that can replace physical touch or taste online, but as stated by Petit et al (2018:43), there are numerous strategies that can be used to still stimulate these senses. However, many digital innovations fail due to consumer resistance (Talwar, Talwar, Kaur & Dhir 2020:287), especially from older consumers who are slower to new technology (Vaportzis, Clausen & Gow 2017:2). It is further notable that millennials and Gen Z (consumers born between 1997 and 2012, making them between the ages of 10 and 25 at the time of this study) are the consumers who rely the most on digital commerce (Smith 2020). The sections that follow discuss sensory branding strategies for the five human senses, for both in-store and online application.

3.5   VISUAL SENSORY BRANDING

Sight as a sense in retail encompasses how consumers make use of their eyes to experience a product or brand (Cowen-Elstner 2018:23; Hulten 2020:58; Pogorzelski 2018:84). As seen in Figure 3.5, the human eye is a complex organ, where the pupil regulates light and the cornea and lens refract the light to create an image on the retina (Hulten 2020:61). Hulten (2020:61) adds that

the human brain uses existing imagery to contextualise new images created. Therefore, all new images are unique to each individual.

FIGURE 3.5

THE HUMAN EYE
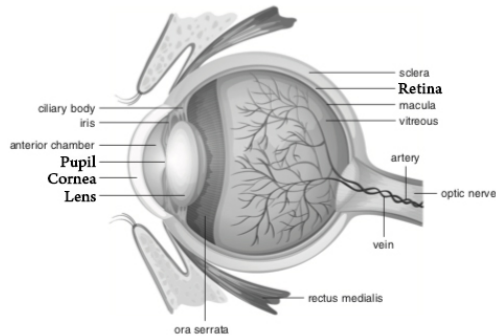
Source: Adapted from Hulten (2020:61)

Of the five senses, sight is the most commonly used by brands to create brand identity and awareness (Foroudi & Palazzo 2019:136; Hulten 2020:59; Pogorzelski 2018:85; Shanthi, Murari, Rafeeque Ahmed & Suganya 2019:205), as it is the most seductive of all the senses (Upadhyaya 2017:353). Biswas, Labrecque, Lehmann and Markos (2014:114), along with Foroudi and Palazzo (2019:136), Galande (2019:48), Hulten (2017:5) and Pogorzelski (2018:85), add that visual cues are what consumers first notice, which is why they comprise the largest focus in marketing strategies.

Visual cues have the ability to influence behaviour relating to brand preference, consumption quantity and purchasing behaviour (Bjerk 2015:3; Hulten 2020:58; 2017:5; Wang 2013:806). The translation of visual stimuli to meaningful information in the human brain is known as visual perception and provides the foundation for decision making (Hulten 2020:60; Yang, Wang, Jiang, Song & Meng 2020:2204). Furthermore, as explained by Didehban, Najar, Momeni and Attarian (2021:100), Dybala, Butterfield, Hendren-Santiago and Hara (2020:1864) and Hulten (2020:60), even if an image is incomplete, humans have the ability to interpret the message, which goes back to the principles of the Gestalt theory, whereby an individual can create a whole from separate parts (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.11). However, the more

visual cues that are excluded, the greater the difficulty in interpreting the message, and the greater the chances of a misunderstanding occurring (Hulten 2020:60). Uddin (2011:13) adds that visual cues will be interpreted differently based on an individual's context, such as their culture, gender or beliefs. Furthermore, Kim and Lee (2021:8) opine that these factors, as well as the age of consumers, have an influence on what visual stimuli will be appealing or not.

As proclaimed by Turley and Milliman (2000:194), visual cues can be categorised into interior and external variables as well as layout and design, while Bitner (1992:66) surmises that visual cues should be seen as a segment of ambient conditions. Hulten (2020:61/206) concurs with the statement that visual sensory stimuli should be complemented with the use of other senses, or the creation of multi-sensory experiences. Furthermore, Kotler (1973:51) opines that visual cues consist also of colour and lighting.

The human eye allows people to differentiate between six colours, namely red, orange, yellow, green, blue and violet (Hulten 2020:61). In Figure 3.6 a colour wheel is provided. Colour wheels are used by artists to understand colour and how the mixing thereof creates additional hues (Dodgson 2019:1). Colours, as stated by Cowen-Elstner (2018:23), Galande (2019:48) and Huang and Jen (2020:9904), influence consumer behaviour and are a key factor to consider by marketers for businesses or brands. This is proved in the statistic that brand recognition is increased by 80% with the effective use of colour (Hillier 2018). It is therefore important that marketers understand which colours complement each other.

However, as further argued by Cowen-Elstner (2018:23), Huang and Jen (2020:9904), Hulten (2017:6) and Pogorzelski (2018:85), colours have meanings which they allude to and marketers need to ensure that the colour's meaning is consistent with the message that they are trying to portray. Figure 3.6 provides the colour wheel and Table 3.1 a summary of colours and their meanings.

FIGURE 3.6

THE COLOUR WHEEL
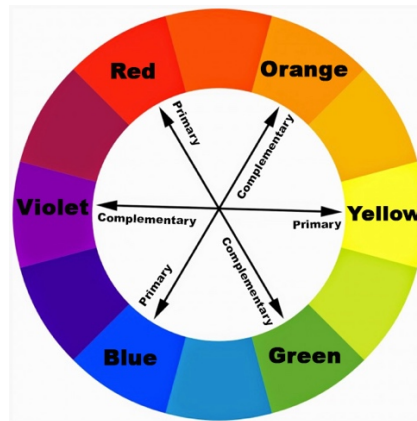
Source: Adapted from Dodgson (2019:1); Kerry (2019)

TABLE 3.1

A SUMMARY OF THE MEANINGS OF DIFFERENT COLOURS

Colour	Meanings
Yellow	Happy; youthful; hope and positivity; caution.
Green	Nature; growth; renewal; rebirth; taking action; prosperity and stability; soothing and relaxing.
Blue	Serene and calming; intelligence and responsibility; depth and power; peaceful; trust and dependability.
Orange	Warmth; warning; energetic; health and vitality; vibrancy and fun; youthfulness.
Red	Heat; energy; passion; love; anger; blood; appetite; speed; call to action.
Violet	Royalty; prestigious and luxurious; expensive; religion and spirituality.
White	Virginity; clean; simple; purity.
Black	Exclusivity; power; elegance; mysterious; unapproachable; mourning; intimidating.

Source: Adapted from Hulten (2020:69); Liegeois & Rivera (2011:18)

Lighting is also important in retail outlets as it has been found to have an influence on the consumer's perception of the store as a whole (Cowen-Elstner 2018:25; Hulten 2020:70). Additionally, Hartman (2020:5) and Hulten (2020:70) postulate that the brightness of a store can influence an individual's cognitive processes, which is linked to the fact that bright light increases mental alertness. The choice of lighting will also be dependent on the nature of the store. For example, a restaurant would make use of dimmer lighting,

whereas a pharmacy would make use of brighter lighting. Hartman (2020:6) states that lighting can have an influence on the duration that consumers stay in a store, which can be attributed to the effect that lighting has on peoples' moods. Abimnwi and Njuguna (2015:35) present a framework (Figure 3.7) to explain the relationship between lighting, emotions and consumer behaviour.

FIGURE 3.7

A FRAMEWORK FOR THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LIGHTING, EMOTIONS AND CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR
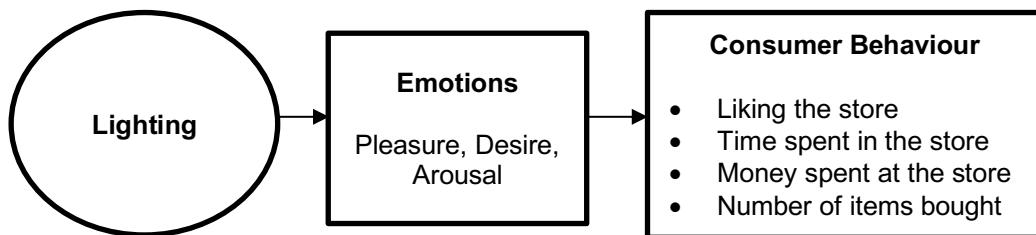
Source: Adapted from Abimnwi & Njuguna (2015:35)

Hulten (2020:70) further states that lighting offers marketers an easy way to vary an environment, signifying different moods to consumers within one retail store. It can therefore be concluded that visual stimuli have a significant impact on the product or brand preference and in turn, on purchase intention.

3.5.1 Traditional in-store visual strategies

In traditional circumstances, visual sensory branding can incorporate colours used by a brand, logo design, packaging design, lighting in the store, the cleanliness of the store, the design and layout of the store itself (both internally and externally), as well as visible signage and display features, such as mannequins in a clothing store (Cowen-Elstner 2018:24; Foroudi & Palazzo 2019:136; Hulten 2020:59). Upadhyaya (2017:357), as well as Wala et al (2019:112), adds that the uniform or clothing of staff members is also an important visual cue. Of the numerous visual cues used in stores, it has been noted that the design of the product itself as well as the décor, cleanliness and lighting of the store have the largest influence on purchasing behaviour and can even influence an individual's mood (Foroudi & Palazzo 2019:136).

Štěchová (2017:14) further opines that the text on the product packaging, especially with regards to the skincare industry, is important.

3.5.2   Digital online visual strategies

The digital space is placing increased worth on the use of visual stimuli in marketing a brand or product, evident in the use of digital photos, movies, trailers and all other internet advertising (Hulten 2020:59; Petit et al 2018:44). An example of this is observable on Instagram, where the popularity of the app is based solely on sharing visual imagery (pictures) with others. Digital sensory strategies share some aspects that are used in traditional sensory strategy, such as the colours used by a brand, logo design and packaging design. However, instead of considering ambient features of a store, digital strategies must consider the webmosphere of the digital platform, such as the layout and user friendliness of websites. Additionally, the use of colour as backgrounds on digital market spaces has been proved to influence consumers' perception of a site as well as their perceived download speed (Broeder & Snijder 2019:7; Broeder & Wildeman 2020:76; Cowen-Elstner 2018:24; Patel 2021).

The digital world is rapidly advancing, bringing about new means to incorporate online sensory strategy, that enables a richer consumer experience (Griffith 2020). With specific reference to digital online visual strategy, the use of 3D imaging (Algharabat, Alalwan, Rana & Dwivedi 2017:223), virtual reality environments (VR) (Griffith 2020; Petit et al 2019:44) and virtual try-ons (VTO), or augmented interactive (AI/AR) technology (Griffith 2020; Huang & Liao 2017:449) are becoming popular. Algharabat et al (2017:204) explain that, as opposed to a static 2-dimensional image, 3D imaging allows consumers to have a 360-degree view as they move their mouse over the product image (see Figure 3.8a). Furthermore, Petit et al (2019:44) opine that VR environments provide consumers with a more interactive and immersive experience (see Figure 3.8b). Finally, VTOs is an AI technology, which enables a consumer to either create a look-alike avatar of themselves, or to upload an image of themselves, so that they can better evaluate what a product may look like, solidifying buying decisions (see Figure

3.8c) (Huang & Liao 2017:450; Petit et al 2019:48). All of the above change the way that consumers interact in the online marketspace.

FIGURE 3.8

VISUAL ENABLING TECHNOLOGIES

Source: (A) Algharabat et al (2017:224); (B) Petit et al (2019:44); (C) Huang & Liao (2017:450)

3.6   AUDITORY SENSORY BRANDING

An environment is perceived differently by each individual, which is largely attributed to the influence of sound (Hulten 2020:84). Simply explained, sound waves from the environment travel to people's eardrums, causing vibrations that their brains transmit into sounds (Figure 3.9) (Hulten 2020:86; NIH 2015; Stucki 2020:19; Union Hearing Aid Centre 2019). Sound is measured in decibels (dB), with the minimum level tolerated by humans being 0dB and the highest being 120dB (Hulten 2020:87; Stucki 2020:20). Additionally, there are sounds that are of a high enough dB to hear, but that the human brain does not acknowledge, known as background noise (Hulten 2020:87).

FIGURE 3.9

THE HUMAN EAR
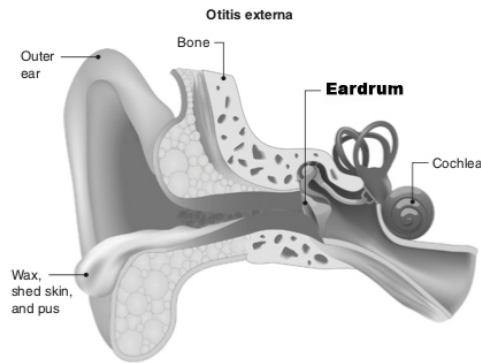
Source: Adapted from Hulten (2020:87)

Auditory stimuli are differentiated from other sensory stimuli in the way that people interpret them. Sound is interpreted internally, whereas the other senses are seen as being externally interpreted (Hulten 2020:87), and therefore sound has powerful effects on an individual's emotions. An important aspect of sound is the melodic contour thereof, which refers to the change in pitch of the sound (Hallam, Cross & Thaut 2016:144; Luo & Hayes 2019:2; Simon 2017), as it explains the natural linkages between music and human emotions (Benenti & Meini 2018:648; de Ceuster 2014:1; Hulten 2020:88).

According to Cowen-Elstner (2018:29) and Hulten (2020:85; 2017:6), the use of auditory branding constitutes three main categories, namely ambient sound (a sound that stems from nature or sound machines) (Chattopadhyay 2017:352); voice sound (which originates from a human) (Tiwari & Tiwari 2012:3; Zhang 2016:2614); and music sound (sound made through the use of instruments or a combination of the different categories of sound, such as a song) (Reybrouck, Podlipniak & Welch 2019:1). Cowen-Elstner (2018:29), Hulten (2020:86) and Shaed, Chik, Aini and Nongchik (2015:34) add that sound has a strong link to vision, as the brain makes use of both in unison to make associations, creating a long-lasting memory and brand loyalty.

Auditory branding influences people's moods, behaviour and feelings, making it a powerful marketing tool that brands can use to shape buying decision and brand preference, both in-store and online (Bartholme & Melewar 2016:420;

Cowen-Elstner 2018:28; Foroudi & Palazzo 2019:136; Galande 2019:48; Hulten 107:6; PH Media 2021; Pogorzelski 2018:86; Shanthi et al 2019:205). However, Cowen-Elstner (2018:28) argues that sound, when used simultaneously with advertising, can influence an individual's ability to process information. As in the case with visual cues, auditory cues have been divided into the type of sound or music (Areni & Kim 1993:338), the beat or tempo of the sound (Hulten 2020:94; Knoeferle, Spangenberg, Herrmann & Landwehr 2011:326) and if consumers find the sound pleasurable (Cowen-Elstner 2018:28; Duncan & Herrington 2013:278). As posited by Stothart and Kazanina (2016:23), the consumer's age can play a part in whether or not they find a sound pleasurable as older individuals do not regulate or perceive sound as a younger individual would.

As posited by Foroudi and Palazzo (2019:137) and Galande (2019:48), the tempo of music is of paramount importance, and can influence many aspects of consumers' purchasing behaviour. The following findings were made by Garlin and Owen (2006:756) regarding the influence of sound on consumer behavioural responses (Cowen-Elstner 2018:29; Foroudi & Palazzo 2019:137):
- pleasurable music in a store has a direct link to store traffic;
- the tempo of music is the most influential auditory factor on consumer behaviour; and
- the tempo and volume of music can influence the length of time that consumers will stay in a store (slow tempo with low volumes will encourage longer stays and vice versa).

Foroudi and Palazzo (2019:137), however, warn that prior to selecting a brand sound, the marketers of the brand should first establish what the consumers actually want and need. Additionally, Hulten (2020:86) and Suarez and Gumiel (2014:264) caution that not only does sound have the ability to give rise to positive feelings, it also has the ability to give rise to feelings of fear and anxiety, which would lead to negative sound experiences. Another benefit of sound in differentiating a brand is that it is an affordable marketing tool that is

easily accessible (Hulten 2020:85; Suarez & Gumiel 2014:264). Furthermore, the findings of Simha (2019:35) solidify that, when appropriately utilised, music in brick and mortar stores has the ability to grab consumers' attention and increase persuasiveness.

Hulten (2020:94; 2017:6), along with Israel, Lehav and Ziv (2019:100232), Randhir, Lataha, Tooraiven and Monishan (2016:280), Suarez and Gumiel (2014:264) and Wollner, Hammerschmidt and Albrecht (2018:3), adds that music can be used to increase sales volume and control the pace of consumer shopping. In general, it has been found that fast paced music excites individuals, while slower paced music creates a relaxing or calm environment, which extends to the staff (Cabigas 2018:2; Feng, Suri & Bell 2014:491; Hulten 2020:94; Kim & Zauberman 2019:505; Pantoja & Borges 2021:102730; Randhir et al 2016:281; Wala et al 2019:112). While auditory stimuli can be a useful tool to marketers in creating a cohesive environment (Randhir et al 2016:281), Cowen-Elstner (2018:28) cautions that the success of auditory sensory branding is dependent on the interaction of consumers. Furthermore, Flowers (2020) suggest that the pronunciation and spelling of a brand name should also be considered an important auditory factor.

3.6.1 Traditional in-store auditory strategies

In the context of traditional sensory branding strategies, sound cues refer to the music in stores, the jingles used by a brand, the sound or pronunciation of the brand's name and even sounds associated with using the physical product itself (Cowen-Elstner 2018:30; Foroudi & Palazzo 2019:136; Griffith 2020; Hulten 2020:93; 2017:6; Wala et al 2019:112).

3.6.2 Digital online auditory strategies

In many cases, the strategies used in brick and mortar stores can be carried through to digital stores, such as with brand jingles and the sound or pronunciation of the brands name and Wala et al (2019:112) state that traditionally, sound has been used by businesses to transfer messages or

information about a product or brand in the form of radio or television, but as the internet has advanced so has the use of auditory stimuli. Another means of making use of auditory sensory strategy online, is through video adverts and background music (Hulten 2020:99).

3.7   OLFACTORY SENSORY BRANDING

According to Upadhyaya (2017:353), smell is the most sensitive of the five human senses, the strength of which lies in its ability to create strong feelings of reminiscence (Hulten 2017:7; Pogorzelski 2018:86; Shanthi et al 2019:206; Vega-Gomez, Miranda-Gonzalez, Mayo, Gonzalez-Lopez & Pascual-Nebreda 2020:1). Olfactory stimuli are received through the olfactory cells in the nose, which are all responsible for identifying specific odours, and are then carried to the olfactory bulb in the brain (Cantone et al 2017:53; Hulten 2020:112; Kumar 2020a; Marin 2015; Mennella, Bobowski & Liem 2018:58; NIH 2017). From here, the electrical signals are redirected to the appropriate areas of the brain where they are processed to make associations (Figure 3.10) (Hulten 2020:112; Kumar 2020a; Marin 2015; NIH 2017; Wala et al 2019:112).

FIGURE 3.10
THE HUMAN NOSE
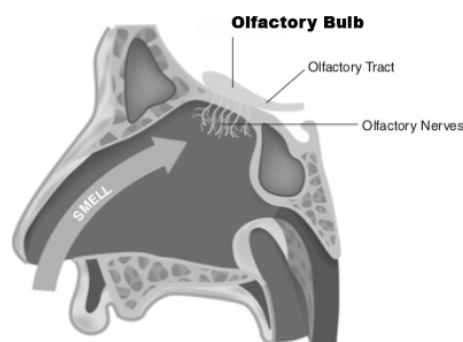
Source: Adapted from Hulten (2020:113)

Additionally, Hulten (2020:112), Monell Chemical Senses Center (2019), Nuwer (2013), Simon (2015), Suarez and Gumiel (2014:268) and Vega-Gomez et al (2020:1) explain that the sense of smell is highly complex in that not only is it synthetic, but that each individual has a slightly unique set of

receptors, meaning that a single fragrance will be perceived differently by each individual. It is therefore impossible to know exactly how a fragrance will be experienced. Another factor that makes it difficult to predict how an individual will experience a new fragrance is that the human brain makes emotional connections to different fragrances, known as trigeminal stimulation (Hammond 2018; Hulten 2020:112; 2017:7; Licon, Manesse, Dantec, Fournel & Bensafi 2018:1; Tremblay & Frasnelli 2018:611; Vega-Gomez et al 2020:1; Walsh 2020).

Pogorzelski (2018:86), Randhir et al (2016:279) and Shanthi et al (2019:206) add that humans can differentiate over 10 000 fragrances and Cowen-Elstner (2018:30), Foroudi and Palazzo (2019:137), Hulten (2017:7), Pogorzelski (2018:86), Suarez and Gumiel (2014:268), Vega-Gomez et al (2020:2) and Walsh (2020) relate olfactory stimuli in branding to not only the fragrance of the product itself, but also to those fragrances that constitute the ambiance of the store where it is sold. Furthermore, a pleasurable fragrance can have an influence on the recall of an experience, the time consumers spend in a store and even the amount that they are willing to spend on a product (Cao & Duong 2021:134; Cowen-Elstner 2018:30; Foroudi & Palazzo 2019:137; Hulten 2017:7; Randhir et al 2016:280; Sliburyte & Vaitieke 2019:102; Srinivau, Balaji & Rajendran 2021:12553; Suarez & Gumiel 2014:269; Vega-Gomez et al 2020:2). It is also notable that when setting a brand fragrance or a fragrance of a product, the business needs to consider who its customers are, so as to create cohesion with their brand (Foroudi & Palazzo 2019:137; Randhir et al 2016:280). For example, women are more sensitive to fragrances than men are and the elderly are less sensitive to fragrances than youth are (Randhir et al 2016:280).

Product fragrances can be used as a primary product attribute whereby the fragrance is the physical product (such as with air fresheners or perfumes), a secondary product attribute, whereby a fragrance is applied to an otherwise odourless product (such as brand specific car fresheners) or for advertising or sales promotion (Hulten 2020:127; van Niekerk 2020:46). The power of the sense of smell lies in its longevity in the mind of an individual (Cowen-Elstner

2018:30; Hulten 2020:110; 2017:7; Randhir et al 2016:279; Suarez & Gumiel 2014:267; Vega-Gomez et al 2020:2), where humans can even remember fragrances from their early childhood, which is unlike any of the other human senses.

Fragrances have an influence on an individual's cognitive processes, emotional responses as well as their behaviour and can be consciously or unconsciously administered and is explicitly linked to physical taste, forming the foundation for taste experiences as a whole (Cowen-Elstner 2018:30; Galande 2019:48; Hulten 2020:111; 2017:7; Pogorzelski 2018:87; Vega-Gomez et al 2020:2; Wala et al 2019:112).

3.7.1 Traditional in-store olfactory strategies

In brick and mortar stores, in addition to the fragrance of the product itself, fragrances are utilised to create a unique atmosphere that can help consumers to differentiate brands, or a signature fragrance (Hulten 2020:121; Pogorzelski 2018:87; Upadhyaya 2017:357; Wala et al 2019:113; Walsh 2020). One method being used that allows brick and mortar stores to effectively make use of olfactory stimuli is nebulization technology, such as aerosols or air vents (Hulten 2020:112). Additionally, the fragrance of staff in an establishment also forms part of the ambient fragrance and should therefore be considered (Hulten 2020:121). Moreover, many outlets and brands have created signature fragrances that can be identified by consumers or that create a certain atmosphere, known as a place marker (Hulten 2020:122; Pogorzelski 2018:87).

3.7.2 Digital online olfactory strategies

As of yet, there is no technology that can replace physical smell via an online platform. However, many marketers still try to make use of product specific olfactory strategies on their digital platforms by making use of imagery and descriptive words (Alac 2017:143; Cowen-Elstner 2018:31; Hauser 2017; Hulten 2020:127). By doing this, marketers hope that just seeing the image or

hearing about the smell, will enable individuals to make the same associations as if they could physically smell the product.

Another strategy which is being used is the distribution of "scratch-and-sniff" cards, where businesses provide a URL or scannable code for consumers to visit, upon which they can scratch the card and actually smell the product while they read about it (Hulten 2020:128). Finally, researchers are continuously working on developing multisensory devices that will enable olfactory stimuli to be delivered to consumers via the internet. An example of this is Season Traveller, developed by Ranasinghe et al (2018), that is a Head Mounted Display that can replicate smells, temperature as well as wind in a location, which allows individuals to get a feel of a location without actually being there (Figure 3.11) (Petitet al 2019:53).

FIGURE 3.11

SEASON TRAVELLER HMD DEVICE
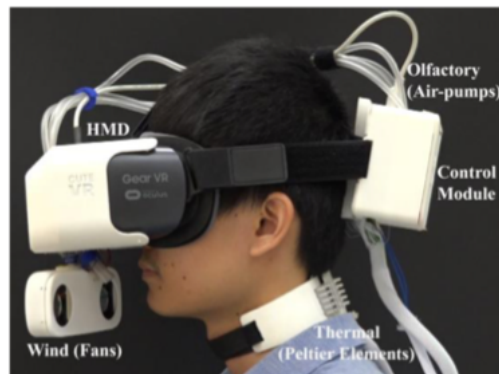
Source: Ranasinghe et al (2018:1)

3.8   TACTILE SENSORY BRANDING

As stated by Foroudi and Palazzo (2019:137), as well as Hulten (2020:138) and Pramudya and Seo (2019:2), the sense of touch constitutes one of the principal sources of stimuli for humans and involves how humans interpret touching and being touched (Cowen-Elstner 2018:25; Hulten 2020:142; Wala et al 2019:114). The sense of touch is also known as haptics and occurs when consumers use any part of their skin to touch an object or another person (Ali & Ahmed 2019:118; Hulten 2020:138; Upadhyaya 2017:353; Serino &

Haggard 2010:225). Foroudi and Foroudi (2021:243), Hulten (2020:138) and Upadhyaya (2017:353) further state that the skin is the largest organ of a human, stretching out to about 2 square metres and when the touch receptors in the skin receive stimuli, they transmit them to the sensory cortex in the brain where they can be interpreted (Figure 3.12). Touch receptors are not evenly located around the body, but are rather clustered in certain areas, with the hands and fingertips being the most populated (Hulten 2020:139; Randhir et al 2016:281; Rynette & Kjesbo 2017; Serino & Haggard 2010:229).

FIGURE 3.12

THE HUMAN SKIN STRUCTURE
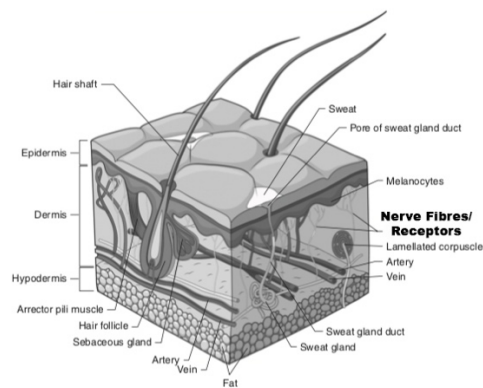
Source: Adapted from Hulten (2020:138)

Hulten (2020:138; 2017:8), along with Pogorzelski (2018:88), Randhir et al (2016:281), Shanthi et al (2019:206), Stach (2018:25), Suarez and Gumiel (2014:269) and Wala et al (2019:114), further explains that touch relates to factors such as texture, shape and temperature and notes that touch is especially relevant for businesses who sell physical products. Touch is an important aspect of sensory branding as it makes it easier for individuals to perceive a product and often associate the feel of a product with quality (Cowen-Elstner 2018:25; Hoang & Tuckova 2020:1286; Hulten 2020:136; 2017:8; Pogorzelski 2018:88; Shanthi et al 2019:206; Stach 2018:25; Suarez & Gumiel 2014:269) and Cowen-Elstner (2018:25), along with Hulten (2017:8), Peck (2020), Perry (2017) and Suarez and Gumiel (2014:269), adds that touch also has a close relationship with ownership and valuation. Tactile sensory stimuli work in close collaboration with sight, as an individual will first judge an

item based on sight and then will proceed to touch the item to further investigate (Ali & Ahmed 2019:118; Galande 2019:48; Hulten 2020:137; 2017:8; Wala et al 2019:114). Additionally, as opined by Hoang and Tuckova (2020:1286) and Hulten (2020:138; 2017:9), many individuals will refuse to purchase a product if the feeling does not match what they expected from seeing it.

Foroudi and Foroudi (2021:244), Foroudi and Palazzo (2019:138) and Stach (2018:25) state that tactile stimuli can be divided into two groups, namely diagnostics cues (when a consumer actively seeks tactile stimuli or information when considering alternative brands) and non-diagnostic cues (those tactile stimuli or information that do not form part of the product evaluation). Furthermore, as explained by Foroudi and Foroudi (2021:244), as well as Hulten (2020:137), touching is imperative as it allows consumers to build confidence in a product or brand name. However, this could work in the alternative situation as well, where a consumer can lose confidence in a brand based on the feel of a product (Cowen-Elstner 2018:26; Ravaja, Harjunen, Ahmed, Jacucci & Spape 2017:2), and the length of time that an individual holds or touches an item can also have an influence on their perception (Hulten 2020:141; Ringler, Sirianni, Gustafsson & Peck 2019:190).

Evidently, haptics allow brands to enhance positive emotional responses and moods, thereby influencing purchasing behaviour (Cowen-Elstner 2018:26; Foroudi & Foroudi 2021:244; Foroudi & Palazzo 2019:138; Hulten 2020:138; 2017:8; Iosifyan & Korolkova 2019:81). While touching a physical product is most common, the physical touch from a staff member in a store will also influence the perception that a consumer has of not only the store, but the brand they associate it with (Cowen-Elstner 2018:25; Hulten 2020:137; Johnson 2020:2; Williams & Ackerman 2011).

3.8.1   Traditional in-store tactile strategies

In traditional retail settings, tactile sensory branding is practiced every time a consumer touches a product or product packaging (Foroudi & Palazzo

2019:138; Upadhyaya 2017:357). Furthermore, Hulten (2020:146), as well as Wala et al (2019:114), explains that other than the act of touching a physical product, aspects such as the temperature of a store can provide haptic stimuli to an individual. In advertising, businesses are even incorporating different textured paper to portray feeling to their consumers (Hulten 2020:151). Pogorzelski (2018:88) adds that consumers can be enticed to interact and touch a product with attention grabbing in store displays as well as tester samples of the product and through the use of unusual packaging.

3.8.2 Digital online tactile strategies

From the above literature on tactile sensory branding, it can be concluded that touch is crucial for product evaluation, and the lack thereof on digital spaces is a major challenge that many businesses are facing (Hulten 2020:137; Yoganathan et al 2019:388). This challenge is especially relevant to brands with physical touch-related products. To address this challenge, brands make use of high-quality images and descriptive words (Yoganathan et al 2019:388); however, these can never compare to the physical feeling of a product. This has led to the phenomenon of consumers evaluating brands in brick and mortar stores and then actually purchasing the item online where it may be cheaper. Skrovan (2017) adds that there is a correlation between age and this phenomenon, where older consumers are more likely to first visit an establishment to touch and assess the product before purchasing online.

Another strategy that businesses make use of to overcome the challenge of a lack of touch, is the option of having the item delivered, and then allowing return within a certain period of time should the consumer not be satisfied (Hulten 2020:147; Peck 2020). However, it should still be noted that the likelihood of consumers purchasing products, which require multi-sensory analysis online, is not high. Yoganathan et al (2019:388) add that marketers can also make use of the remaining human senses, such as hearing or sight to stimulate deep rooted associations that people have in their memory, thereby communicating the feel of a product.

Consumers interact hepatically when shopping online just by touching their mouse or touchscreens (Petit et al 2019:49). However, Petit et al (2019:49) reiterate that while these means may provide some compensation for the lack of physical touch, they do not completely satisfy individuals' need for touch (NFT). The level of NFT, as depicted by Raushenbush (2018), differs in general between Gen Z, millennials, Gen X and baby boomers, with baby boomers followed by GenXers presenting the highest NFT. However, millennials and GenZers are less motivated by NFT, which may be a reason why online shopping is predominant for these two groups of consumers (Raushenbush 2018).

Numerous technological developments have been made, which have been found to improve the haptic interactions that individuals have when shopping online (Brengman, Willems & Van Kerrebroeck 2019:272; Chung, Kramer & Wong 2018:796; Van Kerrebroeck, Willems & Brengman 2017:894), such as a program known as Shoogleit (Cano, Perry, Ashman & Waite 2017:116). Shoogleit enables haptic experiences by mimicking consumers' movements on a touch screen virtually, such as scrunching the material of a piece of clothing (Figure 3.13).

FIGURE 3.13

SHOOGLEIT MULTI-GESTURE INTERFACE

Source: Cano et al (2017:432)

Another haptic enabling technology, developed by Leithinger, Follmer, Olwal and Ishii (2014), is inFORM, which posited that consumers could benefit from interacting with products remotely. inFORM utilises a series of pins that are connected to a laptop and can be manipulated to create basic 3D models, providing consumers with an idea of how they might interact with a product

(Petit et al 2018:50). Figure 3.14 indicates how inFORM may be used to interact with an object, such as a ball.

FIGURE 3.14

INFORM SHAPE-SHIFTING DISPLAY

Source: Leithinger et al (2014:463)

It can be deduced that these technologies go further than product interaction and have been adapted to encourage human interaction. However, use of the above discussed technologies is not yet widespread, and a more cost-effective solution would need to be reached before they could become accessible to more businesses, such as through the use of vibrations on a smartphone (Olsson 2015:18; Petit et al 2018:51). While the applications of virtual reality technology are endless, it is a nascent technology (Lin 2022).

3.9   TASTE SENSORY BRANDING

Ali and Ahmed (2019:118), Briand and Salles (2016:101), Foroudi and Palazzo (2019:138), Melis and Barbarossa (2017:1), Ngugi, O'Sullivan and Osman (2020:41), Pogorzelski (2018:87), Puputti, Aisala, Hoppu and Sandell (2019:1), Randhir et al (2016:281) and Wala et al (2019:113) define taste stimuli as those sensory cues that are initiated by the receptors on an individual's tongue, such as sweet, salty, sour, bitter and umami. The human sense of taste, as explained by Hulten (2020:160; 2017:9), differs from other senses as it is experienced both internally, via the tongue (gastronomic taste), and externally, via the sense of sight (aesthetic taste). Figure 3.15 provides a

graphical depiction of how a taste experience is comprised of both gastronomic and aesthetic taste.

FIGURE 3.15

TASTE AS A DUAL EXPERIENCE
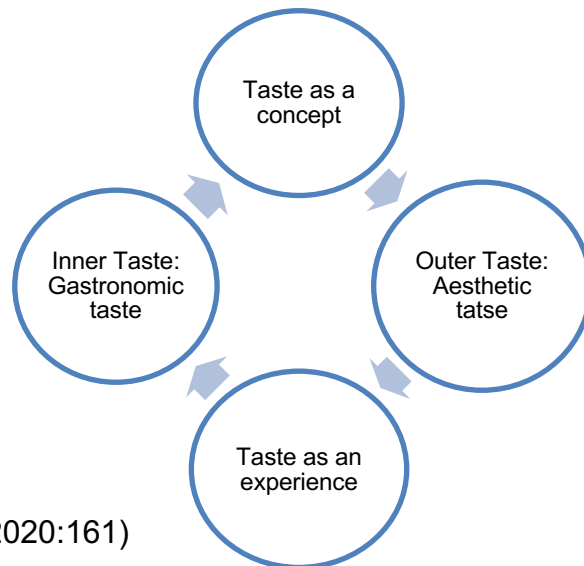
Source: Hulten (2020:161)

Gastronomic taste is the result of taste buds on the tongue and the throat transmitting information to the brain where it can be interpreted and associations can be made (Chikazoe, Lee, Kriegeskorte & Anderson 2019:2; Giove 2021; Hayes 2020; Hulten 2020:162; Lliades 2018; Melis & Barbarossa 2017:2; Puputti et al 2019:1). Figure 3.16 indicates where taste buds are located on the tongue.

FIGURE 3.16

LOCATION OF TASTE BUDS ON THE HUMAN TONGUE
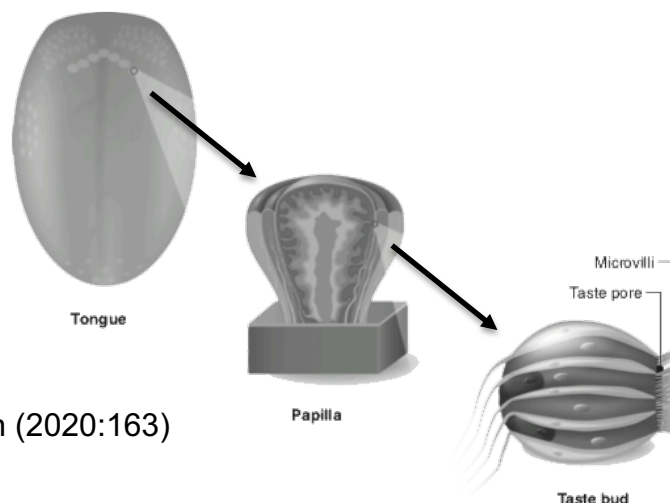
Source: Hulten (2020:163)

Gastronomic taste has the ability to stir both physiological and psychological reactions for an individual (Jang & Lee 2019:2; Puputti et al 2019:1; Randhir et al 2016:281) and people are the only beings that make use of taste as an experience (Hulten 2020:161; Pogorzelski 2018:87). However, humans do not develop preference for a taste that will last indefinitely, attributed to the fact that taste buds regenerate on a weekly basis, which explains why human gastronomic taste preference changes as the individual ages (Hulten 2020:163; Inui-Yamamoto et al 2017:2; Jacewicz 2017; Lanese 2021; Park 2014; Sullivan 2020).

Aesthetic taste is largely influenced by an individual's own preference (Fingerhut, Gomez-Lavin, Winklmayr & Prinz 2021:1; Hoyer & Stokburger-Sauer 2012:168) and refers to both the aesthetics of consumable products (food and beverages) as well as hedonic products (cars or interior design) (Hulten 2020:162; Pogorzelski 2018:87). Furthermore, as explained by Cowen-Elstner (2018:23), Crispin (2017:3); Hulten (2020:162; 2017:9) and Suzen (2020:340), aesthetic taste is not objective, but rather subjective, and therefore, people can experience the exact same object in different ways.

Taste is a sense that can be used by businesses who sell food and beverage products (Shanthi et al 2019:206). Galande (2019:48), as well as Shanthi et al (2019:206), adds that each business will aim to create a unique taste that consumers will associate with the brand, thereby creating differentiation. However, Hulten (2017:9), along with Randhir et al (2016:281), explains that multi-national businesses will adjust their brand's taste to accommodate the preferences of the target audience in each country.

While the majority of businesses that utilise taste as a strategy are those in the food and beverage industry, there are exceptions, such as the dental industry, that also make use of taste to differentiate their products from competitors in the market (Shanthi et al 2019:206). Additionally, the sense of taste is one of the human senses that could not exist in isolation as a taste experience is a combination of taste, smell, touch and sight, a concept known as synaesthesia (Ali & Ahmed 2019:119; Cowen-Elstner 2018:27; Hulten

2020:164; Jang & Lee 2019:3; Korsmeyer 2017:20; Pogorzelski 2018:87; Ranhir et al 2016:281). Cowen-Elstner (2018:27), along with Upadhyaya (2017:353), adds that taste is one of the most difficult human senses to use for communication.

3.9.1   Traditional in-store taste strategies

In the food and beverage industry, a popular example of taste sensory branding are samples (Dunkovic 2016:5; Hulten 2020:172; Lesonsky 2017; Oduguwa 2015:3; Randhir 2016:281). However, more and more retailers are incorporating taste to enhance consumers' experience of the store, for example, a petrol station having a restaurant or the cinema selling popcorn and other consumables. While gastronomic taste is traditionally associated with the food and beverage industry, aesthetic taste is used throughout all the different industries, which is done through combining the other senses, such as smell, to portray a taste (Hulten 2020:172; Pogorzelski 2018:87).

3.9.2   Digital online taste strategies

Aesthetic taste in the digital marketspace refers to how aesthetically pleasing a consumer finds a brand's website and social media presence. However, gastronomic taste is, to date, impossible to replicate virtually. This is not to say that in the future technology will not have advanced enough, with programs such as MetaCookie+ already being tested. MetaCookie+ makes use of an AR device that allows consumers to virtually change the visual appearance of a cookie as well as the fragrance they are exposed to, to manipulate how they perceive the cookie will taste (Figure 3.17) (Petit et al 2018:53).

FIGURE 3.17

METACOOKIE+

Source: Narumi, Nishizaka, Kajinami, Tanikawa & Hirose (2011:94)

3.10   SENSORY OVERLOAD

While shopping, individuals search for stimuli (Hulten 2020:190; Krishna 2011:346), meaning that should there be too little stimulation, an individual will search elsewhere. However, as explained by Bielat (2020:7), Douce and Adams (2020:102145), Hulten (2020:190) and Krishna (2011:346), as well as Roose and Mulier (2020:18), should there be too much stimulation, individuals will seek to reduce the stimuli that they are being exposed to, which in a retail setting will lead to a decrease in time spent in a store as well as a decrease in the number of products purchased. Pogorzelski (2018:88) adds that many businesses make the mistake of trying to be present in the minds of their consumers at all times. However, this results in sensory bombarding and sensory overload. Furthermore, Bielat (2020:7), Pogorzelski (2018:89) and Roose and Mulier (2020:18) opine that in the case of sensory branding, quality sensory stimuli trump the quantity utilised. Moreover, stores located in shopping malls or centres need to be aware that consumers are not only exposed to the sensory marketing and branding within their store, but to that of other stores, which increases the risk of overstimulation (Pogorzelski 2018:88).

It can therefore be concluded that should a brand want to make use of multi-sensory branding, a balance needs to be achieved to avoid sensory overloading, which can mean adjusting the intensity of the stimuli or creating

better cohesion between those stimuli (Bielat 2020:7; Hulten 2020:203; Pogorzelski 2018:88; Roose & Mulier 2020:18).

3.11   SUMMARY OF VARIOUS SENSORY BRANDING STRATEGIES

As opined by Foroudi and Palazzo (2019:133), Liegeois and Rivera (2011:16), Manojkumar et al (2021:655), Upadhyaya (2017:353) and Wala et al (2019:109), brands that will be successful in their application of sensory branding in the future, both in-store and online, will be those who implement a multisensory approach, which implies a 5D sensory branding strategy that includes the use of all five human senses. However, Pogorzelski (2018:88) warns that there is the possibility of over stimulating consumers and opines that while all senses should be used, they do not all need to be used simultaneously.

Within traditional sensory branding, there are many different strategies or stimuli that brands can make use of, relating to each of the five human senses. Table 3.2 provides a summary of these strategies or stimuli.

TABLE 3.2

SENSES AND SENSORY STRATEGIES OR STIMULI

Senses	Sensory Strategy/Stimuli
Sight	Design; packaging and logo; colour; light; theme; graphics; exterior and interior of the store.
Sound	Jingle; voice; music; atmosphere; signature brand sound.
Smell	Product congruence; intensity and sex; atmosphere; advertising and theme; brand fragrance brand; signature fragrance.
Touch	Material and surface; temperature and weight; form and steadiness.
Taste	Name; presentation and environment; knowledge; lifestyle; delight; interplay; symbiosis; synergies.

Source: Hulten (2020:24)

Table 3.3 provides a summary of common sensory-enabling technologies utilised to implement digital sensory branding.

TABLE 3.3

A SUMMARY OF COMMON SENSORY-ENABLING TECHNOLOGIES

Senses	Cues	Concepts	Source
Sight	Screen: Font, icon, picture, videos (colour, depth, size, position, dynamic)	Mental imagery	• Cian, Krishna & Elder (2014); • Eelen, Siegfried & Warlop (2013); • Elder & Krishna (2012); • Petit, Basso, Merunka, Spence, Cheok & Oullier (2016).
		Sensory congruency	• Sunaga, Jaewoo & Spence (2016); • Velasco, Xiaoang, Klemens, Xi, Salgado-Montejo & Spence (2015); • Velasco, Woods, Petit, Cheok & Spence (2016b); • Woods & Spence (2016).
		Interactivity	• Song & Zinkhan (2008); • Van Noort, Voorveld, & Van Reijmersdal (2012).
Hearing	Headphones, speaker sound, jingle	Loud music/ Sensory congruency	• Hagtvedt & Brasel (2016); • Knoeferle, Knoeferle, Velasco & Spence (2016).
Touch	Mouse, touchscreen	Mental imagery	• Shen, Zhang & Krishna (2016).
		Ownership	• Brasel & Gips (2014).
		Affect	• Brasel & Gips (2015); • Shen et al (2016).

Source: Adapted from Petit et al (2018:44)

Table 3.4 provides a summary of new sensory-enabling technologies utilised to implement digital sensory branding.

TABLE 3.4

A SUMMARY OF NEW SENSORY-ENABLING TECHNOLOGIES

Senses	Cues	Concepts	Source
Sight	3D-interactive view, virtual try-ons, augmented reality	Mental imagery	• Choi & Taylor (2014); • Huang & Liao (2017).
		Telepresence/ immersion	• Animesh, Pinsonneault, Yang & Wonseok (2011); • Klein (2003); • Nah, Eschenbrenner & Dewester (2011); • Yim, Chu & Sauer (2017).
		Enjoyment	• Kim & Forsythe (2008a, b); • Lee & Chung (2008); • Nah et al (2011); • Yim et al (2017).
		Flow	• Animesh et al (2011); • Huang (2012); • Huang & Liao (2017); • Jiang & Benbasat (2004); • Nah et al (2011); • Novak, Hoffman & Yung (2000); • Van Noort et al (2012).

Senses	Cues	Concepts	Source
		Interactivity	• Huang (2012); • Yim et al (2017).
		Self-congruity	• Merle, Senecal & St-Onge (2012).
		Ownership	• Brengman et al (2018); • Huang & Liao (2017).
		Need for touch	• Brengman et al (2018); • Choi & Taylor (2014).
		Curiosity	• Beck & Crié (2018).
Hearing	Multisensory experience with auditory inputs (Food simulator, Straw-like User Interface)	Sensory congruency	• Hashimoto, Inami & Kajimoto (2008); • Ho, Jones, King, Murray & Spence (2013); • Liu, Hannum & Simons (2018).
Touch	Vibrotactile interfaces, body-grounded tactile actuators, mid-air haptics	Need for touch	• Brasel & Gips (2014); • Cano et al (2017); • Jin (2011).
		Telepresence	• Leithinger et al (2014); • Sallnäs, Rassmus-Gröhn & Sjöström (2000).
		Emotion	• Rantala, Salminen, Raisamo & Surakka (2013).
		Midas touch effect	• Haans & IJsselsteijn (2009); • Haans, de Bruijn & IJsselsteijn (2014); • Spapé, Hoggan, Jacucci & Ravaja (2015).
Smell	Multisensory experience with smell inputs (Season Traveller, MetaCookie+)	Sensory congruency	• Ranasinghe et al (2018); • Liu et al (2018).

Source: Adapted from Petit et al (2018:44)

Upadhyaya (2017:352) declares that sensory experiences cannot exist in isolation, but should rather form part of a package of the functional product. This ideology is becoming prominent in the skincare industry.

3.12 SUMMARY

It can be concluded from the above literature review that the topic of sensory branding in the skincare industry is growing in popularity and that increased attention needs to be placed on the topic. In this summary, the literature findings are indicated with the abbreviation "LF" and the number of the finding.

The global beauty industry has been exceptionally resilient (LF96) and comprises of four branches of industry, namely cosmetics (LF97); skin care (LF98); personal care (LF99) and fragrances (LF100). Personal care constitutes the largest branch of industry globally, whilst the skincare industry

presented the largest growth rate from 2019 – 2025 (+24.3%), with women being the largest target audience (LF101). It was also found that the largest number of skincare consumers are between the ages of 18 and 30 (LF102). The South African skincare industry has an average growth rate of 7.4% from 2021 – 2026 (LF103), and is characterised by being highly competitive with many players (LF104). From the research in this chapter it was also apparent that youth are opting to move away from large commercial brands, rather seeking out smaller artisanal brands (LF105) and that people are starting to use skincare products at a younger age (LF106). The surge in growth can be linked to the multitude of fads on "how to get and stay beautiful" (LF107).

Skincare products are those that are developed with the aim of improving the look and feel of one's skin (LF108) and due to the multitude of players in the industry, as well as the effects of COVID-19, competitors in the skincare industry are under pressure to be innovative (LF109). It was also determined that despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the skincare industry will remain relatively resilient (LF110), attributed to the fact that consumers view skincare as an affordable luxury, spending on average between R200 and R800 per month (LF111). It is notable that consumer spending on skincare increases as they get older (LF112). However, a long-term impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the skincare industry is where the products are being sold (LF113).

Prior to the global COVID-19 pandemic, 85% of sales of beauty products were in-store (LF114), but in 2020 it was recorded that more consumers are moving to online shopping (LF115) and online shopping rose from 1.66 billion global digital buyers in 2016 to over 2.14 billion global digital buyers in 2021 (LF116). While there has been an estimated 20% - 30% growth in recorded online sales of skincare products, online sales do not offset in-store purchases (LF117), which has been attributed to the fact that consumers are sceptical when shopping online for skincare products (LF118) and are generally more partial to in-store shopping or browsing when looking for a new skincare product (LF119). The popularity and growth of the online shopping industry has been attributed to its association with affordability and convenience and, in addition,

it was found that with regards to online shopping, consumers who place a high value on quality of a product will shop directly from a brand's website (LF120). It was further notable that consumers buy larger quantities when shopping online (LF121).

Consumers have higher expectations than ever before of their personal care products (LF122). Furthermore, based on where the product is sold, the consumer will have different expectations for their shopping experience, which is linked to the price they pay or the product (LF123). Moreover, brands are relying more on how their products make the consumer feel, which can be achieved through the creation of memorable brand experiences (LF124). To create these experiences, sensory experiences have been highlighted as being of paramount importance within the skincare industry (LF125). Furthermore, fragrance is a key factor in the buying decision made by consumers when shopping for personal care products (LF126) and with specific reference to the skincare industry, how the product packaging, as well as the product itself, feels signifies quality to the consumer (LF127). Many purchasing decisions are driven by inner motivations, which govern buying behaviour, and are linked to the five human senses (smell, sight, hearing, touch and taste) (LF128) and as humans are not solely rational beings, but are also influenced by their emotions or feelings, they will therefore favour a brand based on the personality and experience it portrays (LF129).

Sensory branding is the use of the five human senses to engage consumers with the brand in such a way that creates positive emotions, perceptions and memories, ultimately resulting in favourable brand preference (LF130). Moreover, experiences can range in intensity and can be both positive and negative in nature (LF131) and, once an individual makes a sensory association to a product or brand, it is almost impossible to reverse it (LF132), indicative of long-term memory (LF133).

Senses are responsible for converting the stimuli that an individual is exposed to into perceptions (LF134). There are numerous advantages to implementing sensory strategies, including building brand associations (LF135); forming

emotional bonds with consumers (LF136); enhancing the familiarity that consumers have with the brand (LF137); generating positive word of mouth (LF138) and increasing the perceived quality and value of a product, thereby allowing for higher pricing (LF139). While millennials favour online shopping, GenXers still shop mostly in-store and GenZers are the consumers who rely most heavily on digital commerce (LF140). These findings apply to both brick and mortar stores as well as digital stores and when an individual makes use of online or digital platforms to communicate or exchange information, it should be considered a multi-sensory experience (LF141).

It can be concluded that there is a lack of sensory branding being implemented online (LF142); however consumers are expecting engaging sensory experiences both in-store and online (LF143). It is, therefore, no longer sufficient for businesses to practice traditional marketing techniques only (LF144). Sensorial experiences online are important as they instil confidence and brand credibility (LF145) and the use of technology influences shopping patterns and purchasing behaviour both in-store and online (LF146). Additional benefits of businesses concentrating on improving their online presence include the fact that the number of consumers reached is increased online, which can have both positive and negative connotations (LF147). It is common for marketers to make use of sight and hearing when utilising a digital sensory branding strategy (LF148); however sensory-enabling technologies are being developed that brands can use to create cohesion between their in-store atmosphere and their online "webmosphere" (LF149). However, consumers may be resistant to digital innovations (LF150), especially older consumers who are slower to adopt new technology (LF151).

Sight, as a sense in retail, encompasses how consumers make use of their eyes to experience a product or brand (LF152) and is the most commonly used sense by brands to create a brand identity and awareness (LF153) because they are what consumers first notice (LF154). Visual cues influence brand preference, consumption quantity and purchasing behaviour (LF155) and it should be noted that if visual cues are excluded, people will have difficulty interpreting the message (LF156). Visual cues will be interpreted differently

based on an individual's context, such as the culture or beliefs (LF157), gender (LF158) or age (LF159) of consumers. Furthermore, it is advisable that visual sensory stimuli should be complemented with the use of other senses (LF160).

Visual cues consist of colour and lighting (LF161), interior and external variables (LF162), layout and design (LF163) and ambient conditions (LF164). Colours influence consumer behaviour (LF165) and are a key factor to consider by marketers for businesses or brands (LF166) as it has been recorded that brand recognition is increased by 80% with the effective use of colour (LF167) and 85% of consumers are persuaded to buy a product based on colour (LF168). Additionally, colours allude to different meanings (LF169).

Lighting is important in retail outlets as it has been found to have an influence on the consumers' perceptions (LF170). Lighting includes the brightness of a store as it can influence an individual's cognitive processes (LF171). Lighting can further have an influence on the duration that consumers stay in a store (LF172). The use of lightening to influence consumers is commonly used by marketers as it offers an easy way to vary an environment, signifying different moods to consumers within one retail store (LF173).

Traditional in-store visual strategies can include colours used by a brand (LF174), logo design (LF175), packaging design (LF176), lighting in the store (LF177), the cleanliness of the store (LF178), the design and layout of the store itself (LF179), visible signage and display features as well as text on the product packaging itself (LF180) and the uniform of staff (LF181). The digital space is placing increased worth on the use of visual stimuli (LF182) and can include digital photos (LF183), movies and trailers (LF184), colours used by a brand (LF185), logo design (LF186), packaging design (LF187), the layout (LF188), user friendliness of websites (LF189), colour as backgrounds (LF190), 3D imaging (LF191) and virtual reality environments (VR), such as virtual try-ons (VTO), or augmented interactive (AI/AR) technology (LF192).

Sound influences how an individual perceives an environment (LF193) and has a powerful effect on an individual's emotions and moods, making it a

powerful marketing tool that brands can use to shape buying decisions and brand preference, both in-store and online (LF194) because people have personal associations with sound based on their own experiences (LF195). Auditory stimuli include ambient sound (LF196), voice sound (LF197) and music sound (LF198), and has also been found to have a strong link to vision (LF199), which results in long-lasting memory (LF200) and brand loyalty (LF201). Sound, when used simultaneously with advertising, can influence an individual's ability to process information (LF202) and the consumer's age can play a part in whether or not a sound is found to be pleasurable (LF203).

Furthermore, the tempo of music can influence many aspects of consumers' purchasing behaviour (LF204). For example, pleasurable music in a store has a direct link to store traffic, making tempo the most influential auditory factor on consumer behaviour (LF205). Additionally, the tempo and volume of music can influence the length of time that consumers will stay in a store (LF206) and give rise to both positive and negative feelings (LF207). Marketers make use of sound as it is easily accessible (LF208) and provides many benefits, such as increasing sales volume and the pace of consumer shopping (LF209). While auditory stimuli are powerful, they are dependent on the interaction of consumers (LF210). Finally, the pronunciation and spelling of a brand's name should be considered as an important component of auditory stimuli (LF211).

Traditional in-store auditory strategies can include music in stores (LF212), the jingles used by a brand (LF213), the sound or pronunciation of the brand's name (LF214) and sounds associated with using the physical product itself (LF215). Traditional in-store auditory strategies used are also used online (LF216) as well as radio, television (LF217) and video adverts (LF218) and background music (LF219).

Smell is the most sensitive of the five human senses (LF220), the strength of which lies in its ability to create strong feelings of reminiscence (LF221). The human sense of smell is complex as each individual experiences a specific fragrance uniquely (LF222), meaning that it is impossible to know exactly how a fragrance will be experienced (LF223). It is further difficult to predict how a

fragrance will be received as the human brain makes emotional connections to different fragrances (LF224).

Olfactory stimuli in branding relate to both the fragrance of the product itself as well as the ambient fragrance of the store (LF225). A pleasurable fragrance can have an influence on the recall of an experience (LF226), the time that consumers spend in a store (LF227), the amount that they are willing to spend on a product (LF228), as well as their intention to return (LF229). Brands should create fragrances specific to their target audience (LF230), as characteristics such as gender and age influence an individual's perception of a fragrance (LF231). Fragrance can refer to either the primary fragrance or the physical smell of a product (LF232) or secondary fragrance that refers to smells that are applied to an otherwise odourless product (LF233). The power of the sense of smell lies in its longevity in the mind of an individual (LF234), attributed to fragrances influence on an individual's cognitive processes (LF235), emotional responses (LF236), as well as their behaviour, both consciously or unconsciously (LF237).

Traditional in-store olfactory strategies can include the fragrance of the product itself (LF238), signature fragrances (LF239), nebulization technology, such as aerosols or air vents (LF240), or the fragrance of staff in an establishment (LF241). While there is no technology that can replace physical smell online (LF242), digital online olfactory strategies can include the use of imagery and descriptive words (LF243), the distribution of "scratch-and-sniff" cards (LF244), multisensory devices that will enable olfactory stimuli to be delivered to consumers via the internet (LF245).

Touch, or haptics, constitutes one of the principal sources of stimuli for humans (LF246), relating to factors such as texture, shape and temperature (LF247). Touch is therefore especially relevant for businesses who sell physical products (LF248) as individuals often associate the feel of a product with quality (LF249) as well as ownership and valuation (LF250). Tactile sensory stimuli work in close collaboration with sight (LF251). However, there

is a lack of tactile sensory stimuli online, which presents a challenge for businesses that sell physical products (LF252).

A tactile stimulus comprises of both diagnostic and non-diagnostic cues (LF253) and allows consumers to build confidence in a product or brand name (LF254). It has been proven that the length of time that an individual holds or touches an item influences his/her perception (LF255). Haptics allow brands to enhance positive emotional responses, thereby influencing purchasing behaviour as well as the mood of an individual (LF256), including the touch of a staff member (LF257).

It is also noteworthy that consumers have been found to evaluate brands in brick and mortar stores and then purchase the item online where it may be cheaper (LF258), allowing them to touch the product before making a purchasing decision. This is especially true for older consumers (LF259). The level of NFT differs in general between Gen Z, millennials, Gen X and baby boomers, with baby boomers followed by GenXers presenting the highest NFT (LF260). However, millennials and GenZers are less motivated by NFT, which may be a reason why online shopping is predominant for these two groups of consumers (LF261).

Traditional in-store tactile strategies can include touching of a product or product packaging (LF262), the temperature of a store (LF263), different textured paper in advertising (LF264), attention grabbing in store displays (LF259), tester samples of the product (LF265) and the use of unusual packaging (LF266). Digital online tactile strategies can include the use of high-quality images and descriptive words (LF267), the option to have the item delivered, and then returned within a certain period of time (LF268), incorporating other human senses to stimulate deep rooted associations that people have to communicate feel (LF269), consumers touching their mouse or touchscreens (LF270) and numerous technological developments have been made to try and improve the haptic interactions that individuals have when shopping online (LF271). Virtual reality technology is relatively new and, therefore, may not yet be widespread (LF272).

Taste can be sweet, salty, sour, bitter and umami and is experienced both internally, via the tongue (gastronomic taste) (LF273), and externally, via the sense of sight (aesthetic taste) (LF274). Gastronomic taste stirs both physiological and psychological reactions in an individual (LF275); however, humans do not develop preference for a taste that will last indefinitely, which explains why human taste preference changes with time (LF276).

Aesthetic taste is largely influenced by an individual's own preference (LF277) and refers to both the aesthetics of consumable products (food and beverages) as well as hedonic products (cars or interior design) (LF278) but is not objective, meaning that people can experience the exact same object in different ways (LF279). Taste is commonly used by food and beverage businesses to differentiate their products (LF280) and multi-national businesses will adjust their brand taste to accommodate the preferences of the target audience in each country (LF281). Additionally, taste could not exist in isolation (LF282) and is one of the most difficult human senses to use for communication (LF283).

Traditional in-store taste strategies can include taste samples (LF284), incorporation of taste into services (LF285), aesthetic taste is used throughout all the different industries (LF286) and aroma can also be utilised by businesses to create taste experiences (LF287). Digital online taste strategies can include aesthetic taste in the digital marketspace which refers to how aesthetically pleasing a consumer finds a brand's website and social media presence (LF288) and gastronomic taste which is, to date, impossible to replicate virtually (LF289); however, AR technology is being researched to try and bridge this gap online (LF290).

While shopping, individuals search for stimuli (LF291) and should there be too little stimulation, an individual will search elsewhere (LF292); however, if there is too much stimulation an individual will seek to reduce the stimuli that they are being exposed to (LF293). Over stimulation leads to a decrease in time spent in a store (LF294), as well as a decrease in the number of products purchased (LF295). Therefore it is important to remember that quality sensory

stimuli trump the quantity utilised (LF296). This is why it is essential that a balance be achieved to avoid sensory overload (LF297), which can mean adjusting the intensity of the stimuli (LF298) or creating better cohesion between those being utilised (LF299). While all senses should be used, they do not all need to be used simultaneously (LF300).

In Chapter 4, the proposed framework for this study, which is based on the variables discussed in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3, is presented and elaborated on. However, for the purpose of this study, taste stimuli will be excluded from the proposed framework as taste is not a sense with which consumers evaluate skin care products.

CHAPTER 4
CONCEPTUAL MODEL

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 3 the literature review provided in Chapter 2, relating to the concept of brand experience, was conceptualised for the topic of sensory branding in the skincare industry. Within Chapter 3, an in-depth literature review pertaining to the skincare industry, specifically in South Africa, the effects of the global COVID-19 pandemic thereon and the shift of sales from in-store to online for skin care products was provided. Hereafter, the importance of sensory branding to the skincare industry was highlighted. The sections thereafter deliberated the five human senses and sensory strategies for both traditional brick-and-mortar stores, as well as for the digital marketspace, were detailed. Finally, the negative effects of sensory overload were emphasised and a summary of the numerous sensory strategies presented.

In this chapter (Chapter 4), the concept of a theoretical framework is discussed, including the types available to researchers and the components thereof. Hereafter, a conceptual model relevant to this study, which was deduced from the literature review provided in Chapters 2 and 3, is presented and an in-depth discussion provided. The discussion provides a short description of each variable as well as a motivation for the inclusion within the framework. Chapter 4 is concluded with a list of the hypotheses developed for this study from the conceptual model.

4.2   ELEMENTS OF A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND CONCEPTUAL MODEL

As opined by Crawford (2020:35), a framework is essential when conducting research as it allows the researcher to prove the necessity of their work and Shikalepo (2020) adds that a framework provides context for the study and the variables thereof by merging all literature findings into one comprehensive figure. Besides the framework being beneficial in convincing an audience of

the significance of the study, the framework assists the researcher in organising their own information and understanding how the selected variables interact (Crawford 2020:35; Grant & Osanloo 2015:12). When discussing frameworks, two alternative types, namely conceptual and theoretical frameworks are available to researchers (Collins & Stockton 2018:4; Crawford 2020:35; Davis 2021; Adom, Hussein & Agyem 2018:440; Grant & Osanloo 2015:16; Mehta 2013).

A summary of the differences and similarities between theoretical frameworks and conceptual frameworks is presented in Figure 4.1.

FIGURE 4.1

A SUMMARY OF THE DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES BETWEEN THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS
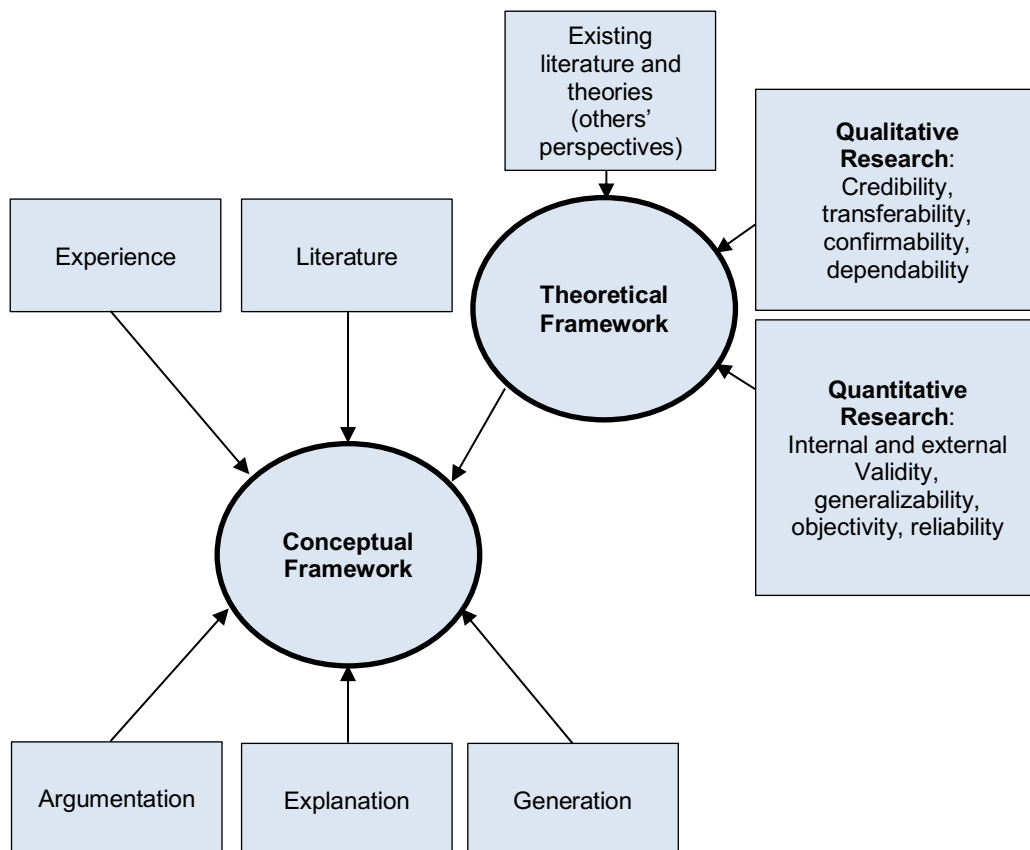
Source: Adapted from Crawford (2020:46); Kivunja (2018:48)

The sections that follow provide a definition and discussion on the differences of the opposing frameworks.

4.2.1 Theoretical framework

Maxwell (2013:39) is of the opinion that theoretical and conceptual frameworks are synonymous, which is supported by Anfara and Mertz (2015:1), Merriam and Tisdell (2016:1), as well as Robson and McCartan (2016:1). However, Grant and Osanloo (2015:16) argue that the two terms are not interchangeable and have distinct differences. As defined by Collins and Stockton (2018:3) and Leeming (2018:668), as well as Merriam and Tisdell (2016:85), a theoretical framework is the structure or foundation of a study. Grant and Osanloo (2015:16) explain that the most apparent difference between conceptual and theoretical frameworks is that conceptual frameworks are constructed based on personal experience, supplemented by existing literature, whereas theoretical frameworks are based solely on existing literature and accepted theories. Ngulube (2018:9) adds that while a conceptual framework comprises concepts from a variety of theories, a theoretical framework is based on a single accepted theory. A theoretical framework is then an existing theory which the researcher contextualises for the purpose of their own study (Grant & Osanloo 2015:16; Kivunja 2018:47; Tight 2018:7).

Theoretical frameworks are utilised in both quantitative as well as qualitative studies. With reference to qualitative research, theoretical frameworks enhance the credibility and dependability of the study (Collins & Stockton 2018:1; Kivunja 2018:48). Additionally, Adom et al (2018:438) and Kivunja (2018:48) add that theoretical frameworks increase the transferability of a qualitative study through confirming that the findings are objective. From the perspective of quantitative research, a theoretical framework proves the internal validity and increases the reliability of the study (Kivunja 2018:48). Furthermore, external validity is achieved through the use of a theoretical framework in quantitative studies as it provides a means for the researcher to prove that their findings are objective (Adom et al 2018:438; Kivunja 2018:48).

4.2.2 Conceptual framework

As previously stated, Maxwell (2013:39) is of the opinion that conceptual and theoretical frameworks are akin, which he accredits to the fact that both variations of a framework make reference to the context of the study. However, Ravitch and Riggan (2017:5) argue that the main purpose of a conceptual framework is for the researcher to reinforce why their study is significant as well as that the means for conducting the study are fitting. Another definition of a conceptual framework is an explanation, of either a written or graphical nature, depicting the key variables of the study and how they are related (Miles, Huberman & Saldana 2014:20; Ngulube 2019:29). This definition is supported by Marshall and Rossman (2016:6), who add that the conceptual framework is a means for a researcher to link their own study to the extant research conducted, thereby highlighting the importance of the study.

All the above-mentioned definitions, while slightly different, fundamentally acknowledge that a conceptual framework is linked to the purpose of the study as well as the interaction between the variables (Crawford 2020:37). Furthermore, from the definitions provided, it is apparent that a conceptual framework serves three broad purposes. The first purpose can be categorised as argumentation, which makes reference to the motivation for why the study is significant or necessary (Marshall & Rossman 2016:67; Ravitch & Carl 2019:33; Ravitch & Riggan 2017:5). Secondly, a conceptual framework provides an explanation for the selection of the key factors of the study (Anfara & Mertz 2015:15; Hennink, Hutter & Bailey 2020:38; Miles et al 2014:20). Lastly, Grant and Osanloo (2015:17), Hennink et al (2020:38), Merriam and Tisdell (2016:86), Ravitch and Carl (2019:33) and Shikalepo (2020) argue that the importance of a conceptual framework lies in its ability to assist the researcher in generating appropriate research questions, data collection methods and analysis thereof. All of the above purposes indicate the strategic importance or use of a conceptual framework in research studies.

When constructing a conceptual framework, as explained by Crawford (2020:42), the researcher draws from their own personal experience.

However, many authors, such as Booth, Colomb, Bizup and Fitzgerald (2016:31), Marshall and Rossman (2016:26) and Ravitch and Riggan (2017:15), as well as Robson and McCartan (2016:73), recognise that the use of personal experience alone when constructing a conceptual framework is insufficient. This statement is supported by Merriam and Tisdell (2016:84), as well as Ravitch and Carl (2019:33), who state that the use of existing literature and theories are essential in the development of a conceptual framework. It is therefore recommended by Anfara and Mertz (2015:7), Marshall and Rossman (2016:26), Ngulube (2020:30), Ravitch and Riggan (2017:15) and Robson and McCartan (2016:74), as well as Shikalepo (2020), that researchers should supplement their own personal experience with existing literature and theories when developing the conceptual framework for a study. Hennink et al (2020:38) and Shikalepo (2020) add that a conceptual framework can serve as a reminder to the researcher about the focus of the study, and therefore the resulting report.

Moreover, a researcher should take into account that the conceptual framework, due to it being constructed based on personal experience, may be viewed differently by their audience and it is therefore critical that they provide ample explanation (Shikalepo 2020). This study draws on previous existing literature and theories to construct a conceptual model. These theories are presented and briefly discussed in the section that follows.

4.3   PREVIOUSLY EXISTING THEORIES

As previously explained, theoretical frameworks are based solely on existing literature and accepted theories (Grant & Osanloo 2015:16). A number of theories, frameworks and models have been identified and contextualised to form the conceptual model of this study. In the sections that follow, Consumer Behaviour Theory, the Experience Economy Theory and Brand Equity Theory and relevant models are discussed, which are used to conceptualise the conceptual model of this study.

4.3.1 Consumer Behaviour Theory

As posited by Comanescue (2019:590) consumer behaviour is a complex ideology as it is influenced by a variety of different factors and is defined by Comanescue (2019:590) along with Manuere, Chikazhe and Manyeruke (2022:105) and Saeed (2019:3) as the study of how a consumer selects an offering, which can relate to goods, services or experiences, to purchase in order to satisfy their needs or desires. Needle (2021) adds that understanding consumer behaviour is imperative to businesses as it allows them to predict who their customers will be, and therefore, aid in targeting correctly. In an attempt to simplify the processes of identifying what factors will influence the consumers buying behaviour, and therefore more accurately attract and engage consumers, a number of models have been developed. As stated by Bray (2008:9), consumer behaviour models can be analytical, which provide a guideline as to what factors will have an influence on behaviour, or prescriptive, which explain the structure of altering behaviour. The most prominent analytical models include the Buyer Behaviour Model and the Consumer Decision Model, while prescriptive models include the Theory of Reasoned Action Model and the Theory of Planned Behaviour Model.

4.3.1.1 The Buyer Behaviour Model

The Buyer Behaviour Model was developed by Howard and Sheth (1969) and provides a clear sequence of how social psychological and marketing strategies influence the consumers decision making process (Manuere et al 2022:106; Ohio University 2022). While the model is complex, the core components include inputs, exogenous variables and outputs, as seen in Figure 4.2. Input variables refer to any information supplied by the brand, including aspects such as price, quality, distinctiveness and marketing strategies (Anjali 2019; Manuere et al 2022:107). Exogenous variables refer to external factors which may influence the consumers behaviour, such as their personality, social class, culture, financial situation or existing perceptions (Anjali 2019; Manuere et al 2022:107). Hypothetical constructs encompass the psychological which influence buying behaviour, such as

motives, attitude, intention, knowledge and satisfaction (Anjali 2019; Manuere et al 2022:107). Lastly, output variables are the result or final decision made by the consumer in terms of making the purchase (Anjali 2019; Manuere et al 2022:108).

FIGURE 4.2

THE CORE COMPONENTS OF THE CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR MODEL
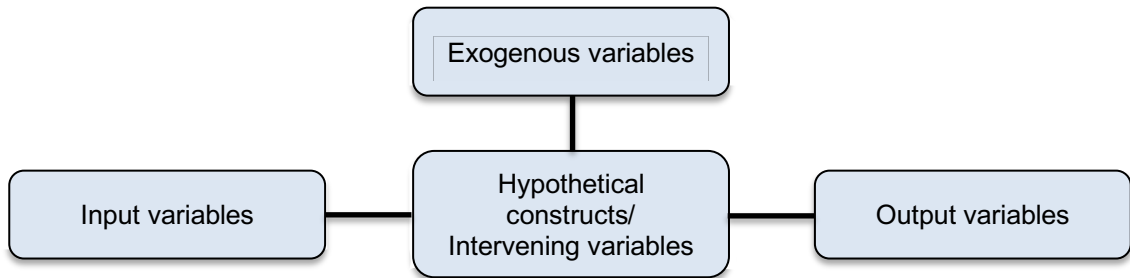
Source: Manuere et al (2022:107)

From this model, the input variables would relate to the independent variable and sub-variables in the proposed conceptual model of this study, while the output variables will relate to the dependent variable namely, brand loyalty (Section 4.4: Figure 4.11).

4.3.1.2 The Consumer Decision Model

The Consumer Decision Model was developed by Engel, Kollat and Blackwell in 1968 and while the model shares many similarities with the buyer behaviour model discussed in Section 4.3.1.1, however it differs in that it is based on the idea that the decision making process surrounds six points, namely; need recognition, search for information, evaluation of alternatives, purchase, post purchase and divestment (Bray 2008:15; Needle 2021). The core assumption of the model is that the seven afore mentioned points are all influenced by either external environmental factors or by the specific traits of an individual (Bray 2008:16; Needle 2021), which can be seen in Figure 4.3.

This model relates to the proposed conceptual model of this study in that when shopping for skincare, consumers have hundreds of options to choose from and so brands need to firstly identify what their target audience specifically

wants before they can adjust the sensory information they provide. Morover, based on the post purchase consumption of consumers, this could either lead to brand loyalty or divestment (Section 4.4: Figure 4.11).

FIGURE 4.3

THE CONSUMER DECISION MODEL
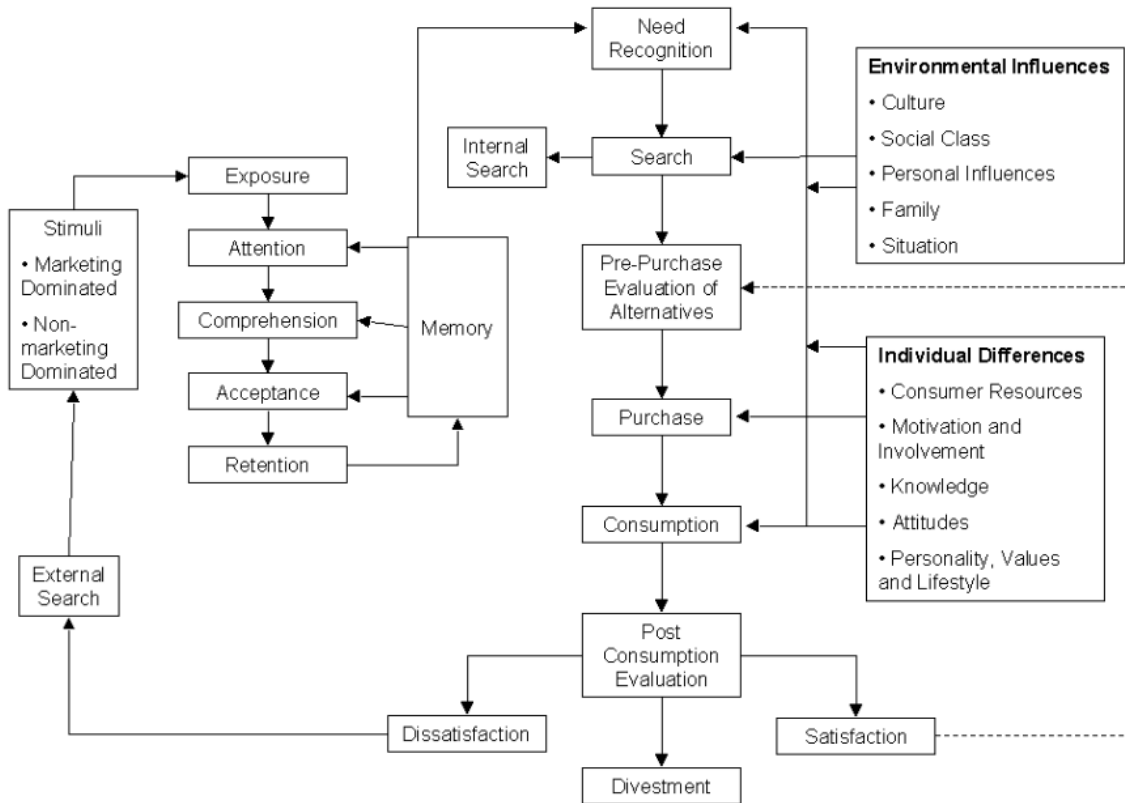
Source: Solomon, Russell-Bennett & Previte (2012)

4.3.1.3 The Theory of Planned Behaviour Model and the Reasoned Action Model

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) Model provides the bases for the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) Model (Bray 2008:20; Manuere et al 2022:109). Manuere et al (2022:108) explain that TPB Model was however limited as it only assessed the consumers attitude or beliefs. When the model was extended to include behaviour, it was renamed the TRA Model (Ajzen & Fishbein 1980; Fishbein & Ajzen 1975). Bhattacharjee and Chetty (2019) along with Hagger (2019:1) explain that the TRA Model aims to define the relationship between consumer attitudes and their shopping behaviour.

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Manuere et al (2022:107) stipulates that the behaviour of consumers is as a result of number of aspects that stem from consumer attitudes and subjective norms of behaviour, as seen in Figure 4.4. Yzer (2012:121) explains that the model insinuates that the beliefs individuals have about behaviour is of importance.

FIGURE 4.4

COMPONENTS OF REASONED ACTION THEORY
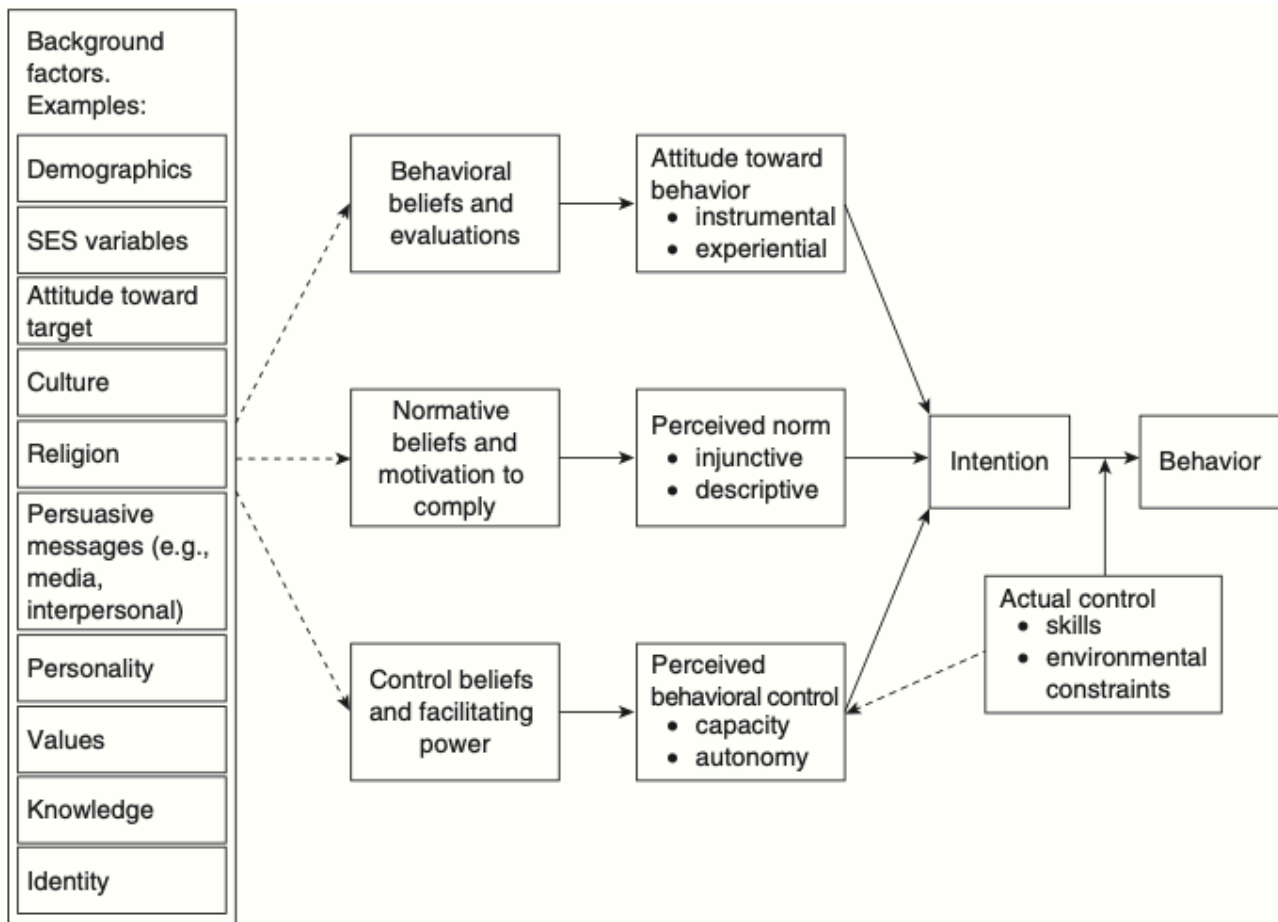
Source: Yzer (2012:121).

For the purpose of the conceptual model developed for this study, background factors would relate to the demographics, cultue, religion, personality, values, knowledge and identitiy of the respondents. Moreover, the background factor of persuasive messages would be represented by the different sensory branding strategies addressed. Finally, the the last stage of the model, behaviour, relates to this study's dependent variable (brand loyalty) (Section 4.4: Figure 4.11).

A limitation to the TRA Model is that it explains that marketers for brick and mortar stores only will try to change the attitudes of consumers towards a brand in order to achieve a desired behaviour (Bhattacharjee & Chetty 2019). This excludes online or e-commerce.

4.3.1.4 The Technology Acceptance Model

The Technology Acceptance Model is founded on the ideology of the TRA Model in that it also depicts that marketers will want to adjust the attitudes of consumers to persuade them to behave in a certain way (Bhattacharjee & Chetty 2019). However, Bhattacharjee and Chetty (2019) explain that the technology acceptance model focuses solely on the process via digital platforms, such as with e-commerce and Kamel, Shafiq and Kakria (2020:101213), along with Salloum, Alhamad, Al-Emran, Monem & Shaalan (2019:128446), add that the model essentially indicates the acceptance of technology by consumers (Figure 4.5).

FIGURE 4.5

THE TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTANCE MODEL
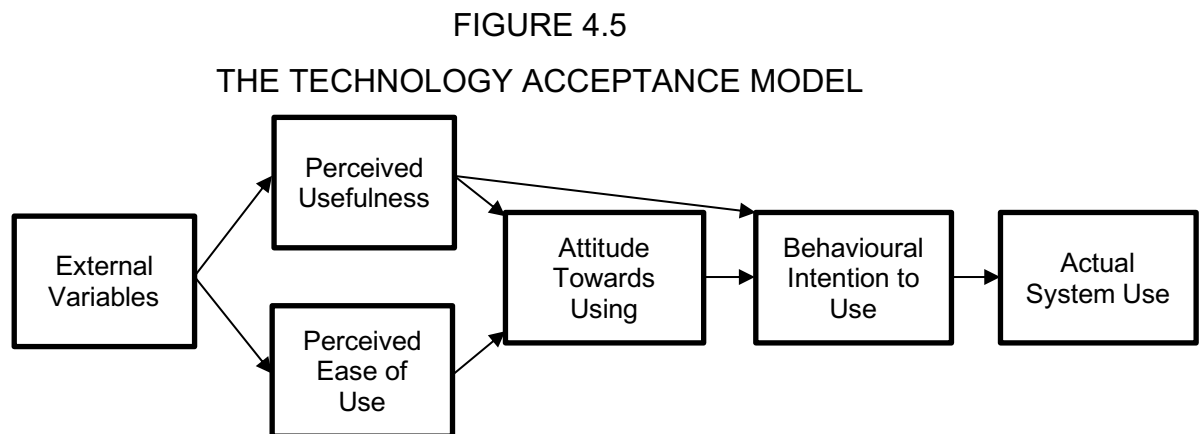
Source: Bhattacharjee & Chetty (2019); Salloum et al (2019:128446)

The attitudes of consumers towards shopping online can be influenced by convenience and cost friendliness as well as the user-friendliness of the digital platform (Bhattacharjee & Chetty 2019; Salloum et al 2019:128446). However, the attitudes towards use, is influenced by marketing strategies. This study had the purpose of investigating the specific sensory strategies desired by consumers when shopping for skincare products both in-store and online and how this translates into brand loyalty, which relates to the use of sensory

stimuli in the marketing and sales of products. This explains the relevance of the use of this model in the creation of the proposed conceptual model of this study (Section 4.4: Figure 4.11). Sensory marketing, or branding, constitutes a segment of the core category of experience marketing, which has roots in the experience economy theory proposed by Pine and Gilmore (1998), which is the second theory discussed in this chapter.

4.3.2 The Experience Economy Theory

The use of experiences in marketing is certainly not new, and can be dated back to the 1980s (Foroudi & Palazzo 2019:132). However, with specific reference to marketing the concept was first brought to light in the work of Hirschman and Holbrook (1982), but was contained to in-store shopping (Pine & Gilmore 1999). It was then posited by Schmitt (1999:11) that traditional marketing did not provide a means to successfully capitalise the experience economy as it disregarded human emotions. This led to the previously accepted consumer decision-making process (need recognition, search for information, evaluation of alternatives, purchase and post-purchase evaluation) (Dewey 1910:72) being considered as incomplete (Foroudi & Palazzo 2019:132).

As declared by Pine and Gilmore (1999:12), the experience economy is the fourth level of an economic offering, whereby commodities, goods and services account for the first three. Moreover, it is opined that while the latter are all necessary, experiences are the most memorable to consumers (Pine & Gilmore 1999:12; Same & Larimo 2012:482). However, Pine and Gimore (1999:14) emphasis that the success of an experience is dependent on the interaction of a consumer as well as the ability of the brand to provide either an entertaining, educational, esthetic or escapist dimension to the experience (Pine & Gilmore 1999:102; Same & Larimo 2012:483). To explain their theory, Pine and Gilmore (1999) developed the experience model (see Chapter 2: Section 2.2.4.1) through which it is possible to understand and interpret the experiences that a person has when purchasing and consuming a product, based on the interactions that they have with that brand. As discussed in

Chapter 2, Section 2.2.4.2, experience marketing is any form of marketing effort that is customer-centric in nature, and aims to create value through connection with consumers (Carù & Cova 2016:272; Ferreira & Sousa 2020:572; Homburg, Jozić & Kuehnl 2017:378; Suardi 2019:15).

4.3.2.1   Conceptual model of experience marketing

Same and Larimo (2012:484) as well as Sari and Rufaidah (2017:861) explain that essentially, an experience with specific reference to marketing can occur when there is interaction between a company or business and the consumer. Moreover, the interaction between the two parties will be influenced by the actions and processes involved in the experience, the environment in which the experience takes place as well as the specific stimuli, or marketing mix, utilized to create the experience (Same & Larimo 2012:484; Sari & Rufaidah 2017:861). Additionally, the experience may be perceived differently by a consumer based on personal characteristics and traits, such as demographics and culture, attitude and knowledge, motivations and past experiences (Same & Larimo 2012:484; Sari & Rufaidah 2017:859). Same and Larimo (2012:484), Sari and Rufaidah (2017:861) along with Yamamoto, Cordova and Mazzei (2018:66) and Larocca, Ladeira, Silva and Mello (2020:4) go further to state that as is the case for most marketing tactics, the desired end result from experience marketing is value creation, either in the form of increased sales or brand loyalty as well as value creation for the consumer through the formation of relationships. Figure 4.6 provides a graphical illustration of the components of experience marketing model.

It can be deduced that experience marketing progresses from exposure to certain stimulus to a change in consumer behaviour, learning and attitude, which relates it to consumer behaviour theory. As discovered in Chapter 2, Section 2.2.10, sensory experiences have been highlighted as one of the strongest dimensions of experience as for humans (Gao & Lan 2020:2; Hulten 2017:1).

FIGURE 4.6

CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF EXPERIENCE MARKETING
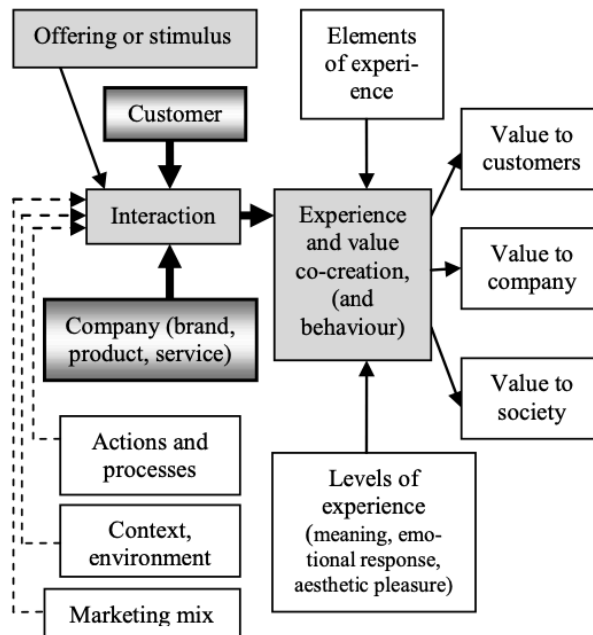
Source: Same and Larimo (2012:484)

The independent variable and sub-variables of this study are the various sensory marketing strategies utilised in the sale of skincare products both in-store and online (Section 4.4: Figure 4.11), which are proposed to have a relationship with brand loyalty, an observable consumer behaviour. This portrays the link between the conceptual model of experience and the proposed conceptual model developed for this study.

4.3.2.2   A model of sensory marketing

As discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.2.10, sensory experiences are powerful and have an influence on consumer attitudes, learning and behaviour. Figure 4.7 presents the model of sensory marketing. The model for sensory marketing stipulates that consumers will have both emotional and cognitive reactions to sensory stimuli provided by a brand, which will result in certain attitude, learning and behaviour responses from that consumer. As previously discussed, the various sensory marketing strategies utilised by skincare brands both in-store and online constitute the independent variable and sub-variables of this study which are propose to have an influence on brand loyalty,

which is a behavioural and attitudinal response of consumers (Section 4.4: Figure 4.11).

FIGURE 4.7

A MODEL OF SENSORY MARKETING
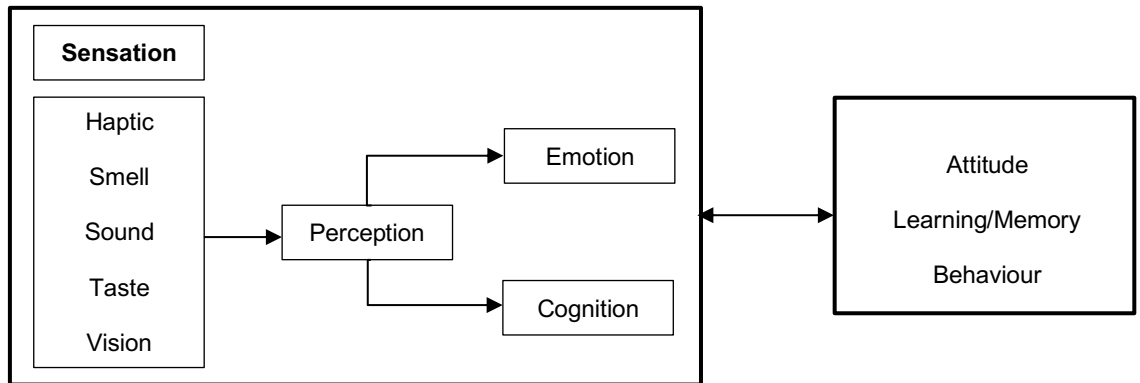
Source: Hulten (2020:14)

However, as discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.2.11, sensory experiences do not occur in isolation, but rather encompasses different aspects to create an overall holistic perception of an experience, such as a shopping experience (Hulten 2020:16).

4.3.2.3 A model for multi-sensory experience and shopping behaviour

Another theory which explains the relationship between sensory stimuli and consumer shopping behaviour is the multi-sensory experience and shopping behaviour framework (depicted in Figure 4.8). The framework for multi-sensory experience and shopping behaviour is very similar to the model for sensory marketing in that they both portray that, based on the sensory stimuli provided by a brand, a consumer will have both emotional and cognitive reactions, which in turn will influence their overall shopping behaviour. However, the multi-sensory experience and shopping behaviour model puts forward that consumers are exposed to a number of sensory stimuli simultaneously (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.11).

FIGURE 4.8

A MODEL FOR MULTI-SENSORY EXPERIENCE AND SHOPPING
BEHAVIOUR
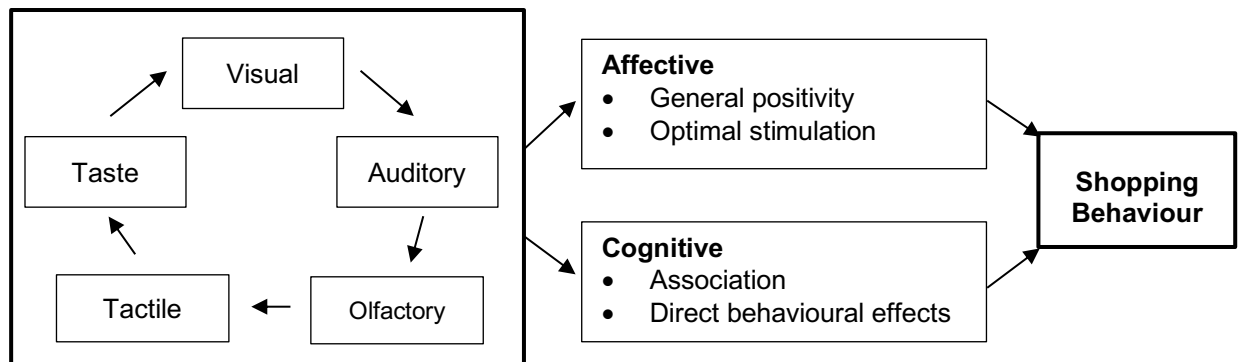
Source: Hulten (2020:16); Spence et al (2014:473)

As the proposed conceptual model of this study deals with the influence of various sensory marketing strategies on brand loyalty with specific reference to the skincare industry, the model for multi-sensory experience and shopping behaviour is relevant as it explains that more than one of the sub-variables of this study can be used similtaniously to achieve the desired response of brand loyalty (Section 4: Figure 4.11). Brand experiences, especially sensory experiences, are being used more and more, which can be attributed to their relationship with brand loyalty, which in turn will contribute to brand equity (Beig & Nika 2022:157) (Chapter 2: Section 2.12).

4.3.3   Brand equity theory

As discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.2.2, brand equity refers to all brand assets or liabilities that can either add value to, or take away value from, a product offering (Aaker 1991:13). More specifically, consumer-based brand equity (CBBE) is defined as the effect of consumers' awareness and knowledge of a brand on their response to marketing of a product offering from a brand (Algharabat et al 2021:8; Chatzipanagiotou et al 2019:328; Koay, Ong, Khoo & Yeoh 2019:55; Narteh 2018:381). To conceptualise this theory, Aaker (1991; 1992) developed a model, whereby five components were identified, known as the brand equity model (Figure 4.9). However, when debating brand equity from a marketing perspective (CBBE) only brand awareness (Chapter

2: Section 2.2.2.1), brand association (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.2.2), perceived quality (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.2.3) and brand loyalty (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.2.4) are relevant.

FIGURE 4.9

CONSUMER BASED BRAND EQUITY MODEL
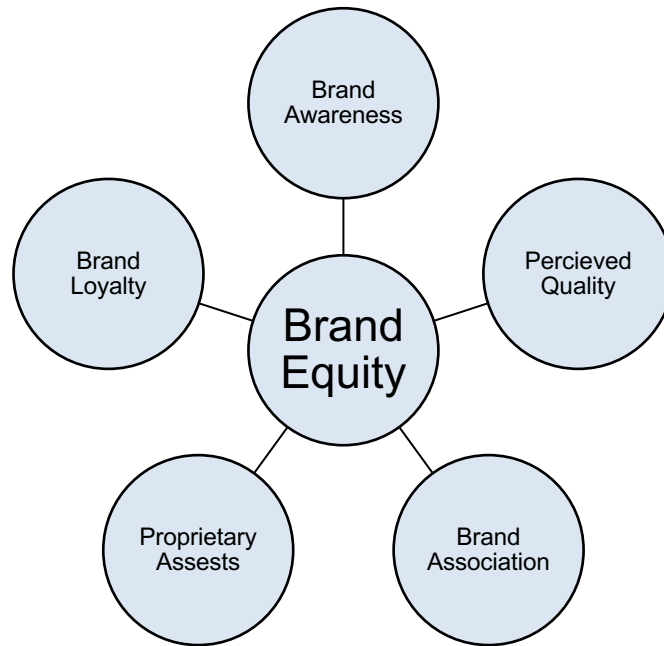
Source: Popovic (2021)

It has been noted that experiences, or experience marketing, has an association with brand preference and therefore, on brand equity (Beig & Nika 2022:157).

4.3.3.1 A model of the influence of brand experience on brand equity

The final model utilised to form the conceptual model for this study is the model of the influence of brand experience on brand equity. As opined by Cleff, Lin and Walter (2014:9), the effects of different types of brand experience on specific components of brand equity have been studied, as depicted in Figure 4.10.

In Figure 4.6, it can be seen that many aspects of brand experience influence consumer brand equity and in Chapter 2, Section 2.2.12, traditionally, brand

experience has directly influenced brand loyalty. However, for the purpose of constructing a conceptual model for this study, the influence of sensory experiences on brand loyalty was highlighted. This model provides the bases of the proposed conceptual model developed for the purpose of this study (Section 4.4: Figure 4.11).

FIGURE 4.10

A MODEL OF THE INFLUENCE OF BRAND EXPERIENCE ON BRAND EQUITY
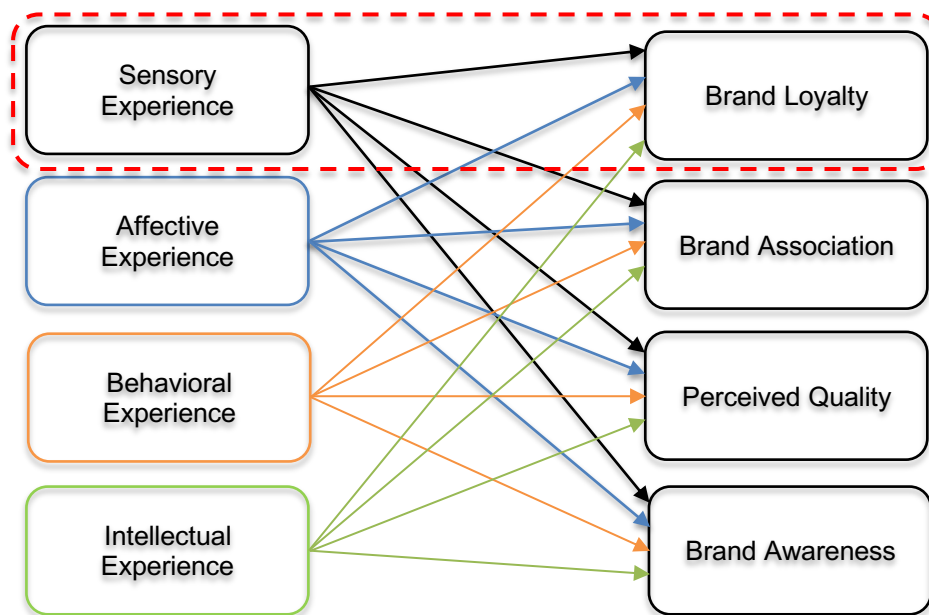
Source: Adapted from Beig & Nika (2022:161)

4.4   THE CONCEPTUAL MODEL

For the purpose of this study a conceptual model was constructed by contextualising the previously discussed theories and models, offering a solution to the research question pertaining to: what sensory experiences are desired by customers when purchasing skincare products in-store, as opposed to online? (Chapter 1: Section 1.3). Following this, hypotheses were created to identify relationships between the independent variables and the dependent variable of this study. Figure 4.11 exhibits the conceptual model for the relationship between visual, auditory, olfactory and tactile traditional and digital branding strategies and brand loyalty.

FIGURE 4.11

A CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF THE DESIRED SENSORY MARKETING
STRATEGIES WHEN PURCHASING SKINCARE PRODUCTS IN-STORE
VERSUS ONLINE

Independent Variables   Dependent Variable

Traditional Sensory Strategies	H_1	
Visual Sensory Strategy	H_{1a}	
Auditory Sensory Strategy	H_{1b}	
Olfactory Sensory Strategy	H_{1c}	
Tactile Sensory Strategy	H_{1d}	Brand Loyalty
Digital Sensory Strategies	H_2	
Visual Sensory Strategy	H_{2a}	
Auditory Sensory Strategy	H_{2b}	
Olfactory Sensory Strategy	H_{2c}	
Tactile Sensory Strategy	H_{2d}	
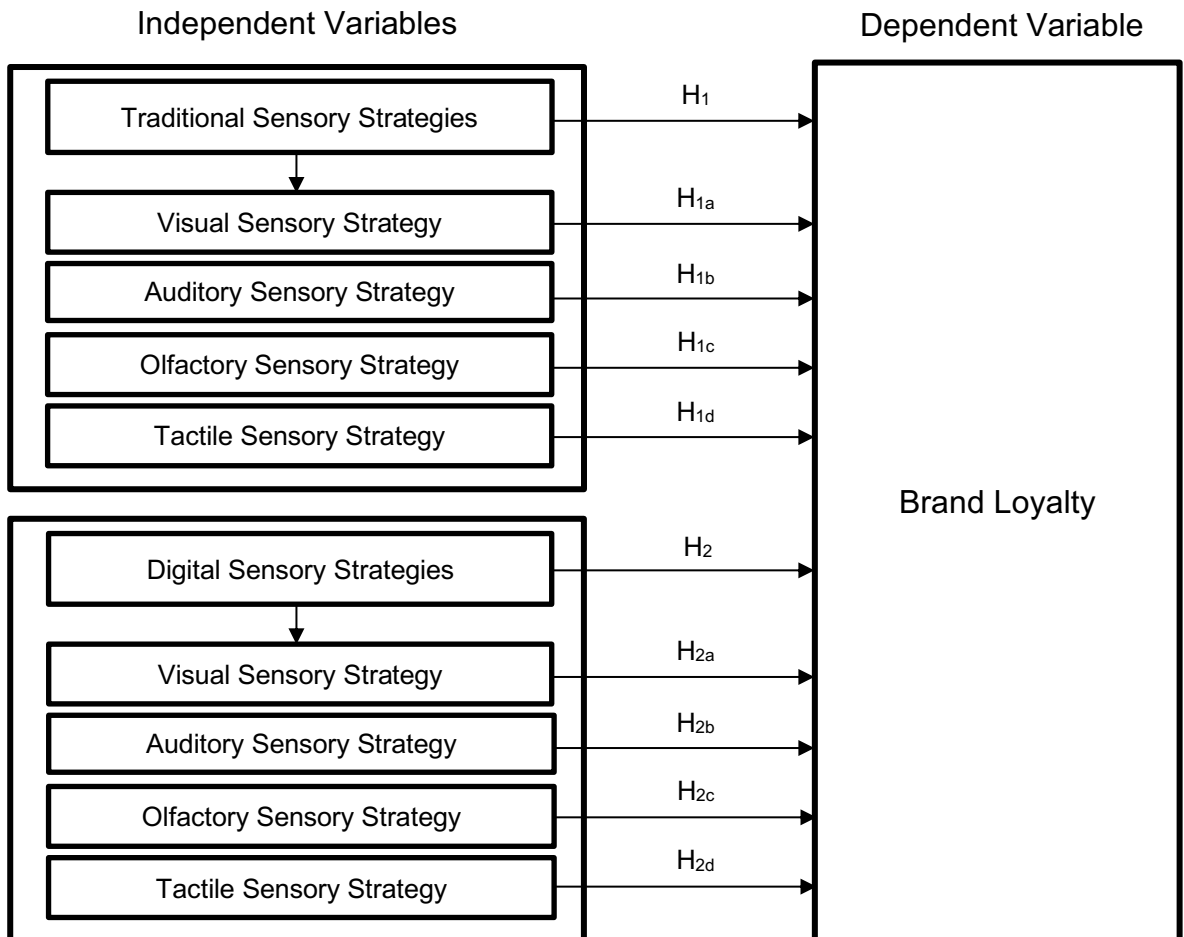
Source: Own construction

The conceptual model (Figure 4.11) constitutes two types of hypotheses, a null hypothesis (H_o) and an alternative hypothesis (H_a). A null hypothesis states that no relationship exists between the independent and the dependent variable. Contradictorily, the alternative hypotheses signify that there is a relationship that exists between the independent and dependent variable (Taylor 2019:1).

For this study, hypotheses have been developed to test the influence of the independent variables (traditional and digital sensory branding strategies) on

the dependent variable (brand loyalty) of this study. These hypotheses are presented in Table 4.1.

TABLE 4.1

NULL AND ALTERNATIVE HYPOTHESES

Hypotheses		
#	H_a	H_o
Relationship between the independent and dependent variables of this study		
Traditional sensory branding strategies		
H_1	There is a significant relationship between traditional sensory branding strategies and brand loyalty.	There is no significant relationship between traditional sensory branding strategies and brand loyalty.
H_{1a}	There is a significant relationship between traditional visual sensory strategies and brand loyalty.	There is no significant relationship between traditional visual sensory strategies and brand loyalty.
H_{1b}	There is a significant relationship between traditional auditory sensory strategies and brand loyalty.	There is no significant relationship between traditional auditory sensory strategies and brand loyalty.
H_{1c}	There is a significant relationship between traditional olfactory sensory strategies and brand loyalty.	There is no significant relationship between traditional olfactory sensory strategies and brand loyalty.
H_{1d}	There is a significant relationship between traditional tactile sensory strategies and brand loyalty.	There is no significant relationship between traditional tactile sensory strategies and brand loyalty.
Digital sensory branding strategies		
H_2	There is a significant relationship between digital sensory branding strategies and brand loyalty.	There is no significant relationship between digital sensory branding strategies and brand loyalty.
H_{2a}	There is a significant relationship between digital visual sensory strategies and brand loyalty.	There is no significant relationship between digital visual sensory strategies and brand loyalty.
H_{2b}	There is a significant relationship between digital auditory sensory strategies and brand loyalty.	There is no significant relationship between digital auditory sensory strategies and brand loyalty.
H_{2c}	There is a significant relationship between digital olfactory sensory strategies and brand loyalty.	There is no significant relationship between digital olfactory sensory strategies and brand loyalty.
H_{2d}	There is a significant relationship between digital tactile sensory strategies and brand loyalty.	There is no significant relationship between digital tactile sensory strategies and brand loyalty.

Source: Own construction

As explained by Kivunja (2018:45), along with de Trigueros (2018:1), a basic conceptual model is built from independent, dependent and, in some cases, mediating variables. Independent variables are those factors within a study that the researcher has control over and can therefore change, whereas dependent variables change as a result of the changes inflicted on the independent variables, meaning the researcher has no control over this

variable (Dagar 2019:60; Rychlak 2017:16; Shukla 2018:1; Vijayalakshmi & Sivapragasam 2019:30).

However, models can further comprise mediating variables. Andrew, Pedersen and McEvoy (2019:42), Bhandari (2021), Hefner (2017:1852) and Namazi and Namazi (2016:545) explain that mediating variables are used when the independent variable has an indirect relationship with the dependent variable, and a mediating variable therefore signifies the process linking the independent and dependent variables of a study. The following sections expand on the independent variables used in the conceptual model relevant to this study.

4.5   THE INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

For the purpose of this study, two main independent variables were identified and selected based on previous academic literature, namely traditional sensory branding strategies and digital sensory branding strategies. These two independent variables were selected based on previously existing literature (see Chapter 3) as well as based on the Experience Economy Theory (Section 4.3.2) and specifically the Model of Sensory Marketing (Section 4.3.2.2) and the Model of Multi-Sensory Marketing (Section 4.3.2.3). The independent variables of this study were considered in conjunction with brand experience.

4.5.1   Brand experience

Brand experiences (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.5) are the result of a number of consumer experiences (Hollebeek & Macky 2019:163; Hollebeek et al 2019:7; Islam et al 2019:7; Lemon & Verhoef 2016:70; Rather 2019:19). Consumer experiences have been categorised into feel-related, cognitive, act, relate and sensory experiences (Schmitt 1999:61). However, for the purpose of this study, sensory brand experiences were focused on as it was determined that they are one of the strongest dimensions of experience, as well as appealing

to and influencing a large variety of consumers (Gao & Lan 2020:2; Hulten 2017:1).

Sensory branding and sensory marketing are utilised to create positive and memorable brand experiences (Gao & Lan 2020:2; Hulten 2017:1) and, while ranging in intensity, remain in the minds of consumers, thereby influencing their commitment to a brand (Beig & Nika 2022:158). Brand experience is a key concern for this study as it will be an indicator of a sustainable competitive advantage. Furthermore, brand experience has a direct relationship with brand loyalty (Brakus et al 2009:54; Harris et al 2017:1; Kim & Chao 2019:10; Ramaseshan & Stein 2014) as well as a lasting effect thereon (Mascarenhas et al 2006; Mittal & Kamakura 2001).

Both traditional sensory branding strategies and digital sensory branding strategies comprise four sub-variables categorised as visual, auditory, olfactory and tactile sensory branding strategies. In the sections that follow, the variables as well as sub-variables of the study are defined and their inclusion in this study is motivated. Furthermore, the specific strategies, in both a traditional and digital sense, will be provided.

4.5.2 Traditional sensory branding

Due to the immense competition in modern markets, brands are increasingly attempting to differentiate themselves. One means to accomplish this, that has proven successful, is to position the brand itself as an experience, which is done through the use of sensorial branding and marketing (Foroudi & Palazzo 2019:132; Galande 2019:47). Sensory branding or marketing is widely accepted as being the use of the five human senses to engage with customers and create brand preference (Beig & Nika 2022:158; Cowen-Elstner 2018:18; Foroudi & Palazzo 2019:131; Galande 2019:47; Hulten 2020:18; 2017:2; Manojkumar et al 2021:655; Ong et al 2018:5; Pogorzelski 2018:84; Suardi 2019:16; Upadhyaya 2017:353; Wala et al 2019:109).

The power of sensory branding lies in the fact that once a consumer makes a sensory association with a brand, it is unlikely they will forget it (Foroudi & Palazzo 2019:132). It can therefore be said that sensorial marketing and branding creates long-term experiences for consumers that remain in their minds well after the encounter. It has further been found that consumers indicate preference towards brands based on the brand's personality and the experience it offers them (Liegeois & Rivera 2011:16). From these literature findings, it can be concluded that traditional sensory branding has an influence on consumer experiences. For these reasons, traditional sensory branding was identified as a variable of this study (Chapter 3: Section 3.3) and provides an explanation to the formulation of hypothesis H1 (There is a significant relationship between traditional sensory branding strategies and brand loyalty).

4.5.3   Digital sensory branding

Technology has become an important communication tool (Hulten 2020:9), evident by the amount of time that consumers are spending online (Deyan 2021; Koetsier 2020), which has been amplified by the exponential advancement of technology (Pathan 2018:189; Ricker & Thatcher 2017:368). Consumers are equivocally demanding of brands online as they are in-store in terms of expecting engaging sensory experiences (Sarathy 2020). This means that it is no longer sufficient for businesses to practice traditional marketing techniques only. Brands must therefore find ways to mimic the experience online that consumers have in-store, thereby increasing consumer confidence and solidifying the credibility of the brand (Kaushik & Gokhale 2021:378; Sarathy 2020).

It has further been stated that each time that a consumer utilises a digital platform to communicate or find information, it should be considered a sensory experience (Hulten 2020:9). Digital sensory branding is however seen as a forgone opportunity, due to the lack of its utilisation in creating brand experiences (Kaushik & Gokhale 2021:5377; Petit et al 2018:42). It can therefore be concluded that while implementing sensory branding online is

perceived as being more difficult, it is necessary. For these reasons, digital sensory branding was identified as a variable of this study (Chapter 3: Section 3.4). This also offers an explanation as to the formulation of hypothesis H2 (There is a significant relationship between digital sensory branding strategies and brand loyalty). For the purpose of this study, both traditional and digital sensory branding comprised visual, auditory, olfactory and tactile sensory branding strategies.

4.5.4   Visual sensory branding

Visual sensory branding (Chapter 3: Section 3.5) was selected as a sub-variable as research found that sight is the sense most commonly used by brands to create brand identity and awareness (Foroudi & Palazzo 2019:136; Hulten 2020:59; Pogorzelski 2018:85; Shanthi et al 2019:205), attributed to it being the most seductive (Upadhyaya 2017:353) and noticeable human sense (Biswas et al 2014:114; Foroudi & Palazzo 2019:136; Galande 2019:48; Hulten 2017:5; Pogorzelski 2018:85). Furthermore, visual cues are powerful as they have an influence on brand preference, consumption quantity and purchasing behaviour (Bjerk 2015:3; Hulten 2020:58; 2017:5; Wang 2013:806). It can therefore be concluded that visual stimuli have an impact on product or brand preference and in turn, on purchase intention, through the creation of brand experiences. As this study focuses on both in-store and online sensory branding of skincare, this also offers an explanation as to the formulation of hypothesis H_{1a} (There is a significant relationship between traditional visual sensory branding strategies and brand loyalty) and H_{2a} (There is a significant relationship between digital visual sensory branding strategies and brand loyalty). The following sections provide specific visual sensory branding strategies.

4.5.4.1   Traditional visual sensory branding strategies

Traditional visual sensory branding strategies constitute colours used by a brand, logo design, packaging design, lighting in the store, the cleanliness of the store, the design and layout of the store itself (both internally and

externally), visible signage and display features, such as mannequins in a clothing store and the uniform or clothing of staff members (Chapter 3: Section 3.5.1).

4.5.4.2 Digital visual sensory branding strategies

Digital sensory strategies share some aspects that are used in traditional sensory strategy, such as the colours used by a brand, logo design and packaging design. Additionally, digital visual sensory branding strategies can include the use of digital photos, movies, trailers and all other internet advertising. Furthermore, digital strategies must consider the webmosphere of the digital platform, such as the layout, user friendliness of websites, colour as backgrounds and perceived download speed. Finally, as technology advances, the use of 3D imaging, virtual reality environments (VR) and virtual try-ons (VTO), or augmented interactive (AI/AR) technology are becoming popular (Chapter 3: Section 3.5.2).

4.5.5 Auditory sensory branding

Auditory sensory branding (Chapter 3: Section 3.6) was selected as a sub-variable as research found that auditory cues have a powerful influence on an individual's emotions, moods and behaviour (Hulten 2020:87), which allows brands to influence a consumer's brand preference (Bartholme & Melewar 2016:420; Cowen-Elstner 2018:28; Foroudi & Palazzo 2019:136; Galande 2019:48; Hulten 107:6; PH Media 2021; Pogorzelski 2018:86; Shanthi et al 2019:205). Furthermore, auditory cues have the ability to create long-lasting memory and therefore, brand loyalty through their strong link to vision (Cowen-Elstner 2018:29; Hulten 2020:86; Shaed et al 2015:34). Due to the influence that auditory sensory branding has on behaviour and, in turn, brand preference, the hypothesis H_{1b} (There is a significant relationship between traditional auditory sensory branding strategies and brand loyalty) and H_{2b} (There is a significant relationship between digital auditory sensory branding strategies and brand loyalty) were formulated.

Auditory cues are further useful to marketers as they can be used to grab the attention of consumers, increase persuasiveness and increase sales volume, as well as control the pace of consumer shopping and create a cohesive environment (Hulten 2020:94; 2017:6; Israel et al 2019:100232; Randhir et al 2016:280-281; Simha 2019:35; Suarez & Gumiel 2014:264; Wollner et al 2018:3). It is apparent from the above literature findings that auditory sensory branding has the ability to influence consumer brand experience. The following sections provide specific auditory sensory branding strategies.

4.5.5.1 Traditional auditory sensory branding strategies

Traditional auditory sensory branding strategies constitute the music in stores, the jingles used by a brand, the sound or pronunciation of the brand's name and even sounds associated with using the physical product itself (Chapter 3: Section 3.6.1).

4.5.5.2 Digital auditory sensory branding strategies

Digital auditory sensory branding strategies are similar to those used in brick and mortar stores and include brand jingles, the sound or pronunciation of the brand's name, radio or television adverts as well as video adverts and background music (Chapter 3: Section 3.6.2).

4.5.6 Olfactory sensory branding

Olfactory sensory branding (Chapter 3: Section 3.7) was selected as a sub-variable as research found that fragrances have an influence on an individual's cognitive processes, emotional responses as well as their behaviour (Cowen-Elstner 2018:30; Galande 2019:48; Hulten 2020:111; 2017:7; Pogorzelski 2018:87; Vega-Gomez et al 2020:2; Wala et al 2019:112). Smell is the most sensitive of the human senses and has the ability to create strong feelings of reminiscence (Hulten 2017:7; Pogorzelski 2018:86; Shanthi et al 2019:206; Upadhyaya 2017:353; Vega-Gomez et al 2020:1). Additionally, it has been found that the sense of smell is a useful marketing tool, attributed to its

longevity in the mind of an individual (Cowen-Elstner 2018:30; Hulten 2020:110; 2017:7; Randhir et al 2016:279; Suarez & Gumiel 2014:267; Vega-Gomez et al 2020:2). Based on the significance that olfactory sensory branding has with relation to the skincare industry, hypothesis H_{1c} (There is a significant relationship between traditional olfactory sensory branding strategies and brand loyalty) and H_{2c} (There is a significant relationship between digital olfactory sensory branding strategies and brand loyalty) were formulated.

Furthermore, it is notable that a pleasurable fragrance influences the ability of consumers to recall an experience, the time consumers spend in a store and even the amount that they are willing to spend on a product (Cao & Duong 2021:134; Cowen-Elstner 2018:30; Foroudi & Palazzo 2019:137; Hulten 2017:7; Randhir et al 2016:280; Sliburyte & Vaitieke 2019:102; Srinivau et al 2021:12553; Suarez & Gumiel 2014:269; Vega-Gomez et al 2020:2). The literature pertaining to olfactory sensory stimuli provides evidence that olfactory sensory branding will have an influence on a consumer's brand experience. The following sections provide specific olfactory sensory branding strategies.

4.5.6.1 Traditional olfactory sensory branding strategies

Traditional olfactory sensory branding strategies can include the fragrance of the product itself and signature fragrances utilised by stores as place markers to differentiate themselves in the market through the use of nebulization technology, as well as the fragrance of staff in an establishment (Chapter 3: Section 3.7.1).

4.5.6.2 Digital olfactory sensory branding strategies

Digital olfactory sensory branding strategies are more difficult, as there is currently no technology that can replace physical smell via an online platform. However, marketers attempt to still provide an olfactory experience to consumers by making use of imagery and descriptive words and distributing

"scratch-and-sniff" cards. Furthermore, as technology advances, multisensory devices are being developed that will allow consumers to physically smell through a digital screen (Chapter 3: Section 3.7.2).

4.5.7 Tactile sensory branding

Tactile sensory branding (Chapter 3: Section 3.8) was selected as a sub-variable as research found that haptics allows brands to enhance positive emotional responses and moods, thereby influencing purchasing behaviour (Cowen-Elstner 2018:26; Foroudi & Foroudi 2021:244; Foroudi & Palazzo 2019:138; Hulten 2020:138; 2017:8; Iosifyan & Korolkova 2019:81). Touch allows consumers to easily make decisions about the product, such as the quality thereof (Cowen-Elstner 2018:25; Hoang & Tuckova 2020:1286; Hulten 2020:136; 2017:8; Pogorzelski 2018:88; Shanthi et al 2019:206; Stach 2018:25; Suarez & Gumiel 2014:269) and the duration that a consumer feels a product will also influence their perception (Hulten 2020:141; Ringler et al 2019:190). Additionally, consumers build confidence in a product and brand through the sense of touch (Foroudi & Foroudi 2021:244; Hulten 2020:137). As this study focuses on both in-store and online sensory branding of skincare, this also offers an explanation as to the formulation of hypothesis H_{1d} (There is a significant relationship between traditional tactile sensory branding strategies and brand loyalty) and H_{2d} (There is a significant relationship between digital tactile sensory branding strategies and brand loyalty).

Furthermore, touch allows consumers to perceive ownership and valuation (Cowen-Elstner 2018:25; Hulten 2017:8; Peck 2020; Perry 2017; Suarez & Gumiel 2014:269) and it has been established that many individuals will refuse to purchase a product if the feeling does not match what they expected from seeing it (Hoang & Tuckova 2020:1286; Hulten 2020:138; 2017:9). It can therefore be deduced that tactile sensory stimuli have an influence on brand experience. The following section provide specific tactile sensory branding strategies.

4.5.7.1 Traditional tactile sensory branding strategies

Traditional tactile sensory branding strategies encompass all touch points between a consumer and a product or product packaging. Further aspects, such as the temperature of a store, different textured paper, the touch from a staff member and tester samples of a product, are also considered tactile stimuli in marketing (Chapter 3: Section 3.8.1).

4.5.7.2 Digital tactile sensory branding strategies

As in the case with olfactory stimuli, there is no technology as of yet that can digitally replace the physical sense of touch for consumers. However, to try and compensate for this, marketers can make use of high-quality images and descriptive words online; provide deliver and return options which allow consumers the opportunity to physically touch a product before deciding to keep it; and program haptic vibrations emitted via the mouse to consumers while shopping. Finally, many researchers are trying to develop technology that will, in the future, allow haptic interactions via a digital platform (Chapter 3: Section 3.8.2). The following section elaborates on the dependent variable used in the conceptual model.

4.6   THE DEPENDENT VARIABLE: BRAND LOYALTY

For the purpose of this study, the dependent variable was identified as brand loyalty, which may be influenced by the independent variables (traditional and digital sensory branding strategies) of this study. This dependent variable was selected based on the extant literature (see Chapter 2) as well as based on the Brand Equity Theory (Section 4.3.3) and specifically the model depicting the influence of brand experience on brand equity (Section 4.3.3.1).

Brand loyalty (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.2.4) refers to how attached a customer is to a certain brand (Aaker 1991:39; Algharabat et al 2021:9; Beig & Nika 2022:160; Narteh 2018:385; Tasci 2018:149). Brand loyalty is an important concept for consideration as it has a role in facilitating competitive advantage

and financial benefits (Aaker 1991:39; Beig & Nika 2022:160; Tartaglione et al 2019:1). This is due to the fact that successful brand loyalty building strategy results in repurchase intention (RI), the generation of positive word of mouth (WOM) as well as a consumer being willing to pay more (WPM) (Alexandra & Cerchia 2018:423; Foroudi et al 2018:10; Giovanis & Anthanasopoulou 2016:2; Haung et al 2018:2132; Saif et al 2018:67; Tartaglione et al 2019:1)

Furthermore, increased consumer loyalty has been shown to lead to a surge in sales, thereby increasing the profit or financial status of a business (Narteh 2018:385). However, due to an increase in online shopping or e-commerce, brand loyalty has seen a significant decrease (Robertson 2020). It can be concluded that brands can utilise brand loyalty to increase their profit margins as well as to gain a competitive advantage, in the market, making brand loyalty a necessary dependent variable to measure. The final section provides a summary of the information provided in this chapter.

4.7   SUMMARY

It can be concluded that it is essential for researchers to construct a framework in order to plan and efficiently execute their research. The findings relating to this chapter are indicated with the abbreviation "PTF" and the number of the finding.

A research framework allows the researcher to prove the necessity of their work (PTF1) and provides the context for the study and the variables thereof (PTF2). Furthermore, the framework assists the researcher in organising their own information and understanding how the selected variables interact (PTF3). There are two types of frameworks, namely theoretical frameworks and conceptual frameworks (PTF4). A conceptual framework is linked to the purpose of the study as well as the interaction between the variables (PTF5). Furthermore, a conceptual framework serves three broad purposes, namely argumentation (a motivation for why the study is significant) (PTF6); explanation (why the variables have been included in the study) (PTF7); and generation (assisting the researcher in developing appropriate research

questions, data collection methods and analysis) (PTF8). When constructing a conceptual model, researchers will draw on their own personal experience as well as the existing literature (PTF9). Furthermore, a conceptual model is based on a variety of concepts that are rooted in different theories (PTF10).

Contradictorily, a theoretical framework draws on previously existing literature as well as accepted theories (PTF11). A theoretical framework is the foundation of a study (PTF12) and is utilised in both quantitative and qualitative studies (PTF13). When used in qualitative studies, a theoretical framework enhances the credibility and dependability of the study (PTF14), as well as increasing the transferability of a qualitative study (PTF15). When used in quantitative studies, a theoretical framework proves the internal and external validity and increases the reliability of the study (PTF16). For the purpose of this study, a conceptual model was developed, which offered a solution to the research question pertaining to: what are the different sensory marketing strategies desired by consumers when purchasing skincare products in-store versus online? (PTF17). The conceptual model constituted independent variables as well as a dependent variable (PTF18). The independent variables pertaining to this study were traditional sensory branding (PTF19) and digital sensory branding (PTF20), each of which comprised four sub-variables.

Visual sensory branding is the first sub-variable of this study and was selected as research found that sight is the sense most commonly used by brands to create brand identity and awareness (PTF21). It is further the most seductive and noticeable sense (PTF22) and has an influence on brand preference (PTF23), consumption quantity (PTF24) and purchasing behaviour (PTF25). Visual sensory strategies have been found to have an influence on brand experience (PTF26) and, with reference to traditional sensory strategies, can include colours used by a brand (PTF27), logo design (PTF28), packaging design (PTF29), lighting in the store (PTF30), the cleanliness of the store (PTF31), the design and layout of the store itself (both internally and externally) (PTF32), visible signage and display features (PTF33) and the uniform or clothing of staff members (PTF34). Digital visual sensory strategies constitute colours used by a brand (PTF35), logo design (PTF36), packaging

design (PTF37), digital photos (PTF38), movies (PTF39), trailers (PTF40), the layout (PTF41), user friendliness of websites (PTF42), colour as backgrounds (PTF43), perceived download speed (PTF44), the use of 3D imaging (PTF45), virtual reality environments (VR) (PTF46) and virtual try-ons (VTO) (PTF46).

The second sub-variable of this study is auditory sensory branding, which was selected as research determined that auditory cues have a powerful influence on an individual's emotions, moods and behaviour (PTF47), allowing brands to influence a consumer's brand preference (PTF48). Auditory cues also create long-lasting memories (PTF49), gain the attention of consumers (PTF50), increase persuasiveness (PTF51), increase sales volume (PTF52), control the pace of consumer shopping (PTF53) and create cohesive environments (PTF54). Traditional visual sensory branding strategies include the music in stores (PTF55), the jingles used by a brand (PTF56), the sound or pronunciation of the brand's name (PTF57) and sounds associated with using the physical product itself (PTF58). With reference to digital auditory sensory branding strategies, they can include brand jingles (PTF59), the sound or pronunciation of the brand's name (PTF60), radio or television adverts (PTF61), video adverts (PTF62) and background music (PTF63).

Olfactory sensory branding was the third sub-variable of the study and was included as research proved that fragrances have an influence on an individual's cognitive processes and emotional responses, as well as their behaviour (PTF64). Smell has the ability to create strong feelings of reminiscence (PTF65) and last for a long time in the minds of consumers (PTF66). Olfactory senses further have the ability to influence consumers' recall of an experience (PTF67), the time consumers spend in a store (PTF68) and the amount they are willing to spend on a product (PTF69). Traditional olfactory sensory branding strategies include the fragrance of the product itself (PTF70), signature fragrances (PTF71), the use of nebulization technology (PTF72) and the fragrance of staff in an establishment (PTF73). There is currently no technology that can replace physical smell via an online platform (PTF74). However, marketers make use of imagery and descriptive words (PTF75) and distributing "scratch-and-sniff" cards (PTF76) to deliver olfactory

sensory experiences. Multisensory devices are being developed that will one day allow consumers to physically smell through a digital screen (PTF77).

The final sub-variable of this study was tactile sensory branding, which was selected as research found that haptics allow brands to enhance positive emotional responses and moods, thereby influencing purchasing behaviour (PTF78). Touch allows consumers to evaluate the quality of a product (PTF79) and consumers build confidence in a product and brand through the sense of touch (PTF80). Additionally, touch creates the feeling of ownership and valuation for consumers (PTF81). Traditional tactile sensory strategies include all touch points between a consumer and a product or product packaging (PTF82), the temperature of a store (PTF83), different textured paper (PTF84), the touch from a staff member (PTF85) and tester samples of a product (PTF86). With reference to digital tactile sensory branding, as of yet there is no technology that can replace the physical sense of touch for consumers (PTF87). However, digital strategies can make use of high-quality images and descriptive words online (PTF88), provide deliver and return options (PTF89) and program haptic vibrations emitted via the mouse to consumers while shopping (PTF90). Researchers are trying to develop technology that will, in the future, allow haptic interactions via a digital platform (PTF91).

The dependent variable of this study was identified as brand loyalty, which was selected as research indicated that it has a role in facilitating competitive advantage and financial benefits (PTF92). Successful brand loyalty building strategy results in repurchase intention (RI) (PTF93), the generation of positive word of mouth (WOM) (PTF94) and consumers being willing to pay more (WPM) (PTF95). Additionally, brand loyalty leads to an increase in sales (PTF96). However, brand loyalty is decreasing due to an increase in the number of online or e-commerce shoppers (PTF97).

A conceptual framework comprises two categories of hypotheses, a null hypothesis (H_o) (PTF98) and an alternative hypothesis (H_a) (PTF99). For the purpose of this study, hypotheses have been developed to test the influence of the independent variables of this study on the dependent variable (PTF100).

The following null hypotheses relating to traditional sensory branding were formulated for this study: H_{1o} (There is no significant relationship between traditional sensory branding strategies and brand loyalty) (PTF101); H_{1ao} (There is no significant relationship between traditional visual sensory strategies and brand loyalty) (PTF102); H_{1bo} (There is no significant relationship between traditional auditory sensory strategies and brand loyalty) (PTF103); H_{1co} (There is no significant relationship between traditional olfactory sensory strategies and brand loyalty) (PTF104); and H_{1do} (There is no significant relationship between traditional tactile sensory strategies and brand loyalty) (PTF105).

The following alternative hypotheses relating to traditional sensory branding were formulated for this study: H_{1a} (There is a significant relationship between traditional sensory branding strategies and brand loyalty) (PTF106); H_{1aa} (There is a significant relationship between traditional visual sensory strategies and brand loyalty) (PTF107); H_{1ba} (There is a significant relationship between traditional auditory sensory strategies and brand loyalty) (PTF108); H_{1ca} (There is a significant relationship between traditional olfactory sensory strategies and brand loyalty) (PTF109: and H_{1da} (There is a significant relationship between traditional tactile sensory strategies and brand loyalty) (PTF110).

The following null hypotheses relating to digital sensory branding were formulated for this study: H_{2o} (There is no significant relationship between digital sensory branding strategies and brand loyalty) (PTF111); H_{2ao} (There is no significant relationship between digital visual sensory strategies and brand loyalty) (PTF112); H_{2bo} (There is no significant relationship between digital auditory sensory strategies and brand loyalty) (PTF113); H_{2co} (There is no significant relationship between digital olfactory sensory strategies and brand loyalty) (PTF114); and H_{2do} (There is no significant relationship between digital tactile sensory strategies and brand loyalty) (PTF115).

The following alternative hypotheses relating to digital sensory branding were formulated for this study: H_{2a} (There is a significant relationship between digital

sensory branding strategies and brand loyalty) (PTF116); H_{2aa} (There is a significant relationship between digital visual sensory strategies and brand loyalty) (PTF117); H_{2ba} (There is a significant relationship between digital auditory sensory strategies and brand loyalty) (PTF118); H_{2ca} (There is a significant relationship between digital olfactory sensory strategies and brand loyalty) (PTF119); and H_{2da} (There is a significant relationship between digital tactile sensory strategies and brand loyalty) (PTF120).

Chapter 5 elaborates on the research methodology, as identified in Chapter 1.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

5.1   INTRODUCTION

Chapter 4 addressed the conceptual model of this study and commenced by introducing the concept of both theoretical frameworks and conceptual models, which included a distinction between the types, and components thereof. Hereafter, previously existing theories and models, which were used to construct the conceptual model of this study, were briefly explained. Following this, the conceptual model put forward by this study was presented, together with an in-depth discussion thereof, as well as the hypotheses thereof. The variables selected for the conceptual model of this study were included in the discussion, as well as the reason for their selection. Chapter 5 explains the research methodology employed to conduct this study. According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2019:130) as well as Saunders, Lewis, Thornhill and Bristow (2016:124), the research methodology of any study can be broken down into separate parts, which they explain through the use of the "research onion", depicted in Figure 5.1.

FIGURE 5.1

THE RESEARCH ONION
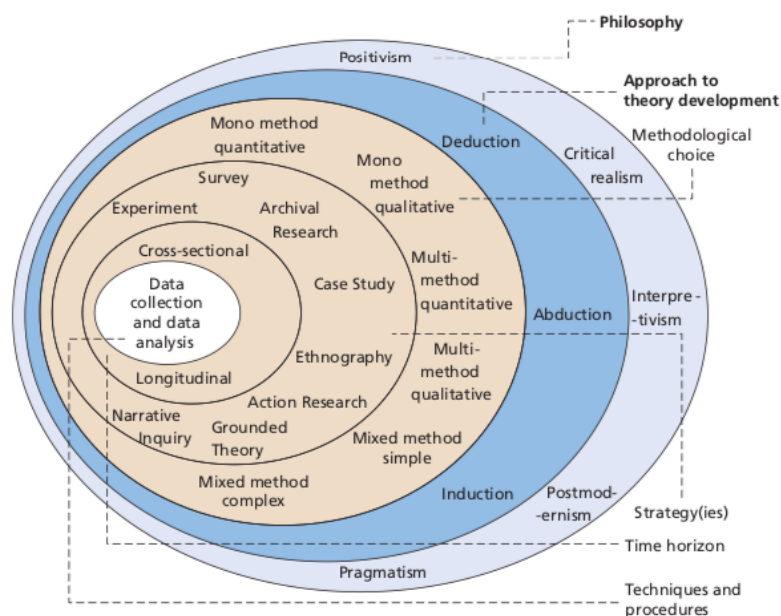
Source: Saunders et al (2019:130); Saunders et al (2016:124)

The research onion provides a means to understand the creation of an appropriate structured research methodology for a study (Boucher 2021:25). Within Chapter 5, each layer of the research onion will be contextualised specifically to this study, whereby research paradigms and designs are first discussed and the specific types utilised for this study identified. Thereafter, data collection and sampling techniques are expanded upon, the specific sampling technique employed in this study is discussed and the measuring instrument is reviewed in depth. The chapter then describes the methods used for determining the validity and reliability of the measuring instrument and finally, the statistical analysis techniques employed for data assessment are described.

5.2   THE RESEARCH PARADIGM

A research paradigm can be described as how a researcher contextualises his/her knowledge on a research topic based on his/her own personal beliefs and assumptions (Blaiki & Priest 2017:9; Kivunja & Kuyini 2017:26; Rehman & Alharthi 2016:51; Goodyear-Smith & Mash 2018:11; Saunders et al 2019:130). According to Pham (2018:2), Ryan (2018:42) and Goodyear-Smith and Mash (2018:12), along with Ikudayisi (2021:53), there are two main research paradigms, namely an interpretivist and a positivist paradigm. As explained by Blaiki and Priest (2017:104), Goodyear-Smith and Mash (2018:12), Ikudayisi (2021:53), Ryan (2018:48) and Struwig and Stead (2015:12), while an interpretivist paradigm is concerned with qualitative or non-numerical data (Park, Lars & Artino 2018:5; Struwig & Stead 2015:12), a positivistic paradigm is associated with quantitative or numerical data (Nel 2016; Park et al 2018:4).

Qualitative research, as stated by Ikudayisi (2021:56), aims to understand a topic from the stance of the respondent, rather than trying to quantify the findings. The researcher will, therefore, make use of open-ended or unstructured means to collect data, giving the respondents the opportunity to provide more in-depth answers, from which the researcher can draw insight on the topic (Gopaldas 2016:118; Levitt, Motulsky, Wertz, Morrow &

Ponterotto 2017:13; Merriam & Grenier 2019:6; Mohajan 2018:23; O'Cathain 2018:4; Tracy 2019:3). Table 5.1 provides a summary of the characteristics associated with qualitative research.

TABLE 5.1

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH CHARACTERISTICS

Research Aspect	Qualitative Research	Source
Common Purpose	Discover ideas, used in exploratory research with general research objectives in a social context	Brenan (2017:15); McLanghlin, Bush & Zeeman (2016:716); Merriam & Grenier (2019:6)
Approach	Observe and interpret	McLanghlin et al (2016:716); Merriam & Grenier (2019:6); O'Cathain (2018:3)
Data Collection Methods	Unstructured, semi-structured or free form	McLanghlin et al (2016:716); Merriam & Grenier (2019:15); O'Cathain (2018:4); Tracy (2019:3); Wiid & Diggines (2015:95)
Researcher Independence	Researcher is intimately involved Results are subjective	Brenan (2017:5); Merriam & Grenier (2019:16)
Samples	Small samples – often in natural settings and somewhat dependent on the research paradigm of the study under question	Boddy (2016:430); Vasileiou et al (2018:2)
Most Often Used	Exploratory research designs	O'Cathain (2018:3)
Quality Criteria	Trustworthiness, credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability	Korstjens & Mosetr (2018:120); Lumsden (2022); McLanghlin et al (2016:716)
Analysis	Coding and document analysis	Korstjens & Mosetr (2018:122); Lumsden (2022); McLanghlin et al (2016:716)

Source: Own construction

In contrast to qualitative research, quantitative research uses numerical data, collected by means of empirical investigation, to interpret and draw conclusions about a topic (Brenan 2017:5; Goertzen 2017:12; Ikudayisi 2021:54; Lucas-Alfieri 2015:20; McLanghlin et al 2016:716; Sheard 2018:430). Goertzen (2017:12), along with Wiid and Diggines (2015:95), adds

that, due to the results being interpreted via statistical analysis, quantitative research is more efficient than qualitative research. Furthermore, Ikudayisi (2021:54) notes that an important benefit of quantitative research is that statistics can be utilised to test correlations between variables, and therefore, relationships can be determined. Table 5.2 provides a summary of the characteristics associated with quantitative research.

TABLE 5.2

QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH CHARACTERISTICS

Research Aspect	Quantitative Research	Source
Common Purpose	Test hypotheses or specific research questions	Bhandari (2022); Brenan (2017:4); Goertzen (2017:13); Morrow (2021)
Approach	Measure and test	Bhasin (2019); Cornell (2022); Goertzen (2017:12); Sheard (2018:430)
Data Collection Methods	Structured response categories provided	Bhasin (2019); Cornell (2022); Lucas-Alfieri (2015:20); Morrow (2021); Wiid & Diggines (2015:95)
Researcher Independence	Researcher uninvolved observer Results are objective	Brenan (2017:5); Goertzen (2017:12); Lucas-Alfieri (2015:20); Morrow (2021)
Samples	Large samples to produce generalisable results (results that apply to other situations)	Bhandari (2022); Bhasin (2019); Cornell (2022); Goertzen (2017:13); Morrow (2021); Rahman (2016:102)
Most Often Used	Descriptive and causal research designs	Bhandari (2022); Cornell (2022); Grove, Gray & Burns (2015:212)
Quality Criteria	Reliability and validity	Bhandari (2022); McLanghlin et al (2016:716); Morrow (2021)
Analysis	Descriptive and inferential statistics	Bhandari (2022); Bhasin (2019); Cornell (2022); McLanghlin et al (2016:716)

Source: Own construction

This study made use of a positivistic paradigm and a quantitative research approach, which were selected as this research study aimed to answer the question of "what are the different sensory marketing strategies desired by consumers when purchasing skincare products in-store versus online?". This was achieved by means of testing the constructed hypotheses relevant to this study. The following section discusses research designs.

5.3   THE RESEARCH DESIGN

Akhtar (2016:68), Bruinders (2021:30), Creswell and Creswell (2017:11) and McCombes (2020b), along with Sileyew (2019:2), maintain that a research design is the researchers' plan to investigate their chosen topic, including the primary data that is needed, the methods for collecting as well as analysing the data, and how they intend to use this information to answer their research question (Boru 2018:1). Akhtr (2016:68) and Bruinders (2021:30), as well as Creswell and Creswell (2017:11), add that the selection of an appropriate research approach is imperative as it will signify the relevance of the study to both the researcher as well as to the intended audience. There are three types of research designs, namely an exploratory research design, an explanatory or causal research design and a descriptive research design (Boru 2018:2; Pratap 2019; Wiid & Diggines 2015:42).

TABLE 5.3

RESEARCH DESIGN CHARACTERISTICS

Factor	Exploratory Design	Source	Explanatory (causal) Design	Source	Descriptive Design	Source
Purpose	Aims to explore fields of uncertainty and how they can be studied. It answers the question of "why?"	Amoah, Ferreira & Potgieter (2020:72); Boru (2018:2); Gomez & Mouselli (2018:47); Pratap (2019)	Used to investigate if two variables have a causal relationship, meaning that the independent variable impacts the dependent variable	Boru (2018:2); Kabir (2016:130); Polonsky & Waller (2019:182); Pratap (2019)	Aims to answer questions of who?, what?, when? and how? relating to a phenomenon. Used to find relationships between variables of a study	Boru (2018:2); Cook & Cook (2016:2); Grove et al (2015:191); Hunziker & Blankenagel (2021:3); Nassaji (2015:129); Pratap (2019)
Data Collection Methods	Flexible means of data collection	Amoah et al (2020:72); Pratap (2019)	Structured means to collect data	Erickson (2017:79); Pratap (2019)	Data collection methods are highly rigid and structured, in that standardised methods are utilised	Pratap (2019)
Limitation	No conclusive answers can	Boru (2018:2);	Causal results are	Kabir (2016:131); Volchok (2015)	It does not explain the	Cook & Cook (2016:2);

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Factor	Exploratory Design	Source	Explanatory (causal) Design	Source	Descriptive Design	Source
	be reached, it only allows the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the topic	Gomez & Mouselli (2018:47)	difficult to administer as they can infer but not prove		outcome, but rather just makes use of descriptive data to indicate such	Pratap (2019); Taylor (2017:244)

Source: Own construction

This study uses the descriptive research design. A study that is based on a descriptive research design investigates a topic that there is some understanding of already; however, there is insufficient information to answer the research question (Boru 2018:2; Boudah 2019:155; Miksza & Elpus 2018:17; Polonsky & Waller 2019:182; Taylor 2017:244). Furthermore, as explained by Cook and Cook (2016:2), Hunziker and Blankenagel (2021:3) and Wiid and Diggines (2015:67), descriptive research design makes use of statistics to identify patterns and meticulous collection and analysis of primary data is therefore essential. Boru (2018:2) adds that after exploratory research has been conducted, researchers often make use of descriptive research to prove their findings.

With regard to this study, there was minimal academic literature pertaining to sensory branding, especially when considering the skincare industry, as declared by Almomani (2020), Grandin et al (2020), Huang and Lu (2020), Levrini and dos Santos (2021) and Sakhawat (2019) and, to the researchers' knowledge, no research specifically on the use of sensory branding online for skincare. Due to the lack of information, the researcher's ability to answer the research question was inhibited. Additionally, this study aimed to investigate the relationship between the independent variables of this study (traditional sensory branding and digital sensory branding) and the dependent variable of the study (brand loyalty). Finally, the primary data required for this study was collected via a structured questionnaire and then analysed through the use of descriptive and inferential statistics, which allowed the researcher to identify patterns relating to the desired sensory branding strategies of consumers, both in brick-and-mortar stores and online. Due to the aforementioned points,

a descriptive research design was selected for the purpose of this study. The following section elaborates on the sampling pertaining to this study.

5.4   SAMPLE IDENTIFICATION

As is the case in most research studies, it would be impossible for the researcher to access all members of the target audience (Alvi 2016:11; Bhardwaj 2019:158; Elfil & Negida 2017:1; Sharma 2017:749; Taherdoost 2016a:20; Turner 2020:833). Therefore, in order to collect accurate information that can be used to generalise for an entire population, the researcher must make use of sampling, which entails collecting data from a portion of the identified population (Alvi 2016:11; Arnab 2017:4; Berndt 2020:224; Bhardwaj 2019:158; Cash, Isaksson, Maier & Summers 2022:3; Elfil & Negida 2017:1; Sekaran & Bougie 2016:235; Sharma 2017:749; Taherdoost 2016a:20; Turner 2020:833; Vasileiou, Barnett, Thorpe & Young 2018:2). As explained by Berndt (2020:225), Bhardwaj (2019:157), Cash et al (2022:11), Elfil and Negida (2017:1), Marchi, Ferrara, Bertini, Fares and Salvati (2017:183), Sharma (2017:749) and Vasileiou et al (2018:13) it is imperative that the number of respondents constituting the sample be large enough and that the characteristics thereof are well defined so that the generalisations made are as accurate as possible. Sharma (2017:749) affirms that the two most noticeable benefits of making use of sampling are time efficiency and cost effectiveness; however, Bhardwaj (2019:158) cautions that while there are many advantages to sampling, a disadvantage is that the chance of bias occurring is heightened. The following sections discuss the sampling of this study, including the sample method, the target population, sample size and response rate.

5.4.1   Target population

The target population of a study can be described as the subset of individuals from which information is needed (Adwok 2015:95; Allen 2017:1283; Asiamah, Mensah & Oteng-Abayie 2017:1610; Pace 2020:3; Wu & Thompson 2020:5). Distinguishing the target population of a study should be a top priority to the

researcher as this will influence the accuracy of the data collected (Adwok 2015:95; Bharswaj 2019:158; Taherdoost 2016a:19; Wallach, Makowski, Jones & Brun 2018:344). The target population for the purpose of this study constituted consumers who have purchased skincare products both in-store as well as online, who were between the ages of 18 and 60 years, of any race, gender and nationality during the time of the study.

The size of a sample of a study, as explained by Ahmad, Samsudin, Adnan and Husein (2019:1), is important as it can influence the accuracy of the assumptions and recommendations made to the entire population, which is agreed upon by Allen (2017:1545), (Berndt 2020:224), Chow, Shao, Wang and Lokhnygina (2017:11), Kranzler (2017:113), Malone, Nicholl and Coyne (2016:21), Pace (2021:5), Taherdoost (2017:237), Taherdoost (2016a:23) as well as Vasileiou et al (2018:2). Crossman (2020), Faber and Fonseca (2014:27), Zamboni (2018) and Vasileiou et al (2018:2) add that by making use of a large sample size, the researcher can better avoid bias.

In most cases, to determine the sample for a study, a sample frame will be consulted, which as explained by Turner (2020:833), as well as Watson, Porteous, Bolt and Ryan (2019:828), is a list of all components in a population. However, in the case of this study where the respondents were individuals who had purchased skincare both in-store and online, no such sample frame exists. Therefore, in order to establish an acceptable sample size for the study, the guidelines provided in Table 5.4 were consulted.

TABLE 5.4
SAMPLE SIZE GUIDELINES

Number of Respondents	Acceptability of Sample Size
50 respondents	Very poor
100 Respondents	Poor
200 Respondents	Reasonable
300 Respondents	Good
500 Respondents	Very good
1000 Respondents	Excellent

Source: Comrey & Lee (2013:217); Rahi (2017:4)

Based on the above guidelines, this study set a minimum sample size of 300 respondents. The following section addresses the response rate pertaining to this study.

5.4.2   Sampling

As defined by Berndt (2020:225), Elfil and Negida (2017:1) and Martinez-Mesa, Duquia, Bastos, Gonzalez-Chica and Bonamigo (2016:327), the sampling method of a study explains how the researcher intends to identify respondents from the target population. Berndt (2020:225), Bhardwaj (2019:158), Martinez-Mesa et al (2016:327) and Vasileiou (2018:3) add that the researcher should take care when selecting the sampling method as the selected sample will in turn affect the sample size as well as the credibility of the data collected. When conducting research, there are two broad forms of sampling methods that a researcher can make use of, as declared by Berndt (2020:224), Bhardwaj (2019:158), Cash et al (2022:9), Elfil and Negida (2017:1), Etikan and Bala (2017:215) and Martinez-Mesa et al (2016:327), as well as Sharma (2017:750), namely probability sampling and non-probability sampling, both of which comprise of more specific techniques of sampling, which is summarised in Figure 5.2.

As explained by Berndt (2020:224), Bhardwaj (2019:158), Parveen and Showkat (2017:2) and Surbhi (2022), when making use of probability sampling, each individual that constitutes the target population has an equal chance of being included in the study. Berndt (2020:224), Bhardwaj (2019:158), Elfil and Negida (2017:1), Etikan and Bala (2017:216), Pace (2021:4), Parveen and Showkat (2017:3), Sharma (2017:749), Singh (2015:15), Surbhi (2022) and Wu and Thompson (2020:11) further claim that the sampling methods synonymous with probability sampling are random in nature. Due to the random nature of the sampling techniques of probability sampling, the researcher is provided with the probability that the sample of the study is representative of the target population (Parveen & Showkat 2017:2; Surbhi 2022). Probability sampling is attractive to researchers as some benefits include increased validity of the study as well as efficient access to,

and administration of, data (Devkota 2020; Pace 2021:4; Sharma 2017:750; Singh 2015:16; Wu & Thompson 2020:11).

FIGURE 5.2

SAMPLING METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

Probability Sampling	
Sub-Category	**Source**
Simple Random Sampling	Csiernik & Birnbaum (2017:92); Singh (2015:15); Struwig & Stead (2015:120)
Systematic Random Sampling	Csiernik & Birnbaum (2017:93); Singh (2015:15); Struwig & Stead (2015:120)
Stratified Sampling	Csiernik & Birnbaum (2017:93); Singh (2015:15); Struwig & Stead (2015:120)
Complex Sampling	Csiernik & Birnbaum (2017:94); Singh (2015:15)

Non-Probability Sampling	
Sub-Category	**Source**
Convenience Sampling	Csiernik & Birnbaum (2017:103); Singh (2015:15); Struwig & Stead (2015:120); Trochim (2020)
Purposive Sampling	Cassell et al (2017:486); Struwig & Stead (2015:120)
Quota Sampling	Csiernik & Birnbaum (2017:103); Singh (2015:15); Struwig & Stead (2015:120); Trochim (2020)
Snowball Sampling	Cassell et al (2017:486); Csiernik & Birnbaum (2017:103); Struwig & Stead (2015:120); Trochim (2020)

Source: Own construction

Non-probability sampling differs from probability sampling in that the sampling techniques are non-random, meaning the possibility of a respondent being included in the study is undefined (Surbhi 2022; Suresh 2018:265). This can be attributed to the fact that non-probability sampling techniques are at the discretion of the researcher's subjective judgement and therefore not all members of the target population will be given the opportunity to take part in the study (Parveen & Showkat 2017:6; Semasinghe 2019:4; Suresh 2018:265). Furthermore, as opined by Akinkunmi (2019:122), Bhardwaj (2019:161), Lehdonvirta, Oksanen, Rasanen and Blank (2020:137), Semasinghe (2019:4) and Singh (2015:15), as well as Wolf et al (2016:342), the benefits of non-probability sampling are cost effectiveness and time efficiency.

With regard to this study, due to the fact that no sampling frame was available, the sampling method selected was non-probability sampling. More specifically, the technique selected was convenience sampling, which implies that respondents are included in the study based on their availability and accessibility (Baxter, Courage & Caine 2015:97; Bhardwaj 2019:161; Cash et al 2022:10; Edgar & Manz 2017:213; Elfil & Negida 2017:2; Etikan et al 2016:2; Martinez-Mesa et al 2016:327; Parveen & Showkat 2017:7; van de Vijver 2015:322; Wu & Thompson 2020:6). Furthermore, while the researcher made use of a mailing list to distribute the questionnaire, it was also distributed via social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn. Therefore, there was no actual list of respondents, which lends support to the use of convenience sampling rather then quota sampling. Moreover, this also explains why it was determined that convenience sampling was more appropriate then purposive sampling.

5.4.3   Completion rate

A response rate, as defined by Lindemann (2019), as well as Sekaran and Bougie (2016:237), refers to the number of respondents who fully complete a questionnaire, divided by the total number of respondents approached, which is then multiplied by 100 so that a percentage can be reached (Figure 5.3).

FIGURE 5.3

RESPONSE RATE CALCULATION

$$\frac{Number\ of\ respondents\ who\ fully\ completed\ the\ questionnaire}{Total\ number\ of\ respondents\ approached} \times 100$$

Source: Adapted from Lindemann (2019) and Sekaran & Bougie (2016:237)

A response rate is an important calculation for a study as it aids in proving the accuracy of the primary data obtained (Lindemann 2019; Sekaran & Bougie 2016:237; Weaver, Beebe & Rockwood 2019:1). However, as this study made use of non-probability sampling, as well as an online questionnaire, the exact total number of respondents approached is not known. Therefore, for the purposes of this study, the ratio between the number of respondents who fully

completed the questionnaire and the number of respondents starting the questionnaire was used as the response or completion rate. In total, 321 respondents successfully completed the questionnaire, exceeding the target sample size of 300 and the resultant completion rate of this study was calculated as 86.3%.

5.5   PRIMARY DATA

As discussed by Ajayi (2017:2), Allen (2017:336), Bouchrika (2021), Dlepu (2021:69) and Worthy (2021), primary research in a study refers to the original raw data that a researcher collects in an attempt to answer their research question. Ainsworth (2020), Bhasin (2018), Dlepu (2021:69), Metcalf (2020) and Struwig and Stead (2015:89) clarify that primary data can be collected via a number of data collection methods and tools, such as conducting interviews, making observations, distributing questionnaires and other unobtrusive means. While many of the aforementioned data collection techniques are still made use of, technology driven options for primary data collection have also become popular, which encompass online or internet-based surveys, observation and online interviews (Amoah et al 2020:123; Struwig & Stead 2015:106; Sylvia & Terhaar 2018:88; Toepoel 2015:2).

The primary data collection method, measuring instrument, reliability and validity, collection procedure, data preparation and analysis of the data collected pertaining to this study are discussed in the following sections.

5.5.1   Data collection methods

Data collection refers to the processes of collecting data linked to a specific topic, which can include either primary or secondary data (Kishore 2022:1). Kishore (2022:1), Schuurman (2020:1015), Jovancic (2019), Kabir (2016:202) and Sekaran and Bougie (2016:158) state that primary data collection refers to data collected directly by the researcher, through which the researcher can test hypotheses and draw conclusions. Flick (2017:7) adds that the desired outcome of data collection is to create a set of findings that can be generalised

for an entire population. Either the quantitative or qualitative approach drive the data collection process (Amoah et al 2020:12; Jovancic 2019; Parveen & Showkat 2017:1; Techo 2016:1). With regard to the qualitative approach, data collection techniques include in-depth interviews, focus groups and projective techniques (Ainsworth 2020; Amoah et al 2020:133; Bhasin 2018; Struwig & Stead 2015:89; Wiid & Diggines 2015:86). Data collection techniques associated with quantitative research include observations, experiments and surveys (Ainsworth 2020; Amoah et al 2020:133; Bhasin 2018; Metcalf 2020; Struwig & Stead 2015:89; Wiid & Diggines 2015:86).

To suit the needs of this study, an online survey was selected as the data collection method. An online survey, as distinguished by Braun, Clarke, Boulton, Davey and McEvoy (2021:642), Liew, Kui, Wu and Gan (2020:1), Nayak and Narayan (2019:31), Rice, Winter, Doherty and Milner (2017:59) and Vanette and Krosnick (2017:22), refers to any survey which is completed digitally on either a computer, cell phone or other mobile device. Benefits associated with online surveys are that they have relatively fast turn-around times; have the ability to reach respondents that would otherwise be unreachable; can be targeted at techno-friendly respondents;, and are relatively cheap to conduct and process data from (Bethlehem & Biffignandi 2021:2; Brace 2018:26; Nayak & Narayan 2019:33; Rice et al 2017:59; Saleh & Bista 2017:65; Shalin 2019:2). Saleh and Bista (2017:64) add that conducting an online survey also allows accurate data to be collected more efficiently than with a paper survey, but caution that the response rate of online surveys can be poor should the researcher not have an up-to-date mailing list or access to respondents.

With reference to this study, there was a strict time limit that the researcher had to abide by, such as meeting submission deadlines for the proposal of the study as well as ethical clearance. Furthermore, the respondents of this study were geographically widely dispersed as there was no restriction on where they were based. Additionally, it can be concluded that the respondents of this study are tech--savvy as they must have purchased skincare products online and finally, the researcher had the means to create an online survey as she is

well-versed in technology herself, and was provided with a platform to do so by the university. All of the aforementioned priorities for data collection pertaining to this study were congruent with the benefits offered by an online survey and the researcher had access to an up-to-date mailing list as she works for a skincare company. For these reasons, an online survey was selected for the purpose of this study as the data collection technique.

5.5.2   Measuring instrument

Each data collection method can be associated with different data collection instruments (Boswell & Cannon 2018:249; Kabir 2016:208; Madondo 2021:79; Trigueros et al 2017:5). According to Boswell and Cannon (2018:264), along with Durdella (2017:265), Ebrahim (2016:3), Madondo (2021:79) and Pandey and Pandey (2015:57), a data collection instrument is the specific tool that a researcher utilises to collect their primary data. The research instrument has an influence on the reliability and relevance of the information collected and therefore the ability for the researcher to accurately analyse the data (Adosi 2020:2; Ary, Jacobs, Irvine & Walker 2018:67; Ebrahim 2016:3; Edwin 2019:1; Kabir 2016:208; Middelton 2022; Ngulube 2019:396; Trigueros et al 2017:5). Adosi (2020), Cote (2022) as well as Pandey and Pandey (2015:57) stipulate that data collection instruments can include questionnaires, interviews, schedules, observation techniques and rating scales; however, an online survey is synonymous with questionnaires (Boswell & Cannon 2018:264; Mbachu 2018; Ndukwu 2022; Ngulube 2019:396; Pajo 2018:157).

A questionnaire is designed to collect information relevant to a study from the desired target population via a number of systematic questions, as defined by Ary et al (2018:323), Browne (2019:73), Pandey and Pandey (2015:57), Stone, Chaparro, Keebler, Chaparro and McConnell (2017:150) and Young (2015:4). As technology has advanced and the internet has become more widely available, web-based self-administered questionnaires have grown in popularity (Ary et al 2018:323; Mahmutovic 2021; Makaleng 2022:141; Howard 2021; White 2014:301), which Candido, Perini, de Padua and Junqueira (2017:2), Debois (2019), Dudovskiy (2018), Howard (2019),

Howard (2021), Mahmutovic 2021; Makaleng (2022:141), Nayak and Narayan (2017:32), Pandey and Pandey (2015:59), Rice et al (2017:59), Sincero (2020), Sutherland (2019) and Young (2015:168) attribute to the cost effectiveness, time efficiency and ease in administrating the results associated with this data collection instrument. Candido et al (2017:2) and Mahmutovic (2021) add that other benefits associated with online questionnaires are that the anonymity of respondents is preserved more easily and the reach of the study can be broadened.

This study made use of a web-based, self-administered questionnaire, as presented in Annexure A. This measuring instrument was selected for the purpose of this study as it allowed the researcher to reach a larger number of respondents as well as aiding the researcher in keeping the budget needed for this research to a minimum. Further than for time and cost efficiency, the respondents of this study are assumed to be tech-savvy as they would have shopped online for skincare products, making a web-based, self-administered questionnaire appropriate for this target audience.

5.5.3   Questionnaire structure

The aim of this study was to conduct an investigation into the desired sensory branding strategies in-store versus online. To collect primary data relating to this topic from the respondents of this study, a questionnaire was constructed, which constituted six sections, namely demographics, visual stimuli, auditory stimuli, olfactory stimuli, tactile stimuli and brand loyalty. Prior to the main sections of the questionnaire, respondents were also asked to answer screening questions which related to consent as well as whether they had purchased skincare both in-store and online to ensure they met the requirements of the target audience for this study. The sections of the questionnaire are discussed in the next section, and the sources of the items provided in Annexure C.

5.5.3.1   The demographic details of the respondents

In order to ensure that the respondents of a study are appropriate, the researcher should collect demographic information (Connelly 2013:269; Gray 2019:376; Hughes, Camden & Yangchen 2016:138). The demographic data pertaining to the respondents of this study were collected in Section A of the questionnaire, which comprised previously tested items from Brook (2019), Botha (2014:138), Eurostudent.eu (2008:3:13), Grelecka (2016:96:97), Hung (2016:163), Liegeois and Rivera (2011:88), OECD (2018:3), Potgieter, Berman & Verity (2019:1), Swardt (2008:106), Tapson (2009:146), Thornberry (2015:114) and Wang and Wu (2017:69). Items in this section of the questionnaire related to the gender of the respondent, the age of the respondent, the average monthly budget for skincare of the respondent and the frequency of shopping for skincare products both in-store and online, all of which were closed-ended questions that asked the respondent to select one option from the predefined list provided.

5.5.3.2   Items relating to the variables specific to this study

Section B of the questionnaire comprised previously tested items from Anvar (2016:108), Botha (2014:137), Fritz (2018:177), Grzybowska-Brezezinska, Rudzewicz and Kowalkowski (2013:40), Hewawalpita and Perera (2017:4), Hung (2016:168), Jiang and Benbasat (2007:466), Kokoi (2011:86), Li and Meshkova (2013:454), Liegeois and Rivera (2011:86), Maneti (2014:116), Matterport (2020), Nel (2003:182), Pillay (2003:68), Smith (2020), Theofanides and Kerasidou (2012:44), Wang and Wu (2017:70) and Zhang (2021). The items in this section relate to the independent variable, visual stimuli both in-store and online, which influence the experience of shopping for skincare products.

Section C addressed the second variable identified in this study, which has an influence on the experience of shopping for skincare products, namely auditory stimuli. Previously tested items from Botha (2014:137), Cowen-Elstner (2018:230), Engelen (2016:18), Fiore and Kelly (2007:606), Foroudi

and Palazzo (2019:136), Geci, Nagyova and Rybanska (2017:713), Griffith (2020), Hulten (2020:93; 2017:6), Kim (2017a:21), Liegeois and Rivera (2011:86), Maneti (2014:115), Nel (2003:181), Pogar, Plant, Rosulek and Kouril (2015:559), Shenje (2018:226), Subkowski (2019:47), Tapson (2009:148), Threadgill, Ryan, Jordan and Hajcak (2020:2), Turner (2012:56), Upadhyaya (2017:357), Vida, Obadia and Kunz (2007:476), Wang and Wu (2017:69) and Wala et al (2019:112) were utilised.

The fourth section, Section D, referred to the independent variable of olfactory stimuli that influence the experience of shopping for skincare products both in-store and online, and included previously tested items from Alac (2017:143), Anvar (2016:110), Cowen-Elstner (2018:31), Hauser (2017), Hulten (2020:127), Hung (2016:169), Liegeois and Rivera (2011:86), Maneti (2014:115), Ranasinghe et al (2018), Reader (2016:16), Silva and Duarte (2017:101), Spangenberg, Crowley and Henderson (1996:70), Wang and Wu (2017:69), Wrzesniewski, McCauley and Rozin (1999:714) and WSJ (2013). Section E constituted the tactile stimuli (independent variable) which may have an influence on the experience of shopping for skincare products both in-store and online. Previously tested items were utilised from Anvar (2016:109), Botha (2014:137), Cunningham (2012:177), Fritz (2018:178), Geci et al (2017:713), Grzybowska-Brezezinska et al (2013:40), Hulten (2020:141), Hung (2016:168), King (2012), Kokoi (2011:86), Liegeois and Rivera (2011:86), Liu, Liu, Xu, Cheng, Masuko and Tanaka (2020:1820), Maneti (2014:115), Manshad and Brannon (2021:91), Matterport (2020), Nel (2003:180), Pillay (2003:70), Ringler et al (2019:190), Silva and Duarte (2017:101), Theofanides and Kerasidou (2012:44) and Wang and Wu (2017:70), as well as Zhang (2021) in this section.

The final section, Section F, made reference to brand loyalty (the dependent variable). Previously tested items from Awuor (2010:iii), Dehghan and Shahin (2011:12), Ergin, Ozdemir and Parilti (2005:11) and Wang and Wu (2017:71), were utilised.

5.5.4 Question format

The success of a questionnaire is dependent on the respondents' ability to clearly understand what information is being asked of them and if they have the necessary knowledge (Boucher 2021:44; Crossman 2020; Landy, Zedeck & Cleveland 2017:113). The researcher needs to therefore ensure that the questionnaire is written in such a way that matches the literacy level of the intended audience (Gray 2019:371; Hyman & Sierra 2016:1) and that no prejudicial language, ambiguity, jargon, leading questions or hypothetical questions are used (Crossman 2020; Fauvelle 2019). Bridger (2018:24), Crossman (2020) and Gray (2019:370) add that how the questionnaire is structured can also have an impact on the likelihood of respondents completing the questionnaire as well as the reliability and validity of the data collected.

When compiling a questionnaire, a researcher can make use of either open-ended questions or closed-ended questions. As explained by Bonner and Chen (2019:29), Farrell (2016), Gray (2019:378), Hyman and Sierra (2016:1), Martinez and Scherer (2020:113) and Singer and Couper (2017:116), open-ended questions refer to those that do not have a predetermined list of responses to select from and therefore the responses collected are not limited (Benzo, Mohsen & Fourali 2017:307; Bonner & Chen 2019:30; Coolican 2017:169; Robinson & Leonard 2018:92; Stockemer 2018:42; Zikmund et al 2017:136). In comparison, a structured question limits the respondent's answers to a list which is predetermined by the researcher (Bonner & Chen 2019:29; Benzo et al 2017:307; Farrell 2016; Gray 2019:378; Hyman & Sierra 2016:1; Martinez & Scherer 2020:113; Singer & Couper 2017:116; Stockemer 2018:42; Zikmund et al 2017:136), such as with dichotomous, multiple choice, checklists, rankings, grids and scaled questions (Amoah et al 2020:162; Benzo et al 2017:307; Wiid & Diggines 2015:170).

Furthermore, Amoah et al (2020:163), Coolican (2017:169), Stockemer (2018:42), Jackson (2019:233), Wiid and Diggines (2015:169), Wilson (2021:363) and Zikmund, D'Alessandro, Winzar, Lowe and Babin (2017:136)

add that open-ended questions are associated with unstructured questions, while closed-ended questions are associated with structured questions. Table 5.5 provides a summary of the advantages and disadvantages associated with unstructured and structured questions.

TABLE 5.5

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF UNSTRUCTURED AND STRUCTURED QUESTIONS

	Unstructured Questions	Structured Questions
Advantages	• Respondents' answers are not restricted • They allow researchers to gain more insight on topics where little information is known • A larger variety of answers can be collected, which provides insight into motives of the respondent	• Structured questions are more economical and time efficient • Easy to apply as they are pre-coded
Disadvantages	• Time consuming and relatively more expensive to collect and analyse data • The data collected cannot be statistically analysed • The data collected may be difficult to interpret and analyse due to misinterpretation • Unstructured questions generally present a low response rate	• Respondents can feel frustrated when they are unable to provide their full opinion • Structured questions can lead to bias, as the researcher has the ability to lead the respondent to a desired answer

Source: Adapted from Amoah et al (2020:163); Coolican (2017:170); Stockemer (2018:42); Wiid & Diggines (2015:171)

The questionnaire linked to this study comprised closed-ended questions, which are summarised in Table 5.6.

TABLE 5.6

A SUMMARY OF THE TYPES OF QUESTIONS UTILISED IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE OF THIS STUDY

Type of Question	Item in the Questionnaire
Dichotomous questions	Screening questions; the respondents' gender (Q1)
Multiple choice questions	The respondents' age (Q2); the respondents' monthly budget for skincare products (Q3); the frequency with which the respondent buys skincare products in-store (Q4) as well as online (Q5)

Type of Question	Item in the Questionnaire
5-point Likert scale questions	All items relating to the variables of this study (Q6 – Q14)

Source: Own construction

Where necessary, an "other" option was provided in the questionnaire to ensure that should the respondent have another opinion, they could provide it, thereby allowing the researcher to collect accurate information. For the purpose of this study, a 5-point Likert scale was chosen as it is easier for respondents to understand, which in turn results in a higher response rate (Khandelwal 2021). Additionally, a 5-point Likert scale is most appropriate when collecting and analysing data from a larger sample size (Khandelwal 2021). Furthermore, the 5-point Likert scale questions utilised to collect information pertaining to the variables of this study asked respondents to note to what extent they either agreed or disagreed (on a scale from 1 - strongly agree, to 5 - strongly disagree) that each factor had an influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products both in-store and online. A neutral response (3) would indicate that the respondent was indifferent regarding how a certain factor influenced their experience of shopping for skincare products both in-store and online.

The use of 5-point Likert scale questions was appropriate as it allowed the researcher to determine to what extent each factor influenced the experience of shopping for skincare products both in-store and online, rather than just whether they did or did not. From the data collected, mean scores could then be calculated per question.

5.5.5   Reliability of the measuring instrument

While validity of research refers to the ability of the findings to be applied to real-life situations, the reliability of the research makes reference to how consistently the results can be reached when making use of the same measuring instrument in different studies (Ahmed, Opoku, Olanipekun & Sutrisna 2022:16; Alston & Bowles 2019:64; Andrade 2018:499; Bolarinwa

2015:195; Bonett & Wright 2014:3; Bryman & Bell 2015:168; Cypress 2021:85; Ghazali 2016:149; Kraska, Brent & Neuman 2020:150; Kumar 2019:278; Leander 2021:41; Middleton 2020; Mohajan 2017:58; Riezler & Hagmann 2021:55; Surucu & Maslakci 2020:2695; Taber 2018:1273; Taherdoost 2016a:33), which alludes to the credibility of the study (Leung 2015:325; Mohajan 2017:58). For the purpose of this study, Cronbach alpha coefficients were calculated to ensure reliability of the measuring instrument, as Bonett and Wright (2014:3), Ghazali (2016:149), Heale and Twycross (2015:66), Surucu and Maslakci (2020:2710), Taber (2018:1274) and Taherdoost (2016a:33) aver that it is the most appropriate means of determining reliability.

Therefore, after CFA was conducted, where Cronbach alpha coefficients were calculated for each of the remaining variables to measure their reliability. When interpreting the results of Cronbach alpha coefficients, a result of 0.90 and above proves excellent reliability, 0.70 – 0.90 proves high reliability, 0.50 – 0.70 proves moderate reliability and 0.50 and below proves low reliability (Bonett & Wright 2014:5; Bryman & Bell 2015:169; Ekolu & Quainoo 2019:25; Frost 2022c; Ghazali 2016:149; Goforth 2015; Heale & Twycross 2015:66; Heidel 2022; Leander 2021:41; Namdeo & Rout 2016:1374; Taherdoost 2016a:33). It is further stipulated by Nunnally (1978:270) that a result lower than 0.70 should be considered as unreliable.

5.5.6   Validity of the measuring instrument

As stated by Leander (2021:41) and Middleton (2020), validity in research refers to the ability of the findings to be utilised in tangible situations and Haradhan (2017:73), along with Patino and Ferreira (2018:183), asserts that any study should address content, face and construct validity.

According to Haradhan (2017:74), Hopkins (2021) as well as Koller, Levenson and Gluck (2017), content validity makes reference to whether or not the measuring instrument of a study encompasses a broad enough array of items to collect content relevant to the underlying topic of the study. Haradhan (2017:74) and Hopkins (2021) add that content validity is ensured through the

researchers' dependence on the judgement of experts on the topic and Koller et al (2017) argue that content validity is a necessary condition to achieve construct validity. For the purpose of this study, the researcher made use of previously tested items in the questionnaire (Annexure C) to ensure content validity.

Face validity in research refers to whether the measuring instrument does in fact measure what the researcher claims it to (Connell et al 2018:1894; Haradhan 2017:75; Hopkins 2021; McLeod 2013). Face validity, as stated by Haradhan (2017:75) and Hopkins (2021), is the least objective means of establishing validity as it is based on the personal judgement of the researcher. For the purpose of this study, statistical, language and content experts were consulted in order to ensure face validity of the questionnaire items.

The last type of validity addressed in this study is construct validity, which Andrade (2018:499), Ghazali (2016:149), Hopkins (2021), Koller et al (017), Kumar (2019:276), Middleton (2020), Mohajan (2017:58) and Taherdoost (2016b:29) define as how well the measuring instrument actually measures the construct of the study. For the purpose of this study, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was utilised to ensure construct validity. CFA is a statistical tool that can be utilised to validate a measuring instrument, which measures to what extent a variable is represented by a number of constructs (Bastos 2021; Frey 2018). Bastos (2021) further explains that CFA is commonly used when the items within a questionnaire have previously been used to test a specific variable and is used when hypothesis testing is necessary (Glen 2022b). The CFA results of the relevant goodness-of-fit indices were consulted to assess model fit, namely CMIN/df, CFI, SRMR and RMSEA, and interpreted in accordance with the guidelines set out by Brown (2015:86), Hair, Black, Babin, and Anderson (2019:636) and the UCLA (2021). If a measuring instrument is valid then it is generally reliable; however, as explained by Ahmed (2022:16), Cypress (2021:85), Ghazali (2016:150), Heale and Twycross (2015:66), Kraska et al (2020:150), Middleton (2020) as well as Riezler and Hagmann (2021:55), a measuring instrument can be reliable but not valid.

5.5.7 Data collection procedure

As previously stated, this study made use of a web-based, self-administered questionnaire to collect data from the respondents. Prior to distributing the questionnaire, it was reviewed by by both academic and industry experts to ensure correct use of terminology, structure and layout for the purpose of this study. The questionnaire was then distributed via online social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn, as well as by distributing the questionnaire via email to an existing mailing list. The researcher abided by the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPI Act). When consumers subscribed to the skincare companie's mailing list, they provided consent for their email address to be used for the distribution of marketing and research material. To ensure that there were no problems with ethical consideration for minors or vulnerable groups, an item in the demographic section of the questionnaire was dedicated to the respondent's age.

Accompanying the questionnaire, the respondents were provided with a cover letter, which detailed the purpose of the study and information required from them. It was further explained in the cover letter that the respondents would remain anonymous and the results confidential. The anonymity of the respondents was further protected by the researcher through the use of codes per item. Respondents were also provided with instructions regarding how to complete the questionnaire and a table of definitions to assist them in understanding the questions. Finally, the cover letter highlighted that the respondent's participation was of a voluntary nature and that they could withdraw from the study at any time at no cost to themselves. The cover letter of this study can be found in Annexure B.

Once the respondents had made the decision to click on the link provided, they were re-directed to the web-based, self-administered questionnaire and the cover letter was again presented. Prior to the questionnaire commencing, the respondent was asked to provide written consent and if the respondent chose to decline, then the questionnaire was terminated and they were re-

directed to the end "thank you" page. Additionally, upon the submission of the completed questionnaire, implied consent was also assumed. The researcher further had access to respondents who purchase skincare products as she is currently working for an all-natural skincare company, Katavi Botanicals, and therefore has access to their mailing list.

5.5.8   Data preparation

Before data can be interpreted, it needs to be refined or structured, which is a process known as data preparation (Abdallah et al 2017:11). A large focus of data preparation is editing and coding of the collected information (Amoah et al 2020:215; Harris 2020), which can be done manually or via the use of a digital platform (Kumar 2019:49).

For the purpose of this study, the researcher made use of the digital platform, "QuestionPro", to create as well as distribute the questionnaire used to collect the primary data pertaining to this study. QuestionPro offers the researcher an analytics function, which keeps a record of the number of respondents who complete the questionnaire as well as the completion rate. An additional function offered by QuestionPro for the analysis of the data collected, is a basic summary of statistical information per item in the questionnaire, which is also presented in the form of graphical representations, which the researcher has the option to download in either MS Word, MS Excel or PDF formats.

To ensure that the data analysis is accurate, the researcher needs to eliminate those questionnaires that are incomplete. For the purpose of this study, a setting within QuestionPro was utilised, which only allows completed questionnaires to be included in the results, thereby also allowing the researcher to detect any omissions and errors. Hereafter, the results were downloaded in an MS Excel format, from which the raw data could be used to calculate both descriptive and inferential statistics as well as to construct the desired graphical representations for the study.

5.5.9   Data analysis techniques used

Statistical analysis, according to Bergin (2018:75) and Kumar (2019:442), allows a researcher to compare and describe the primary data that they collect. For the purpose of this study, descriptive statistics were utilised to explain the data, constituting frequency distributions, means and associated standard deviations to summarise the sample data. Additionally, the following inferential statistics were utilised.

- Cronbach Alpha Coefficient was used to test for reliability of the variables in the study of correlations between the factors used in CFA (Leppink 2019:60; Tavakol & Dennick 2011:53).

- Confirmatory Factor Analysis was used to assess model fit (Alavi, Visentin, Thape, Hunt, Watson & Cleary 2020:2209; Finch 2020:223), based on the recommended interpretation guidelines (Brown 2015:86; Hair et al 2019:636; UCLA 2021).

- SEM Models were used to investigate the relationships that may exist between the independent variables (traditional and digital sensory branding) and the dependent variable (brand loyalty) of this study, thereby testing the formulated null (H_o) and alternative (H_a) hypotheses.

- Primary Models were utilised to identify which sub-variables (traditional and digital visual, auditory, olfactory and tactile stimuli) specifically had a relationship with the dependent variable (brand loyalty) of the study, thereby testing the formulated null (H_o) and alternative (H_a) hypotheses.

- The Pearson's correlation coefficient tests was used to measure the correlation between the various variables and sub-variables of the study (Akoglu 2019:92; Goftay & Thatte 2017:78; Onilor & Amadi 2018:15; Schober, Boer & Schwarte 2018:1763).

- The Chi-Square Test of Association as well as the cross tabulation was used to determine the association between the respondents' age and their average monthly budget for skincare.

- ANOVAs and Welch Robust Test were calculated to identify differences in group means (Delacre, Leys, Mora & Lakens 2019:1; Glen 2022b; Goftay & Thatte 2017:78; Gravetter & Wallnau 2016:394; Holmes et al 2017:274).

- Tukey Test and Games-Howell were used to identify significant differences between sample means (Chen, Xu, Tu, Wangg & Niu 2018:60; Lee & Lee 2018:353; Sun 2016:1).
- Cohen's d were calculated to quantify the relationship between two groups, allowing the identification of statistically significant variances on $p < 0.1$ and $p < 0.05$ (Goulet-Pelletier & Cousineau 2018:243).

Through the use of inferential statistics, inferences could be made about the population of the study (Wilson & Joye 2017:78). All primary data of this study were statistically analysed using the latest edition of IBM SPSS Statistics version 28.

5.6   PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED

Problems encountered in a research study constitute the barriers or challenges that a researcher is faced with during the process of conducting their research (Matin & Khan 2017:23). The problems encountered by the researcher during this study included the following.

- Response speed – A relatively large number of respondents were required for this study (a minimum of 300), and due to the distribution of the questionnaire being on online platforms, the response speed was slow.
- Lockdown – During the time of conducting this research, the country was still in the midst of the adjusted level 1 lockdown. This had an influence on the access to respondents. Furthermore, during lockdown individuals were restricted with regards to shopping in-store, which also could have had an influence on the results.
- Access to new, relevant information – There were very limited academic sources pertaining to sensory branding of skincare products as well as sensory branding in the digital shopping landscape.

5.7   SUMMARY

In this conclusion, the research methodology relevant to this study is indicated with the abbreviation "RMF" and the number of the finding.

A research paradigm describes the context from which the study is written (RMF1) and can be either an interpretivist or a positivist paradigm (RMF2). An interpretivist paradigm is generally concerned with non-numerical data (RMF3), whereas a positivistic paradigm in general focusses on numerical data (RMF4). Qualitative research makes use of unstructured means to collect data (RMF5) and the researcher can draw insight on the topic (RMF6). Quantitative research uses numerical data, collected by means of empirical investigation (RMF6), to interpret and draw conclusions about a topic (RMF7). Furthermore, quantitative research is more efficient than qualitative research (RMF8) and statistics can be utilised to test correlations between variables (RMF9). This study made use of a positivistic paradigm (RMF10) and a quantitative research approach (RMF11).

A research design is the researcher's plan to investigate the chosen topic (RMF12) and will signify the relevance of the study to both the researcher as well as to the intended audience (RMF13). There are three types of research designs, namely an exploratory research design (RMF14), an explanatory research design (RMF15) and a descriptive research design (RMF16). A descriptive research design was selected for the purpose of this study (RMF17), which was due to the fact that; there was minimal academic literature pertaining to sensory branding, especially when considering the skincare industry (RMF18). This study aimed to investigate the relationship between the independent variables of this study and the dependent variable of the study (RMF19), and the primary data required for this study was collected via a structured questionnaire (RMF20) and then analysed through the use of descriptive and inferential statistics (RMF21).

Sampling allows the researcher to collect generalisable information from a portion of the population (RMF22). The two most noticeable benefits of making

use of sampling are time efficiency (RMF23) and cost effectiveness (RMF24); however the chance of bias occurring is heightened (RMF25).

The sampling method of a study explains how the researcher intends to identify respondents from the target population (RMF26) and there are two types, namely probability sampling and non-probability sampling (RMF27). Probability sampling means that each individual that constitutes the target population has an equal chance of being included in the study (RMF28). This means that the researcher is provided with the probability that the sample of the study is representative of the target population (RMF29). Benefits of probability sampling include increased validity of the study (RMF30) as well as efficient access to, and administration of, data (RMF31). Non-probability sampling differs from probability sampling in that the sampling techniques are non-random (RMF32). The sampling techniques include non-random (RMF33) and the benefits of non-probability sampling are cost effectiveness (RMF34) and time efficiency (RMF35). This study made use of non-probability sampling (RMF36), more specifically, the technique selected was convenience sampling (RMF37).

The target population of a study is the subset of individuals which information is needed from (RMF38) and the target population for the purpose of this study constituted consumers who have purchased skincare products both in-store as well as online (RMF39). Furthermore, a large enough sample size is needed to ensure that the researcher can better avoid bias (RMF40) and in most cases, to determine the sample for a study, a sample frame will be consulted (RMF41). In the case of this study where the respondents were individuals who had purchased skincare both in-store and online, no such sample frame exists (RMF42) and a minimum sample size of 300 respondents was set (RMF43).

For the purpose of this study, completion rate was calculated by dividing the number of respondents who fully completed the questionnaire by the total number of respondents who started the questionnaire (RMF44). The completion rate of this study was 86.3% (RMF45). Primary data in a study

refers to the original raw data that a researcher collects in an attempt to answer the research question (RMF46) and as technology advances, internet-based surveys, observation and online interviews are growing in popularity (RMF48). With regard to qualitative data collection, data collection techniques include in-depth interviews, focus groups and projective techniques (RMF49), while data collection techniques associated with quantitative research include observations, experiments and surveys (RMF50).

An online survey was selected as the data collection method for this study (RMF51), which is any survey which is completed digitally on either a computer, cell phone or other mobile device (RMF52). Benefits associated with online surveys are that they have relatively fast turn-around times (RMF53); have the ability to reach respondents that would otherwise be unreachable (RMF54); can be targeted at tech-savvy respondents (RMF55); and are relatively cheap to conduct and process data from (RMF56); however the response rate does tend to be lower with online surveys (RMF57). An online survey was selected because there was a strict time limit (RMF58); the respondents of this study were geographically widely dispersed (RMF59); the respondents of this study are tech-savvy (RMF60); and the researcher had the means to create an online survey (RMF61).

A data collection instrument is the specific tool that a researcher utilises to collect the primary data (RMF62) and can include questionnaires, interviews, schedules, observation techniques and rating scales; however an online survey is synonymous with questionnaires (RMF63). A questionnaire is designed to collect information relevant to a study from the desired target population via a number of systematic questions (RMF64) and web-based self-administered questionnaires have grown in popularity (RMF65) because they are cost effective, time efficient and easy to administer and the anonymity of respondents is preserved more easily (RMF66). This study made use of a web-based, self-administered questionnaire (RMF67).

To collect primary data relating to this topic from the respondents of this study, a questionnaire was constructed, which constituted six sections, namely

demographics, visual stimuli, auditory stimuli, olfactory stimuli, tactile stimuli and brand loyalty (RMF68). The respondents were provided with a cover letter, which detailed the purpose of the study and information required from them (RMF69). The demographic information required from respondents included the gender of the respondent (RMF70), the age of the respondent (RMF71), the average monthly budget for skincare of the respondent (RMF72) and the frequency of shopping for skincare products both in-store and online (RMF73), all of which were closed-ended questions that asked the respondent to select one option from the predefined list provided (RMF74). The remaining sections of the questionnaire made use of Likert-scale questions pertaining to each of the variables of the study (RMF75).

To ensure that respondents can clearly understand and accurately answer the questions, the researcher needs to therefore ensure that the questionnaire is written in such a way that matches the literacy level of the intended audience (RMF76) and that no prejudicial language, ambiguity, jargon, leading questions or hypothetical questions are used (RMF77). Either open-ended questions or closed-ended questions can be used in a questionnaire (RMF78). Open-ended questions refer to those that do not have a predetermined list of responses to select from (RMF79), while closed-ended questions limit the respondent's answers to a list which is predetermined by the researcher (RMF80). Open-ended questions are associated with unstructured questions (RMF81), while closed-ended questions are associated with structured questions (RMF82). The questionnaire linked to this study comprised closed-ended questions (RMF83) and where necessary, an "other" option was provided in the questionnaire (RMF84).

Furthermore, the 5-point Likert scale questions utilised to collect information pertaining to the variables of this study asked respondents to note to what extent they either agreed or disagreed that each factor had an influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products both in-store and online (RMF85). A neutral response (3) would indicate that the respondent was indifferent regarding how a certain factor had an influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products both in-store and online (RMF86).

Validity in research refers to the ability of the results to be utilised in tangible situations (RMF87) and a study should address content, face and construct validity (RMF88). Content validity makes reference to whether or not the measuring instrument of a study encompasses a broad enough array of items to collect content relevant to the underlying topic of the study (RMF89) and this study made use of previously tested items in the questionnaire to ensure content validity (RMF90). Face validity in research refers to whether the measuring instrument does, in fact, measure what the researcher claims it to (RMF91) and for the purpose of this study, statistical, language and content experts were consulted in order to ensure face validity (RMF92). Finally, construct validity is defined as how well the measuring instrument actually measures the construct of the study (RMF93), and for the purpose of this study, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was utilised to ensure construct validity (RMF94). If a measuring instrument is valid then it is generally reliable (RMF95); however a measuring instrument can be reliable but not valid (RMF96).

The reliability of the research makes reference to how consistently the results can be reached making use of the same measuring instrument for different studies (RMF97). For the purpose of this study, Cronbach alpha coefficients were calculated to ensure reliability of the measuring instrument (RMF98), where Cronbach alpha coefficients were calculated for each of the remaining variables to measure their reliability (RMF99). When interpreting the Cronbach Alpha results in this study, a result lower than 0.70 was considered as unreliable (RMF100).

The web-based, self-administered questionnaire utilised in this study was distributed via online social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn, as well as by distributing the questionnaire via email to an existing mailing list (RMF101) and to ensure that there were no problems with ethical consideration for minors or vulnerable groups, an item in the demographic section of the questionnaire was dedicated to the respondent's age (RMF102).

For the purpose of this study, the researcher made use of the digital platform, "QuestionPro", to create as well as distribute the questionnaire used to collect the primary data pertaining to this study (RMF103). Statistical analysis allows a researcher to compare and describe the primary data that they collect (RMF104) and this study made use of descriptive statistics (RMF105), as well as inferential statistics (RMF106). Additional inferential statistics calculated included Cronbach Alpha Coefficient (RMF107); Confirmatory Factor Analysis (RMF108); SEM Models (RMF109); Primary Models (RMF110); Pearson's Correlation Coefficients (RMF111); Chi-Square Test of Association (RMF112); ANOVAs and Welch Robust (RMF113); Tukey Test and Games-Howell (RMF114); and Cohen's d (RMF115). Through the use of inferential statistics, inferences could be made about the population of the study (RMF116) and primary data of this study was statistically analysed using the latest edition of IBM SPSS Statistics version 28 (RMF117).

Problems encountered in this study included that a relatively large number of respondents were required for this study and due to the distribution of the questionnaire being on online platforms, the response was slow (RMF118); during the time of conducting this research, the country was still in the midst of a lockdown (RMF119); and there were very limited academic sources pertaining to sensory branding of skincare products, as well as sensory branding in the digital shopping landscape (RMF120).

Chapter 6 presents the results from the empirical investigation of this study.

CHAPTER 6
REPORTING THE RESULTS

6.1   INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 5, the research methodology employed to conduct this study was addressed, which commenced with a discussion and motivation for the research paradigm and design selected for the purpose of this study. Hereafter, sampling was discussed, which included the identification of the target population of this study as well as the completion rate. Following this, the specific data collection method and measuring instrument utilised in this study were highlighted and the questionnaire structure and format expanded upon. It was further detailed how the researcher ensured that the measuring instrument utilised was reliable and valid and how it would be distributed to collect primary data. Finally, the preparation of the data was detailed and the data analysis to be used deliberated. The chapter concluded by listing problems encountered through the duration of the study and a summary was provided.

Chapter 6 describes how the primary data collected through the use of the web-based self-administered questionnaire relative to this study, was prepared for further analysis and interpretation and provides a discussion relating to the results in the form of Tables and Figures. Chapter 6 addresses the primary objective of this study as determined in Chapter 1: Section 1.3.1 (*to investigate the sensory experiences desired by customers, when purchasing skincare products in-store, as opposed to online*). It is also stated in Chapter 6, based on the results, whether the hypotheses developed in Chapter 1: Table 1.1 are rejected or supported.

Before the primary data collected for the purpose of this study is interpreted and discussed, the completion rate will be given (Section 6.2.1). Hereafter, the internal reliability relating to the variables (Section 6.2) and sub-variables (Section 6.2.2) of this study are provided in the form of Cronbach Alpha values.

The first set of results reported on in Chapter 6 relate to the demographic profile of the respondents (Section 6.4) or Section A of the questionnaire (Annexure A). Following this, descriptive statistics, including mean, median, mode, standard deviation and skewness of the data, are calculated for each of the questionnaire items, which are presented in Tables and then further discussed (Section 6.5). The section that follows, Section 6.6.2, presents the calculated Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) results. In Section 6.6.3 the results of the SEM models created between the independent and dependent variables of this study are presented, followed by the Primary Models calculated between the sub-variables and dependent variables of the study and discussed in Section 6.6.4. Within Sections 6.6.5 and 6.6.6 evidence was given to either reject or support the formulated hypotheses of the study and subsequently, in Section 6.6.7, the Pearson's correlation coefficient is presented, used to test the correlation between the independent variables of the study (traditional and digital sensory branding strategies) and the dependent variable of the study (brand loyalty). Additionally, in Section 6.6.8, the Chi-Square Test of Association as well as the cross tabulation conducted is provided, which is used to determine the association between the respondents' age and their average monthly budget for skincare.

The final statistical analysis is presented in Section 6.6.9, where significant differences between certain groups are identified through the use of ANOVAs and Welch Robust and then Tukey's test, Cohen's d and Games-Howell is utilised to determine any statistically or practically significant differences. The last section, constituting Chapter 6 (Section 6.7), consists of a summary of the chapter, where the results are represented by "EF" followed by the number of the result being reported. This is done as the "EF" results will be referred to in Chapter 7 to make suppositions and draw conclusions.

6.2 COMPLETION RATE AND INTERNAL RELIABILITY OF THE VARIABLES IN THE STUDY

In this study, individuals who had purchased skincare products in brick-and-mortar stores as well as via online platforms were included in the target

population. These individuals were reached by posting a link to the questionnaire, which was accompanied by the cover letter, on social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn, as well as by distributing the questionnaire via email to an existing mailing list. The researcher has access to an appropriate mailing list as she currently works for an all-natural skincare company.

6.2.1 Completion rate

The completion rate of a study is an essential component for consideration as it can determine if there was any bias (Lindemann 2021;2019) and can be calculated by dividing the number of respondents who fully completed the questionnaire by the number of respondents who started but did not fully complete the questionnaire (Lindemann 2021; Phillips, Friedman & Durning 2017:269). Willott (2019) adds that the response rate of a questionnaire should generally be 50% or higher to be acceptable. However, Saleh and Bista (2017:64) argue that when making use of online surveys, the response rate is generally much lower, which is supported by Lindemann (2021) who states that while the average survey response rate is 33%, email surveys only present an average response rate of 30% and online surveys 29%.

As determined in Chapter 5: Section 5.4.1, in the case of this study no sample frame exists and therefore, to establish an acceptable sample size for the study, set guidelines were consulted (Chapter 5: Table 5.4). The guideline stipulated that 300+ respondents yielded a good study sample size (Comrey & Lee 2013:217; Rahi 2017:4), which is why it was decided that this study would make use of a minimum sample size of 300 respondents. However, after the data was cleaned and processed for statistical purposes, a total number of 321 usable questionnaires were collected. Additionally, a total of 372 potential respondents started the questionnaire, indicting a response rate of 86.3% ($\frac{321}{372} x 100$). It can therefore be concluded that the response rate of this study is acceptable. The section that follows discusses the internal reliability of the variables of this study.

6.2.2   Internal reliability of the variables of the study

To determine the internal reliability of the variables of the study, Cronbach Alpha coefficients and the inter-item relatedness of the variables of the study were utilised, which were calculated through the use of IBM SPSS Statistics version 28. Internal consistency, as depicted by Ahmed et al (2022:16), Alston and Bowles (2019:64), Andrade (2018:499), Cypress (2021:85), Goforth (2015), Kraska et al (2020:150), Kumar (2019:278), Leander (2021:41), Middleton (2020), Riezler and Hagmann (2021:55), Surucu and Maslakci (2020:2695) and Taber (2018:1273), relates to the ability of a set of items to reproduce similar results should a study be repeated. Simply, Cronbach Alpha coefficients allow the researcher to identify how closely related a set of items in a questionnaire are to each other (American Psychological Association 2020; Michalos 2014:143; Tang, Cui & Babenko 2014:205). It is also noteworthy that the Cronbach Alpha value is relative to the number of items in a set, meaning that should the number of items in a set increase or decrease, so will the Cronbach Alpha values (Hoekstra, Vugteveen, Warrens & Kruyen 2018:352; UCLA: Statistical Consulting Group 2020). Plummer and Tanis Ozcelik (2015:940), along with Taber (2018:1278), therefore conclude that when interpreting Cronbach Alpha values, one must take into consideration the size of the item set. There is however, a set of guidelines which researchers should make use of when interpreting Cronbach Alpha, presented in Table 6.1.

TABLE 6.1

GUIDELINES FOR INTERPRETING CRONBACH ALPHA VALUES

Cronbach Alpha Coefficient Value	Interpretation
$\alpha \geq 0.9$	Excellent
$0.9 > \alpha \geq 0.8$	Acceptable
$0.8 > \alpha \geq 0.7$	Good
$0.7 > \alpha \geq 0.6$	Questionable
$0.6 > \alpha \geq 0.5$	Poor
$0.5 > \alpha$	Unacceptable

Source: Briggs & Cheek (1986:115); Ekolu & Quainoo (2019:25); Frost (2022c); Heidel (2022); Leander (2021:41); Namdeo & Rout (2016:1374) & Taber (2018:1278)

While Nunnally (1978:270) suggests that the cut off rate when interpreting Cronbach Alpha is 0.7, Hulin, Netemeyer and Cudeck (2001:56), along with Taber (2018:1288), argue that Cronbach Alpha values above 0.95 indicate redundancy rather than excellence and Tavakol and Dennick (2011:54) suggest that a maximum Cronbach Alpha value of 0.9 should be observed before redundancy can be assumed. The outcomes of the calculation of the Cronbach Alpha values and average inter-item relatedness for the variables of this study are presented in Table 6.2.

TABLE 6.2

CRONBACH ALPHA AND INTER-ITEM CORRELATIONS CALCULATED FOR THE VARIABLES OF THIS STUDY

Variables/ Sub-Variables	Number of Items (N)	For This Study		For This Study After Deletion Of Items With Negative Or Small Item-Total Correlations	
		Cronbach Alpha	Average Inter-Item Correlation	Cronbach Alpha	Average Inter-Item Correlation
Visual Stimuli					
In-store visual stimuli	6	0.90	0.60	No items were deleted	
Digital visual stimuli	6	0.88	0.57	No items were deleted	
Auditory Stimuli					
In-store auditory stimuli	5	0.83	0.49	No items were deleted	
Digital auditory stimuli	5	0.81	0.46	No items were deleted	
Olfactory Stimuli					
In-store olfactory stimuli	5	0.81	0.46	No items were deleted	
Digital olfactory stimuli	5	0.78	0.42	No items were deleted	
Tactile Stimuli					
In-store tactile stimuli	6	0.85	0.49	No items were deleted	
Digital tactile stimuli	5	0.70	0.34	0.82	0.55
Brand Loyalty					

Variables/ Sub-Variables	Number of Items (N)	For This Study		For This Study After Deletion Of Items With Negative Or Small Item-Total Correlations	
		Cronbach Alpha	Average Inter-Item Correlation	Cronbach Alpha	Average Inter-Item Correlation
Brand loyalty	9	0.78	0.33	No items were deleted	

As seen in Table 6.1, the Cronbach Alpha values calculated for this study ranged from 0.78 to 0.90. The conclusion can be drawn, based on the Cronbach Alpha values calculated for this study that the measuring instrument was reliable and valid (EF1). In the sections that follow, the descriptive statistics calculated through the use of IBM SPSS Statistics version 28, are presented and discussed, which include the measures of central tendency as well as the standard deviation and skewness of the data.

6.3   DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Descriptive statistics make use of the measures of central tendency to summarise a data set (Bhandari 2022; Frost 2020; Singh 2018b). However, Frost (2020) cautions that a drawback of descriptive statistics is that they cannot be used to draw inferences or make conclusions about the topic being studied, but rather are only able to summarise the raw data collected. Researchers must therefore subsequently make use of inferential statistics (Section 6.6) to contextualise the results to the relevant topic. The following section reports on the descriptive statistics pertaining to the demographic profile of the respondents of this study.

6.4   DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

As detailed by Allen (2017:1704), as well as Hughes et al (2016:138) and Kumar (2020b), collecting demographic information is essential in any research study as it allows the researcher to ensure that their respondents are appropriate for their target population, which allows for generalisations to be made. Additionally, collecting demographic information safeguards against the

inclusion of vulnerable groups (such as minors or the elderly), as well as bias (Allen 2017:1704; Hughes et al 2016:138; Connelly 2013:269).

The data set relevant to the demographic profile of the respondents was collected in the first section (Section A) of the questionnaire of this study (Annexure A), which constituted five closed-ended questions where respondents could select one answer from a predefined list. The five questions related to the gender and age of the respondents, the respondents' average budget for skincare products and how often, on average, they purchase skincare products both in-store and online.

Another limitation of descriptive statistics is that they cannot be applied to all types of data (Kaliyadan & Kulkarni 2019:83), which is the case for item 1 (gender of the respondent), item 4 (how often, in general, the respondents purchase skincare products in-store) and item 5 (how often, in general, the respondents purchase skincare products online). From the data collected, 80% of the 379 respondents were female and 20% of respondents were male (EF2). The results of the demographic profile of the respondents of this study are graphically displayed in Figures 6.1 to 6.5.

FIGURE 6.1

AGE GROUP OF RESPONDENTS
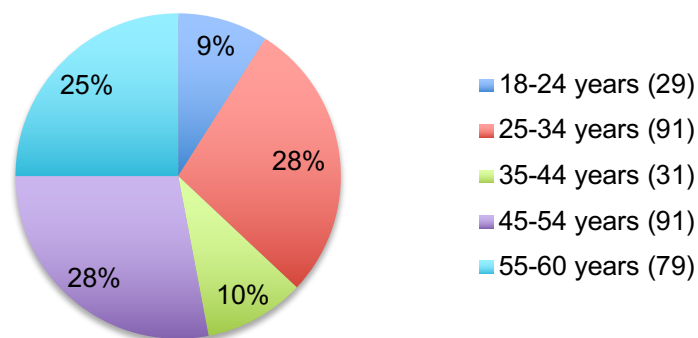
From Table 6.1 it can be seen that the two largest groups of respondents were between the ages of 25 – 34 years and 45 – 54 years, both accounting for 28% respectively of the sample. Moreover, only 10% of the respondents were

between the ages of 35 – 44 years (EF3). Figure 6.2 presents the average monthly budget that respondents spend on skincare.

FIGURE 6.2

AVERAGE MONTHLY BUDGET FOR SKINCARE PRODUCTS

- R50 - R500 p/m (56)
- R501 - R1000 p/m (134)
- R1001 - R1500 p/m (109)
- R1501 - R2000 p/m (16)
- More than R2000 p/m (6)
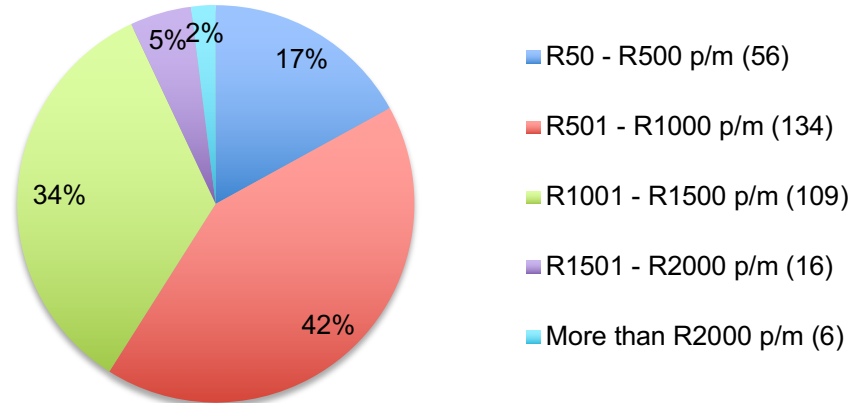
As seen in Table 6.2, the majority of the respondents (76%) were willing to spend between R501 – R1500 p/m on skincare, while only a minority of respondents (2%) reported that that were willing to spend more than R2000p/m on their skincare (EF4). Figure 6.3 presents the results relating to the frequency with which respondents purchase skincare products in-store.

FIGURE 6.3

FREQUENCY OF IN-STORE PURCHASES
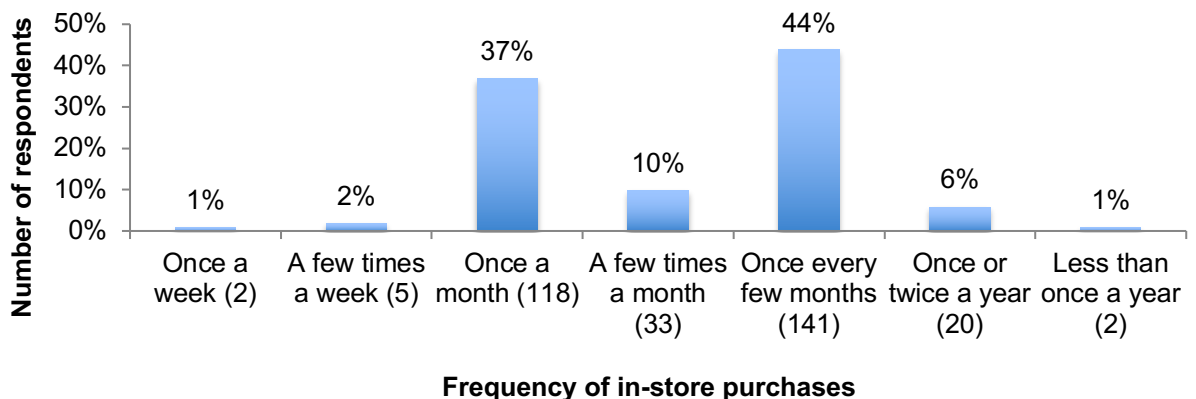
From Figure 6.3, almost half of the respondents reported that they purchased skincare in-store only once every few months (44%) while an additional 37% of respondents bought skincare in-store once every month. Only 1% of the

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respondents bought skincare in-store once a week or less than once a year (EF5). Figure 6.4 presents the results relating to the frequency with which respondents purchase skincare products online.

FIGURE 6.4

FREQUENCY OF ONLINE PURCHASES
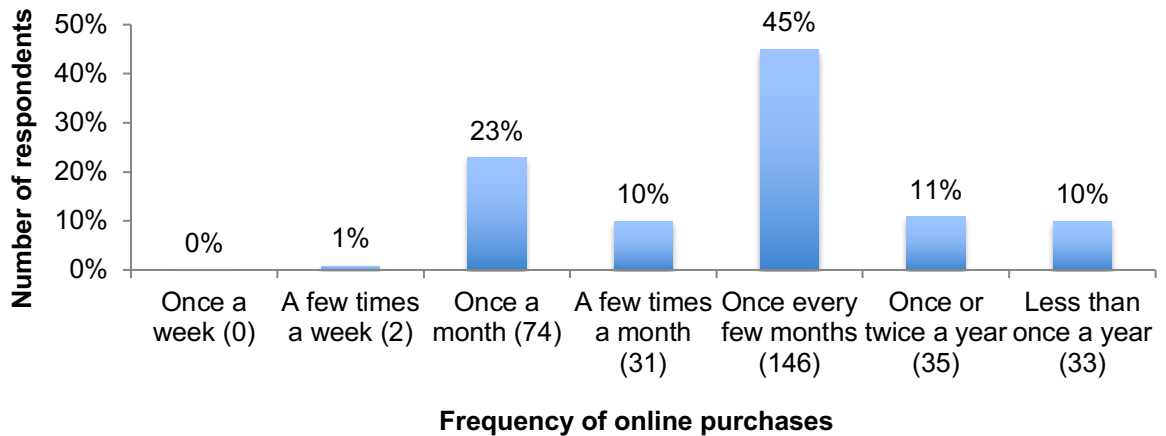
In Table 6.4 it can be seen that the majority of respondents either purchase skincare online once every few months (45%) or once a month (23%). There was only 1% of the respondents who indicated that they purchased skincare online a few times a week and no respondents who purchased skincare online once a week (EF6). The sections that follow present and discuss the descriptive statistics calculated for the variables of this study.

6.5   DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE VARIABLES OF THE STUDY

This study specifically comprised two independent variables, namely traditional sensory branding strategies and digital sensory branding strategies, each of which constituted the sub-variables of visual, auditory, olfactory and tactile stimuli. The questionnaire of this study was constructed such that each sub-variable was represented by a 5-point Likert scale question, where respondents were asked to indicate on a scale from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree) to what extent factors associated with the respective sub-variable influences their experience of shopping for skincare products. A response by the respondents of 3 (indifferent) indicated that the respondent

was indifferent about how the factor associated with the respective sub-variable influenced their experience of shopping for skincare products.

For data analysing and reporting purposes, answers of 1 (strongly agree) and 2 (agree), as well as 4 (disagree) and 5 (strongly disagree) were grouped to form a "level of agreement", whereby consumers agreed that the factor had an influence on their experience or a "level of disagreement", where respondents disagreed that the factor had any influence on their experience. The sections that follow present and discuss the descriptive statistics calculated for each of the variables and sub-variables of this study.

6.5.1 Traditional sensory branding strategies

For the purpose of this study, traditional sensory branding strategies constituted the sub-variables traditional visual, auditory, olfactory and tactile stimuli.

6.5.1.1 Traditional visual stimuli

The descriptive results pertaining to traditional visual stimuli are summarised in Table 6.3.

TABLE 6.3

SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSES REGARDING THE TRADITIONAL
VISUAL STIMULI

#	Question	Value N	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Dev.	Skew-ness	Agreed (%)	Disagreed (%)	Indifferent (%)
B1	The layout of the store influences my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	321	1.45	1	1	0.71	1.60	90	8	2
B2	The positioning of the products influences my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	321	1.64	2	1	0.75	0.75	88	10	2

#	Question	Value N	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Dev.	Skew-ness	Agreed (%)	Disagreed (%)	Indifferent (%)
B3	The colours used in the store influence my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	321	1.73	2	2	0.77	1.07	87	11	2
B4	The aesthetics of the product packaging influence my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	321	1.47	1	1	0.67	1.65	94	5	1
B5	The lighting in the store influences my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	321	1.79	2	2	0.72	0.68	86	13	1
B6	The design of the store influences my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	321	1.65	2	1	0.74	0.99	88	11	1

In Table 6.3, it can be seen that the mean scores of the items relating to traditional visual stimuli ranged from 1.45 to 1.79 (EF7). Moreover, it can be concluded that there is a relatively small standard deviation, with scores varying from 0.67 to 0.77, indicating that the respondents had similar assumptions regarding whether or not visual stimuli had an influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products in-store (EF8). Also notable from Table 6.3 is that the mode as well as the median of each item in the data set is either 1 (Strongly agreed) or 2 (agreed), which indicates that, in general, respondents agreed to a large extent that factors in this sub-section, constituting traditional visual stimuli, had a positive influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products in-store (EF9). This implies that all factors represent desirable sensory branding strategies for consumers who shop in-store for skincare products (EF10).

Bitner (1992:66), Kotler (1973:51) and Turley and Milliman (2000:194) surmise that ambient conditions of a store constitute visual cues, such as interior and external variables, layout and design as well as colour and lighting (Chapter 3: Section 3.5) (LF161 – LF163). Items B1, B3, B5 and B6 in this data set relate to the afore mentioned visual cues, and based on the distribution of responses seen in Table 6.3, it can be deduced that the ambiance of the store is an important aspect when considering the experience of shopping for

skincare products in-store (EF11). Furthermore, relating specifically to the product itself, it can be concluded that how eye catching or aesthetically pleasing the packaging is has an influence on purchasing behaviour (EF12), deduced by the high level of agreement shown by respondents towards items B4 (94%). The high level of agreement towards item B2 (88%) also led to the conclusion that purchasing behaviour is further influenced by the placement of the product on the shelf (EF13), which could relate to which shelf or next to which competitors the product is displayed (Ellsworth 2021) (EF14). The following section reports on the results relating to traditional auditory stimuli.

6.5.1.2 Traditional auditory stimuli

The descriptive results pertaining to traditional auditory stimuli are summarised in Table 6.4.

TABLE 6.4

SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSES REGARDING THE TRADITIONAL AUDITORY STIMULI

#	Question	Value N	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Dev.	Skew-ness	Agreed (%)	Disagreed (%)	Indifferent (%)
C1	The music played in the store influences my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	321	1.83	2	1	0.93	0.95	76	6	16
C2	The natural noises associated with stores (such as other consumers or staff chatting) influence my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	321	2.34	2	2	0.78	0.56	68	5	27
C3	The sound or pronunciation of the brand's name influences my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	321	2.60	3	3	0.83	-0.02	41	10	48
C4	The volume of the music that is played in the store influences my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	321	1.73	2	1	0.80	1.01	85	3	12
C5	The tempo of music played in the store influences my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	321	1.76	2	1	0.85	1.02	82	4	14

From Table 6.4 it can be seen that the mean values of items C1, C2, C4 and C5 varied between 1.73 and 2.34 (EF15), while the mean value of item C3 is 2.60 (EF16). This divide in opinions regarding traditional auditory stimuli may explain the range of standard deviation values (varying between 0.78 and 0.93) (EF17). Moreover, it can be seen that the mode and median values for items C1, C2, C4 and C5 is either 1 (strongly agreed) or 2 (agreed), indicating that in general respondents agreed to a large extent that factors in this sub-section, which relate to traditional auditory stimuli, had a positive influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products in-store, implying that these factors represent desirable sensory branding strategies for consumers who shop in-store for skincare products (EF18). However, in item C3, the mode as well as the median was 3, indicating that the majority of the responses noted an indifference towards the influence of the sound or pronunciation of the brand's name (EF19).

Further seen from the distribution of responses indicated in Table 6.3, respondents were in a high level of agreement that the music in the store (76%, item C1), the tempo (82%, item C5) and volume (85%, item C4) of the music and the natural noises associated with the store (68%) all had a positive influence on their experience of shopping for skincare in-store (EF20). The afore mention auditory stimuli constitute the ambient sound of a store (Areni & Kim 1993:338; Chattopadhyay 2017:352; Hulten 2020:94; Knoeferle et al 2011:326) (Chapter 3: Section 3.6) (LF196 - EF198, LF204, LF205, LF212), and it can therefore be concluded that the stores ambient sound has an influence on consumer behavioural responses when shopping for skincare products in-store. More than half of the respondents were in agreement that the sound or pronunciation of the brand's name either had no influence on their experience (10%) or that they were indifferent towards how this factor influenced their experience (48%) (EF21). This suggest that the sound or pronunciation of the brand's name is not necessarily a desired sensory branding strategy for consumers shopping in-store for skincare products (EF22). The following section reports on the results relating to traditional olfactory stimuli.

6.5.1.3 Traditional olfactory stimuli

The descriptive results pertaining to traditional olfactory stimuli are summarised in Table 6.5.

TABLE 6.5

SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSES REGARDING THE TRADITIONAL OLFACTORY STIMULI

#	Question	Value N	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Dev.	Skew-ness	Agreed (%)	Disagreed (%)	Indifferent (%)
D1	Diffused atmospheric smells influence my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	321	1.53	1	1	0.63	0.86	93	0	7
D2	The intensity of the diffused smells influences my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	321	1.56	1	1	0.62	0.72	94	0	6
D3	The smell of the product itself influences my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	321	1.40	1	1	0.54	0.95	97	0	3
D4	Signature smells of stores influence my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	321	2.01	2	2	0.60	0.35	84	1	15
D5	The fragrance of staff members in the store influences my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	321	1.89	2	2	0.71	0.64	85	2	13

From Table 6.5 it can be seen that the mean scores for all items varied between 1.40 and 2.01 (EF23). Additionally, the standard deviation scores varied from 0.54 to 0.71, implying that in general, respondents felt similarly about whether or not olfactory stimuli influenced their experience of shopping for skincare products in-store (EF24). Moreover, the mode as well as the median for items D1 – D3 was 1 (strongly agreed) (EF25), while the mode and median for item D4 and D5 are both 2 (agreed) (EF26). It can therefore be concluded that the respondents were in a high level of agreement towards the fact that the factors constituting traditional olfactory stimuli had a positive influence on their experience, which implies that all factors represent desirable

sensory branding strategies for consumers who shop in-store for skincare products (EF27).

Almost all of the respondents (97%) were in agreement that the fragrance of the product itself had an influence on their experience of shopping for skincare in-store (EF28), which supports the claim that fragrance is a key factor in the buying decision made by consumers when shopping for personal care products (Singh 2020) (Chapter 3: Section 3.2.2) (LF126). Furthermore, olfactory stimuli in branding relates to not only the physical fragrance of the product, but to the ambient fragrance of the store as well (LF225), which can include signature fragrances (LF239), diffused atmospheric fragrances (LF240) or the fragrance of the staff members (LF241) (Chapter 3: Section 3.7). From the results of this study presented in Table 6.5, it is apparent that there was a high level of agreement by the respondents that the ambient fragrance of a store was important when shopping for skincare in-store (EF29). The following section reports on the results relating to traditional tactile stimuli.

6.5.1.4 Traditional tactile stimuli

The descriptive results pertaining to traditional tactile stimuli are summarised in Table 6.6.

TABLE 6.6

SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSES REGARDING THE TRADITIONAL TACTILE STIMULI

#	Question	Value N	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Dev.	Skew-ness	Agreed (%)	Disagreed (%)	Indifferent (%)
E1	The possibility to touch the physical product influences my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	321	1.33	1	1	0.61	2.07	96	2	2
E2	The possibility to sample the physical product influences my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	321	1.36	1	1	0.54	1.31	98	0	2

#	Question	Value N	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Dev.	Skew-ness	Agreed (%)	Disagreed (%)	Indifferent (%)
E3	The feel or texture of the product's packaging influences my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	321	1.43	1	1	0.64	1.37	93	1	6
E4	The temperature of the store influences my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	321	1.78	2	2	0.74	0.84	86	2	12
E5	The texture of the skincare product itself influences my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	321	1.43	1	1	0.61	1.44	96	1	3
E6	The duration that I touch or feel the product influences my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	321	2.04	2	2	0.66	0.29	80	1	19

In Table 6.6 it can be seen that the mean scores for all items ranged between 1.33 and 2.04 (EF30). Additionally, the items in this section presented standard deviation values ranging from 0.54 to 0.74, indicating that respondents felt similarly regarding whether or not traditional tactile stimuli had an influence on their experience (EF31). All items in the data set relating to traditional tactile stimuli presented modes and median values of either 1 (strongly agreed) or 2 (agreed), indicating that, in general, respondents were in a high level of agreement that the factors constituting traditional tactile stimuli had a positive influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products in-store, implying that all factors represent desirable sensory branding strategies for consumers who shop in-store for skincare products (EF32).

Further deducible from the results in Table 6.6 is that both diagnostic cues (when a consumer actively seeks tactile stimuli or information when considering alternative brands) and non-diagnostic cues (those tactile stimuli or information that do not form part of the product evaluation) (Foroudi & Foroudi 2021:244; Foroudi & Palazzo 2019:138; Stach 2018:25) (Chapter 3: Section 3.8) (LF253) play a role in the experience of shopping for skincare products in-store, as determined by the distribution of responses. It is however notable that respondents signified a stronger level of agreement towards how

diagnostic cues influence their experience, supported by the mode scores being 1 (Strongly agreed) (items E1 – E3 & E5), whereas factors relating to non-diagnostic cues presented mode scores of 2 (agreed) (items E4 & E6) (EF33). The following section reports on the results relating to digital visual stimuli.

6.5.2 Digital sensory branding strategies

For the purpose of this study, digital sensory branding strategies constituted the sub-variables digital visual, auditory, olfactory and tactile stimuli.

6.5.2.1 Digital visual stimuli

The descriptive results pertaining to digital visual stimuli are summarised in Table 6.7.

TABLE 6.7

SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSES REGARDING THE DIGITAL VISUAL STIMULI

#	Question	Value N	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Dev.	Skew-ness	Agreed (%)	Disagreed (%)	Indifferent (%)
B7	The aesthetics of the product packaging influence my experience of shopping for skincare products online	321	1.49	1	1	0.67	1.39	93	1	6
B8	High quality digital images influence my experience of shopping for skincare products online	321	1.46	1	1	0.70	1.73	92	1	7
B9	The layout and user friendliness of the website influence my experience of shopping for skincare products online	321	1.37	1	1	0.55	1.26	97	0	2
B10	How aesthetically pleasing the website is influences my experience of shopping for skincare products online	321	1.47	1	1	0.62	1.37	95	1	4
B11	The use of interactive technology (such as 360 – degree imaging) influences my	321	1.70	2	1	0.82	0.93	82	2	16

#	Question	Value N	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Dev.	Skew-ness	Agreed (%)	Disagreed (%)	Indifferent (%)
	experience of shopping for skincare products online									
B12	The use of videos influences my experience of shopping for skincare products online	321	1.81	2	1	0.81	0.68	81	3	16

From Table 6.7 it can be seen that the mean scores of all the items in the sub-section varied between 1.37 and 1.81 (EF34). Furthermore, the standard deviation scores varied from 0.55 to 0.82, indicating that respondents feel similarly regarding how the factors, relating to digital visual stimuli, influence their experience (EF35). Moreover, the respondents, in general, indicated that the factors constituting digital visual stimuli had a positive influence on the experience of shopping for skincare products online, as determined by the mode and median values for all items in the data set being either 1 (strongly agreed) or 2 (agreed) (EF36), This result implies that digital visual stimuli represent desirable sensory branding strategies for consumers who shop online for skincare products (EF37). It can therefore be deduced that visual stimuli are imperative to the sales of skincare products online (EF38).

Items B8 – B12 in this data set make reference to factors associated with the webmosphere (Chapter 3: Section 3.5.2) (LF183, LF185, LF188 – LF192) and, as deducible from the distribution of responses indicated in Table 6.7, it can be concluded that the webmosphere created is an important consideration for the sales of skincare online (EF39). The following section reports on the results relating to digital auditory stimuli.

6.5.2.2 Digital auditory stimuli

The descriptive results pertaining to digital auditory stimuli are summarised in Table 6.8.

TABLE 6.8

SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSES REGARDING THE DIGITAL AUDITORY
STIMULI

#	Question	Value N	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Dev.	Skew-ness	Agreed (%)	Disagreed (%)	Indifferent (%)
C6	The use of background music or sounds on the website influence my experience of shopping for skincare products online	321	2.23	2	2	0.85	0.73	70	7	21
C7	The reactive sounds influence my experience of shopping for skincare products online	321	2.26	2	2	0.83	0.88	71	8	21
C8	The use of video adverts or clips influence my experience of shopping for skincare products online	321	1.86	2	2	0.82	0.98	83	4	13
C9	The use of brand jingles influences my experience of shopping for skincare products online	321	2.76	3	3	0.82	-0.17	33	15	52
C10	The use of digital sounds to portray the actual sound of using the product influences my experience of shopping for skincare products online	321	2.36	2	2	0.84	0.62	64	10	26

From Table 6.8 it can be seen that the mean scores for items C6 – C8 as well as C10 varied between 1.86 and 2.36 (EF40). Moreover, the mode and median scores for items C6 – C8 as well as C10 were 2 (agreed), which is indicative of the fact that respondents were in agreement regarding the influence of digital auditory stimuli on their experience of shopping for skincare products online and implies that these factors represent desirable sensory branding strategies for consumers who shop online for skincare products (EF41). However, in item C9, the mean value is 2.76 and both the mode and the median are 3, which indicates that respondents were, in general, indifferent towards how brand jingles influenced their experience of shopping for skincare products online (EF42). This may suggest that brand jingles are becoming irrelevant in the digital market space with specific reference to skincare (EF43).

Further notable from the results presented in Table 6.8 is that respondents were in a high level of agreement (83%) regarding the influence of video clips on their experience of shopping for skincare online. From this result, the conclusion can be drawn that audio and visual cues should be used simultaneously to create multi-sensory experiences for consumers (EF44), as stipulated by Cowen-Elstner (2018:28), Hulten (2020:86) and Shaed et al (2015:34) (Chapter 3: Section 3.6) (LF199 & LF202). The following section reports on the results relating to digital olfactory stimuli.

6.5.2.3 Digital olfactory stimuli

The descriptive results pertaining to digital olfactory stimuli are summarised in Table 6.9.

TABLE 6.9

SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSES REGARDING THE DIGITAL OLFACTORY STIMULI

#	Question	Value N	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Dev.	Skew-ness	Agreed (%)	Disagreed (%)	Indifferent (%)
D6	The use of descriptive language on a website influences my experience of shopping for skincare products online	321	1.50	1	1	0.66	1.17	93	1	7
D7	The use of scratch-and-sniff cards given out in stores influences my experience of shopping for skincare products online	321	2.37	2	2	0.78	0.33	59	6	36
D8	The use of imagery association influences my experience of shopping for skincare products online	321	1.70	2	1	0.73	0.72	87	1	12
D9	The use of virtual reality technology to replicate the olfactory stimuli influences my experience of shopping for skincare products online	321	1.95	2	2	0.74	0.41	80	2	18
D10	The use of third-party technology influences my experience of shopping for skincare products online	321	1.99	2	2	0.83	0.47	74	3	23

From Table 6.9 it can be seen that the mean scores of all items varied between 1.50 and 1.99 (EF45), while the standard deviation scores varied from 0.66 to 0.83, implying that respondents felt similarly regarding whether or not digital olfactory stimuli have an influence on their experience for shopping for skincare products online (EF46). Further observable from Table 6.9 is that the mode and median of all items in the data set relating to digital olfactory stimuli were either 1 (strongly agreed) or 2 (agreed), which indicates that, in general, respondents were in agreement that these factors had a positive influence on the experience of shopping for skincare online (EF47). This would then imply that these factors, constituting digital olfactory stimuli, represent desirable sensory branding strategies for consumers who shop online for skincare products (EF48).

One factor which less respondents agreed was influential on their experience of shopping for skincare online was the use of scratch-and-sniff cards (item D7) (EF49). Furthermore, the deduction can be made that consumers who are purchasing skincare products online are still wanting to experience olfactory stimulation, as determined by the distribution of responses for items D6 and D8 (EF50). Finally, consumers are interested in new virtual reality technology with regards to olfactory stimulation, as indicated by the positive distribution of responses in items D9 and D10 (EF51). The following section reports on the results relating to digital tactile stimuli.

6.5.2.4 Digital tactile stimuli

The descriptive results pertaining to digital tactile stimuli are summarised in Table 6.10.

TABLE 6.10

SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSES REGARDING THE DIGITAL TACTILE
STIMULI

#	Question	Value N	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Dev.	Skew-ness	Agreed (%)	Disagreed (%)	Indifferent (%)
E7	The use of high-quality images influences my experience of shopping for skincare products online	321	1.45	1	1	0.67	1.44	93	1	6
E8	The use of descriptive words to describe the feel of the product influences my experience of shopping for skincare products online	321	1.49	1	1	0.71	1.35	90	2	8
E9	The availability of a return policy influences my experience of shopping for skincare products online	321	1.46	1	1	0.66	1.23	92	1	7
E10	Haptic responses when clicking on certain icons or making a purchase influence my experience of shopping for skincare products online	321	2.23	2	2	0.75	0.66	72	7	22
E11	The use of interactive software influences my experience of shopping for skincare products online	321	2.58	3	3	0.84	0.06	47	13	39

From Table 6.10, it can be seen that the standard deviation scores varied from 0.66 to 0.84, meaning those respondents felt similarly regarding whether or not digital tactile stimuli have an influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products online (EF52). Moreover, the mean scores for items E7 – E10 varied between 1.45 and 2.23 (EF53) and the mode and median scores for items E7 – E10 were either 1 (strongly agreed) or 2 (agreed) (EF54). This result implies that, in general, respondents were in agreement that the factors relating to digital tactile stimuli had a positive influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products online (EF55). Moreover, it can be concluded then that these factors represent desirable sensory branding strategies for consumers who shop online for skincare products (EF56).

However, in item E11, the majority of responses were indicative of an indifferent response to the influence of interactive technology on the

experience of shopping for skincare products online (EF57). This is supported by a mode and median value of 3 (indifferent) (EF58), which indicates that respondents, were in general, divided regarding the influence that interactive technology had on their experience of shopping for skincare online. The use of interactive technology is still relatively new and no yet widespread or cost effective (Olsson 2015:18; Petit et al 2018:51) (Chapter 3: Section 3.8.2) (LF272). Therefore, it can be assumed that not everyone has been exposed to interactive technology when shopping online, which could explain the divide seen in the respondents' answers (EF59). The following section reports on the results relating to the dependent variable of the study, brand loyalty.

6.5.3 Brand loyalty

The dependent variable of this study is brand loyalty, and the descriptive results pertaining to brand loyalty are summarised in Table 6.11.

TABLE 6.11

SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSES REGARDING BRAND LOYALTY

#	Question	Value N	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Dev.	Skew-ness	Agreed (%)	Disagreed (%)	Indifferent (%)
F1	Should my preferred brand increase their prices, I would still purchase their brand	321	2.51	2	2	1.05	0.32	62	28	10
F2	If my preferred brand's products are unavailable, I will not try an alternative	321	2.47	2	2	1.01	0.58	67	25	8
F3	I say positive things about my preferred brand to other people	321	1.72	2	2	0.57	0.58	96	1	3
F4	I will recommend my preferred brand to someone who seeks my advice	321	1.69	2	2	0.54	0.05	97	0	3
F5	I have a positive emotional relation (feel attached) to my preferred brand	321	2.13	2	2	0.70	0.47	76	3	21
F6	I am loyal to my preferred brand due to the quality of their products	321	1.69	2	2	0.57	0.31	96	1	3

#	Question	Value N	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Dev.	Skew-ness	Agreed (%)	Disagreed (%)	Indifferent (%)
F7	I am loyal to my preferred brand due to the experiences I have had with them	321	1.87	2	2	0.54	0.26	93	1	6
F8	My loyalty to my preferred brand is strengthened by the value-added services they provide, above the product itself	321	2.09	2	2	0.64	0.99	82	3	15
F9	My preferred brand provides a different experience than any of the alternative brands available	321	2.16	2	2	0.61	0.67	78	3	19

From Table 6.11, it can be seen that the mean scores of all items varied between 1.69 and 2.51 (EF60). Moreover, the standard deviation scores varied from 0.54 to 1.05, meaning that the respondents felt similarly about the statements relating to brand loyalty (EF61). Further observable in Table 6.11, the mode and median value for all items in this data set is 2 (agreed), indicating that, in general, respondents were in agreement regarding the statements relating to brand loyalty (EF62).

With reference to a brand increasing their prices (item F1), 62% of the respondents agreed that they would continue to purchase their products, which may speak to the literature finding of Gerstell et al (2020:5) that skincare is considered an affordable luxury (LF111). However, 10% of respondents were indifferent regarding this factor and 28% disagreed, indicating that they would not continue to purchase their products (EF63). This result would indicate that these respondents are price sensitive, which could be linked to the age of the respondents (see section 6.6.8), whereby older consumers are willing, or can afford, to spend more per month on their skincare products (EF163).

Similarly, in item F2 that relates to whether or not the brand's product was available, 67% of respondents noted that they would not try an alternative, whereas 8% were indifferent and 25% of respondents disagreed, which indicates that they would try an alternative should their preferred brand's

product not be available (EF64). The differing views regarding this factor of brand loyalty may be linked to the fact that based on the respondents gender (Osselaer & Bijmolt 2009:83; Ndubisi 2006:50), age (Klopotan et al 2014:488; McDougall 2015; Paricha 2019) and level of education (Klopotan et al 2014:488; McDougall 2015; Sun, Foscht & Eisingerich 2021:2; Vince 2021), their likelihood of being loyal to a skincare brand may differ (EF65).

Additionally, as seen in Table 6.11, respondents indicated a high level of agreement with the statements relating to spreading word-of mouth (item F3) (EF66) as well as making references to other people (item F4) (EF67). These two results concur with the Alexandra and Cerchia (2018:423), Foroudi et al (2018:10), Giovanis and Anthanasopoulou (2016:2), Haung et al (2018:2132), Saif et al (2018:67) as well as Tartaglione et al (2019:1), who state that increased brand loyalty results in the generation of positive word of mouth (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.2.4)(LF35).

Furthermore, in item F7, 93% of respondents indicated that they are loyal to their preferred brand due to the experiences that they have with them (EF68) and in item F8 a large proportion (82%) of respondents indicated that their loyalty to their preferred brand is strengthened by the value-added services (EF69). From these three results it was deduced that consumers are wanting different experiences when shopping for skincare both in-store and online. However, in the final item of the sub-section (item F9), 19% of respondents indicated that there preferred brand did not offer a different experience (EF70). This result may suggest that some brands are not fully utilising experiences to differentiate themselves in the market (EF71). Finally, tangible and functional aspects of the product, such as quality, are influences of overall brand loyalty, as determined by the distribution of responses in item F6 (EF72). The sections that follow report on the inferential statistics calculated for this study.

6.6   INFERENTIAL STATISTICS

Inferential statistics, as explained by Frost (2020) and Selvanathan, Selvanathan and Keller (2020:4), Singh (2018b) and Wagh, Bhende and

Thakare (2021:9), are used to make inferences about a population based on the collected sample. Wagh et al (2021:10) emphasise that in order to be able to generalise from a data set onto an entire population, the sample should be adequate, and Frost (2020) adds that it is also essential that the researcher ensures that his/her study is reliable and valid so that generalisations made are true. The inferential statistics utilised in this study, as discussed in Chapter 5: Section 5.5.9, are presented in Table 6.12.

TABLE 6.12

INFERENTIAL STATISTICS EMPLOYED FOR THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY

Inferential Statistic	Motivation for use in this Study
Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)	Used in this study to validate the measuring instrument as well as test the hypotheses of this study
SEM Models	Used to determine if significant relationships existed between the variables of the study and the dependent variable, which aided in testing the hypotheses of this study
Primary Models	Used to determine if significant relationships existed between the sub-variables of the study and the dependent variable, which aided in testing the hypotheses of this study
Pearson's correlation coefficient	Used to identify the relationships between the variables and sub-variables of the study
Chi-square test of association	Used to determine whether two demographic variables of the respondents are independent or related
ANOVAs	Used to determine if significant differences in means existed between certain groups
Tukey test & Games-Howell	Used to identify specifically where significant differences in means existed
Cohen's d	Used to identify practical significant differences between groups

6.6.1   The results of the descriptive statistics of the second order factors of the variables of this study

Table 6.13 presents the descriptive statistics of the second order factors of the variables of this study. When interpreting the Table below, yellow highlighting represents the highest std. dev. values, while green highlighting represents the lowest std. dev. values. Additionally, the mean value indicative of the most positive response is highlighted in pink, and that representing the most negative is highlighted in blue.

TABLE 6.13

THE RESULTS OF THE DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF FIRST ORDER
FACTORS OF THE VARIABLES OF THE STUDY

First Order Factors	Valid N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Traditional Visual Stimuli	321	1	5	1.62	0.59
Traditional Auditory Stimuli	321	1	5	2.03	0.65
Traditional Olfactory Stimuli	321	1	5	1.68	0.47
Traditional Tactile Stimuli	321	1	5	1.56	0.48
Traditional sensory branding	321	1	5	1.72	0.45
Digital Visual Stimuli	321	1	5	1.55	0.56
Digital Auditory Stimuli	321	1	5	2.29	0.63
Digital Olfactory Stimuli	321	1	5	1.90	0.55
Digital Tactile Stimuli	321	1	5	1.66	0.56
Digital sensory branding	321	1	5	1.85	0.48

As seen in Table 6.13, the variable digital visual stimuli presented the mean value indicative of the most positive response (1.55) (EF73), followed closely by traditional tactile stimuli (1.56) (EF74). This indicates that in general, respondents agreed that both digital visual and traditional tactile stimuli have the most positive influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products (EF75). Respondents were least in agreement towards how digital auditory stimuli influenced their experience of shopping for skincare products online (EF76).

Further seen in Table 6.13, it is indicated that traditional sensory branding has the lowest standard deviation (std. dev.) (0.45) (EF77), indicating that the

answers of the respondents relating to traditional sensory branding were condensed, or that on average, they felt similarly regarding how this variable influenced their experience (EF78). When considered in conjunction with the mean score of 1.72, it is apparent that the general consensus between respondents was that traditional sensory branding positively influences their experience of shopping for skincare products in-store (EF79). Contradictorily, the highest standard deviation (0.65) is observed for traditional auditory stimuli (EF80), indicating that respondents have the widest range of answers for this sub-variable (EF81). Nevertheless, the mean value for traditional auditory stimuli (2.03) indicates that in general, respondents still agreed that traditional auditory stimuli positively influence their experience of shopping for skincare products in-store (EF82).

6.6.2 Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is a statistical tool that can be utilised to validate a measuring instrument and is a multivariate calculation, which measures to what extent a variable is represented by a number of constructs (Bastos 2021; Frey 2018). While CFA has similarities to exploratory factor analysis (EFA), the main difference lies in the fact that the researcher can predefine the exact number of factors needed to link measured variables to latent variables (Bastos 2021; Frey 2018; Glen 2022a) and Glen (2022a) adds that CFA is used when hypothesis testing is necessary. Bastos (2021) further explains that CFA is commonly used when the items within a questionnaire have previously been used to test a specific variable.

When interpreting CFA, one firstly examines chi-square (X^2) as this value indicates the difference between the observed and estimated covariance matrix and is the fundamental measure of CFA (Hair, Black, Babin & Anderson 2019:635; UCLA 2021). Following this, the degrees of freedom (df) should be considered as this will indicate to the researcher the amount of mathematical information that can be obtained (Hair et al 2019:636). Once the researcher has considered the basic measures of goodness-of-fit, the absolute fit indices should be observed, which include the Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI), Root

Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) and the Standardised Root Mean Residual (SRMR). These goodness-of-fit measures were applied for the purpose of this study based on the recommendation of the employed statistician.

GFI, according to Hair et al (2019:637), is a fit statistic that does not take into consideration the sample size of the study, which can range from 0 to 1, where the higher the value observed is, the better the model fit is assumed to be. RMSEA is used by researchers to determine how well a model actually fits a population, as it does not reject models that consist of larger numbers of variables, and lower values are indicative of better fit (Hair et al 2019:637; UCLA 2021). When studying covariances, the error in prediction creates a residual, which makes interpretation of the results challenging. However, SRMR provides a solution to this, as they are directly comparable (Hair et al 2019:637). Finally, the researcher can examine the incremental fit indices relevant to the study, such as the comparative fit index (CFI). Hair et al (2019:639) define CFI as an incremental fix index that has been normed in such a way that the outcomes range from 0 to 1, where higher values are representative of better fit. For the purpose of this study, it was firstly determined whether or not all the parameter estimates were statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). Thereafter, the relevant goodness-of-fit indices were consulted to assess model fit, namely CMIN/df, CFI, SRMR and RMSEA. Table 6.14 provides the rule of thumb cut-off values for interpretation of the goodness-of-fit indices utilised in this study.

TABLE 6.14

INTERPRETATION GUIDELINES FOR THE GOODNESS-OF-FIT INDICES

Index	Cut-off for good model fit	Cut-off for adequate model fit	Source
CMIN/df	< 3.00	< 5.00	• Hair et al (2019:636) • UCLA (2021)
CFI	> 0.95	> 0.90	• Brown (2015:86); • Hair et al (2019:639); • UCLA (2021)
GFI	> 0.95	> 0.90	• Hair et al (2019:637) • UCLA (2021)

Index	Cut-off for good model fit	Cut-off for adequate model fit	Source
SRMR	< 0.05	< 0.08	• Brown (2015:86); • Hair et al (2019:637); • UCLA (2021)
RMSEA	< 0.08	< 0.10	• Brown (2015:86); • Hair et al (2019:637); • UCLA (2021)

Furthermore, where appropriate, modification indices (MI) were utilised. The use of MI was deemed necessary where two items were highly related (MI > 0.10) and the researcher therefore allowed them to correlate with one another. In the sections that follow, the CFA results calculated for each primary factor, namely traditional and digital sensory branding, are reported on. Following this, the CFA results calculated for the second-order factors, namely visual, auditory, olfactory and tactile stimuli, are reported on.

6.6.2.1 Confirmatory Factor Analysis for traditional sensory branding strategies

CFA was computed to test the measurement models relating to traditional sensory branding. As part of CFA, factor loadings were assessed for each item, and with reference to the model relating to traditional sensory branding, no items were removed (EF83). Thereafter, the model-fit measures were used to assess the model's overall goodness of fit (CMIN/df, SRMR/GFI, CFI and RMSEA), which are presented in Table 6.15.

TABLE 6.15

MODEL FIT SUMMARY FOR TRADITIONAL SENSORY BRANDING

Factor	Model fit summary at start				Model fit summary at end				Parameters
	CMIN	SRMR	CFI	RMSEA	CMIN	SRMR	CFI	RMSEA	P < 0.05
Traditional visual stimuli	6.16	0.04	0.96	0.13	2.65	0.02	0.99	0.07	All parameters were significant
Traditional auditory stimuli	26.07	0.10	0.84	0.28	2.10	0.01	1.00	0.06	All parameters were significant
Traditional olfactory stimuli	9.74	0.06	0.93	0.17	3.87	0.03	0.98	0.10	All parameters were significant

Traditional tactile stimuli	6.69	0.05	0.94	0.13	2.24	0.03	0.99	0.06	All parameters were significant

The following modifications were made with reference to the sub-variables constituting traditional sensory branding:

- From the CFA calculation conducted for traditional visual stimuli, it was found that item B1 (The layout of the store influences my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store) and item B2 (The positioning of the products influences my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store) had a high MI (30.01) and they were therefore co-varied (EF84).

- From the CFA calculation conducted for traditional auditory stimuli, it was found that item C2 (The natural noises associated with stores influence my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store) and item C3 (The sound or pronunciation of the brand's name influences my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store) had a high MI (50.91) and they were therefore co-varied (EF85); item C1 (The music played in the store influences my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store) and item C2 had a high MI (30.67) and they were therefore co-varied (EF86), and item C1 and item C3 had a high MI (19.04) and they were therefore co-varied (EF87).

- From the CFA calculation conducted for traditional olfactory stimuli, it was found that item D4 (Signature fragrances of stores influence my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store) and item D5 (The fragrance of staff members in the store influences my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store) had a high MI (30.48) and they were therefore co-varied (EF88).

- From the CFA calculation conducted for traditional tactile stimuli, it was found that item E2 (The possibility to sample the physical product influences my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store) and item E6 (The duration that I touch or feel the product influences my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store) had a high MI (32.43) and they were therefore co-varied (EF89).

From Table 6.15 it can be seen that all the model-fit measure values, after the necessary MI were applied (model fit summary at end), are within their respective common acceptance levels (Table 6.14) (EF90). Therefore, it can be deduced that the four-factor model (traditional sensory branding) yielded good fit (EF91).

6.6.2.2 Confirmatory Factor Analysis for digital sensory branding

CFA was computed to test the measurement models relating to digital sensory branding. As part of CFA, factor loadings were assessed for each item, and with reference to the model relating to digital sensory branding, only one item (E11 - The use of interactive software influences my experience of shopping for skincare products online) was removed (EF92). Thereafter, the model-fit measures were used to assess the model's overall goodness of fit (CMIN/df, SRMR/GFI, CFI and RMSEA), which are presented in Table 6.16.

TABLE 6.16

MODEL FIT SUMMARY FOR DIGITAL SENSORY BRANDING

Factor	Model fit summary at start				Model fit summary at end				Parameters
	CMIN	SRMR	CFI	RMSEA	CMIN	SRMR	CFI	RMSEA	P < 0.05
Digital visual stimuli	16.14	0.07	0.87	0.22	2.90	0.02	0.99	0.08	All parameters were significant
Digital auditory stimuli	18.80	0.09	0.85	0.24	2.89	0.02	0.99	0.08	All parameters were significant
Digital olfactory stimuli	15.19	0.06	0.88	0.21	4.32	0.03	0.98	0.10	All parameters were significant
Digital tactile stimuli	8.90	0.08	0.94	0.16	4.55	0.03	0.99	0.11	Item E11 deleted (p = 0.70)

The following modifications were made with reference to the sub-variables constituting digital sensory branding:
- From the CFA calculation conducted for digital visual stimuli, it was found that item B11 (The use of interactive technology influences my experience of shopping for skincare products online) and item B12 (The use of videos influences my experience of shopping for skincare products online) had a

high MI (60.29) and they were therefore co-varied (EF93) as well as that item B9 (The layout and user friendliness of the website influence my experience of shopping for skincare products online) and item B10 (How aesthetically pleasing the website is influences my experience of shopping for skincare products online) had a high MI (42.94) and they were therefore co-varied (EF94).

- From the CFA calculation conducted for digital auditory stimuli, it was found that item C9 (The use of brand jingles influences my experience of shopping for skincare products online) and item C10 (The use of digital sounds to portray the actual sound of using the product influences my experience of shopping for skincare products online) had a high MI (73.62) and they were therefore co-varied (EF95).

- From the CFA calculation conducted for digital olfactory stimuli, it was found that item D6 (The use of descriptive language on a website influences my experience of shopping for skincare products online) and item D8 (The use of imagery association influences my experience of shopping for skincare products online) had a high MI (40.61) and they were therefore co-varied (EF96).

- From the CFA calculation conducted for digital tactile stimuli, it was found that item E11 (The use of interactive software influences my experience of shopping for skincare products online) was insignificant ($p < 0.05$), where $p = 0.70$ (EF97), and the item was therefore removed.

From Table 6.16 it can be seen that all the model-fit measure values, after the necessary MI were applied (model fit summary at end), are within their respective common acceptance levels (Table 6.14) (EF98). Therefore, it can be deduced that the four-factor model (digital sensory branding) yielded good fit (EF99). The following section discusses the SEM models created for this study.

6.6.3 SEM models

As explained by Ockey and Choi (2015:305), structural equation modelling (SEM) is a statistical analysis technique which is linked to CFA. Boon (2013:116), Shaheen, Ahmed, Waqas, Waheed and Farooq (2017:136) and Tarka (2018:314) add that the widespread application of SEM to social studies can be attributed to the fact that it is possible to apply modifications as well as allow for evaluation of a theoretical model. Furthermore, SEM allows a researcher to investigate the relationships that may exist between latent variables and to what extent a structural or conceptual model fits the primary data collected (Boon 2013:116; Saheen et al 2017:133; Tarka 2018:314). However, for SEM to be appropriate, a relatively large sample size is needed, and while there is no exact recommendation on sample size, it is advised that a minimum of 100 respondents are needed (Lambert 2015:93). For reporting purposes, SEM models follow the same recommended cut-off values proposed for CFA (discussed in Section 6.6.2: Table 6.14). Additionally, SEM focuses more on regression and standardised regression estimates than CFA does, which ranges between 0, which is indicative of no significant relationship, to 1, which is indicative of a very significant relationship (Goyal 2021). The sections that follow report on the SEM models conducted for the independent variables (traditional and digital sensory branding strategies) and dependent variable (brand loyalty) of this study.

6.6.3.1 SEM model for traditional sensory branding and brand loyalty

The first SEM model created relates to the relationship between traditional sensory branding and brand loyalty. With reference to the SEM model created for traditional sensory branding and brand loyalty, there were no MI needed (EF100). Table 6.17 presents a summary of the regression weights table output.

TABLE 6.17

REGRESSION WEIGHTS FOR TRADITIONAL SENSORY BRANDING

Factor	Regression weight summary				
	Est.	S.E.	C.R.	P	Std. Est.
Brand loyalty <--- Traditional sensory branding	0.32	0.08	3.75	<0.01	0.351

From Table 6.17, it can be seen that there was a significant (p < 0.05) relationship between traditional sensory branding and brand loyalty, where p < 0.01 (EF101). However, the relationship is relatively weak, as determined by a standardized regression weight estimate of 0.351 (EF102). It has been noted that in order for a brand to create a loyal customer base, they should place emphasis on experiential marketing (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.3) and traditional sensory branding has been a quintessential factor in implementing experiential marketing (Chapter 3: Section 3.3). This could explain the relationship observed between traditional sensory branding and brand loyalty. Furthermore, the model-fit measures were used to assess the model's overall goodness of fit (CMIN/df, SRMR/GFI, CFI and RMSEA), presented in Table 6.18.

TABLE 6.18

MODEL FIT SUMMARY FOR TRADITIONAL SENSORY BRANDING

Factor	Model fit summary			
	CMIN	SRMR	CFI	RMSEA
Traditional sensory branding	3.02	0.09	0.85	0.08

It can be seen that the CMIN and RMSEA values are within their common acceptance levels for adequate model fit (Table 6.14) (EF103). However, the SRMR and CFI values are outside of their common acceptance levels (Table 6.14) (EF104). Therefore, it can be deduced that the model yielded a marginal to poor fit (Table 6.14) (EF105). This could be attributed to the fact that not all factors proved to be significant, and will therefore worsen the model fit. Figure 6.5 provides the graphical representation of the SEM model for traditional sensory branding and brand loyalty. In Figure 6.5 and 6.7 the following abbreviations are utilised; traditional sensory strategies (traditional); traditional tactile stimuli (TTS); traditional visual stimuli (TVS); traditional olfactory stimuli (TOS), and; traditional auditory stimuli (TAS).

FIGURE 6.5

THE SEM MODEL FOR TRADITIONAL SENSORY BRANDING
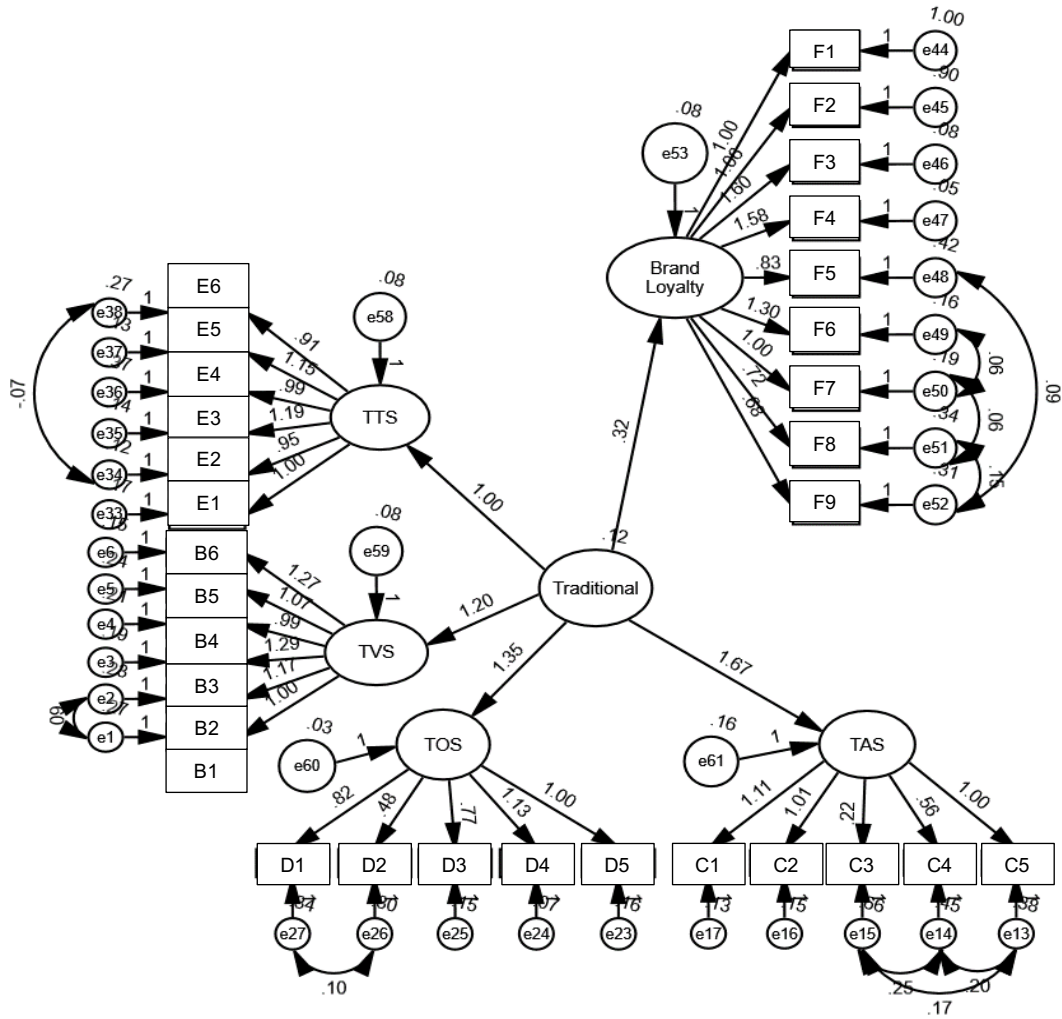
6.6.3.2 SEM model for digital sensory branding and brand loyalty

The second SEM model created relates to the relationship between digital sensory branding and brand loyalty. With reference to the SEM model created for digital sensory branding and brand loyalty, it was found that item D9 (the use of virtual reality technology to replicate the olfactory stimuli influences my experience of shopping for skincare products online) and item D10 (the use of third-party technology influences my experience of shopping for skincare products online) had a high MI (68.98) and they were therefore co-varied (see Figure 6.15) (EF106). This may have occurred as both items referred to the use of innovative technology in delivering olfactory stimuli online. Table 6.19 presents a summary of the regression weights table output.

TABLE 6.19

REGRESSION WEIGHTS FOR DIGITAL SENSORY BRANDING

Factor	Regression weights summary at start					Regression weights summary at end				
	Est.	S.E.	C.R.	P	Std. Est.	Est.	S.E.	C.R.	P	Std. Est.
Brand loyalty <--- Digital sensory branding	0.25	0.07	3.64	<0.01	0.34	0.26	0.07	3.66	<0.01	0.34

From Table 6.19, it can be seen that there was a significant relationship between digital sensory branding and brand loyalty, where p < 0.01 (EF107). However, the relationship is relatively weak, as determined by the standardized regression weight estimates of 0.34 and 0.34 respectively (EF108). The literature relating to digital sensory branding indicates that consumers are no less demanding of a brand online than they are in-store with regard to sensory stimuli (Chapter 3: Section 3.4) and as already discussed in the previous section, sensory marketing is essential in implementing experiential marketing (Chapter 3: Section 3.3) and therefore, brand loyalty. This could explain the significant relationship between digital sensory branding and brand loyalty observed. Furthermore, the model-fit measures were used to assess the model's overall goodness of fit (CMIN/df, SRMR/GFI, CFI and RMSEA), presented in Table 6.20.

TABLE 6.20

MODEL FIT SUMMARY FOR DIGITAL SENSORY BRANDING

Factor	Model fit summary at start				Model fit summary at end			
	CMIN	SRMR	CFI	RMSEA	CMIN	SRMR	CFI	RMSEA
Digital sensory branding	3.78	0.11	0.82	0.93	3.58	0.11	0.83	0.09

It can be seen that the CMIN and RMSEA values, both at the start and at the end, are within their common acceptance levels for adequate model fit (Table 6.14) (EF109). However, the SRMR and CFI values, both at the start and at the end, are outside of their common acceptance levels (Table 6.14) (EF110). Therefore, it can be deduced that the model yielded a marginal to poor fit (Table 6.14) (EF111). This could be attributed to the fact that not all factors proved to be significant, and will therefore worsen the model fit. Following this,

a full SEM model was created to determine whether a stronger relationship existed between traditional or digital sensory branding and brand loyalty. Figure 6.6 provides the graphical representation of the SEM model for traditional sensory branding and brand loyalty. In Figure 6.6 and 6.7 the following abbreviations are utilised; digital sensory strategies (digital); digital auditory stimuli (DAS); digital olfactory stimuli (DOS); digital tactile stimuli (DTS), and; digital visual stimuli (DVS).

FIGURE 6.6

THE SEM MODEL FOR DIGITAL SENSORY BRANDING
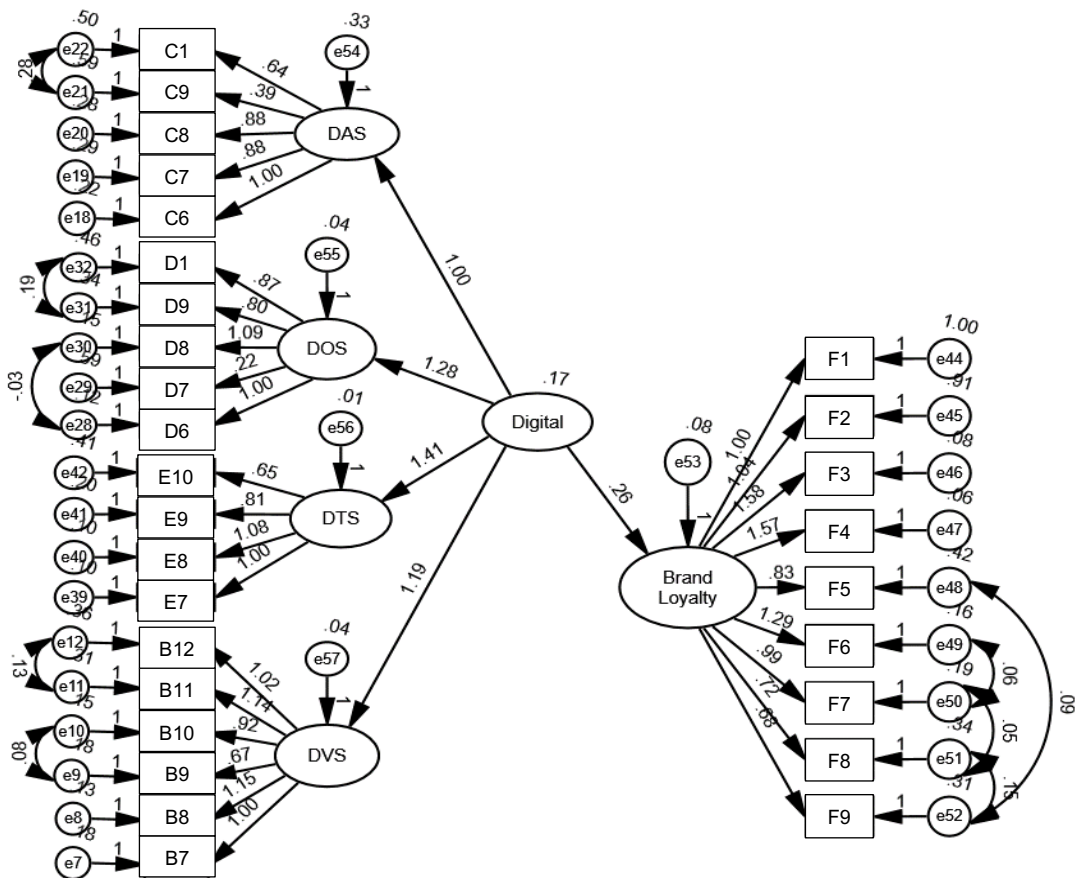
6.6.3.3 SEM model for both traditional and digital sensory branding and brand loyalty

With reference to the full SEM model created, it was determined that the significance of the relationships between both traditional and digital sensory branding and brand loyalty became weaker, as seen in Table 6.21, (EF112),

which is a common outcome when adding additional factors into a SEM calculation.

TABLE 6.21

THE REGRESSION WEIGHTS RELATING TO THE FULL SEM MODEL

Factor	Regression weights summary				
	Est.	S.E.	C.R.	P	Std. Est.
Brand loyalty <--- Traditional sensory branding	0.18	0.07	2.71	0.01	0.20
Brand loyalty <--- Digital sensory branding	0.14	0.05	2.66	0.01	0.19

From Table 6.21 it can be seen that there is a significant ($p < 0.05$) relationship between both traditional ($p = 0.01$) and digital ($p = 0.01$) sensory branding and brand loyalty (EF113). However, both are very weak relationships, as determined by the standardised regression weight values of 0.20 and 0.19 respectively (EF114). It can therefore be concluded that both traditional and digital sensory branding are related to brand loyalty, albeit weakly (EF115). Moreover, there was only a very small change in the significance level of the relationships between both traditional and digital sensory branding and brand loyalty as a result of including both independent variables to the SEM model (EF116). The model-fit measures were used to assess the model's overall goodness of fit (CMIN/df, SRMR/GFI, CFI and RMSEA) (Table 6.22).

TABLE 6.22

MODEL FIT SUMMARY FOR FULL SEM MODEL

Factor	Model fit summary at start			
	CMIN	SRMR	CFI	RMSEA
Traditional and digital sensory branding	3.25	0.23	0.76	0.08

It can be seen that the CMIN and RMSEA values are within their common acceptance levels for adequate model fit (Table 6.14) (EF117). However, the SRMR and CFI values are outside of their common acceptance levels (Table 6.14) (EF118). Therefore, it can be deduced that the model yielded a marginal to poor fit (Table 6.14) (EF119). Additionally, it was found that there was an extremely high MI (200.43) between traditional sensory branding and digital sensory branding and they were therefore co-varied (EF120). However, this resulted in the relationship between both traditional and digital sensory

branding and brand loyalty became insignificant (EF121). Figure 6.7 provides the graphical representation of the full SEM model for both traditional and digital sensory branding and brand loyalty.

FIGURE 6.7

THE FULL SEM MODEL
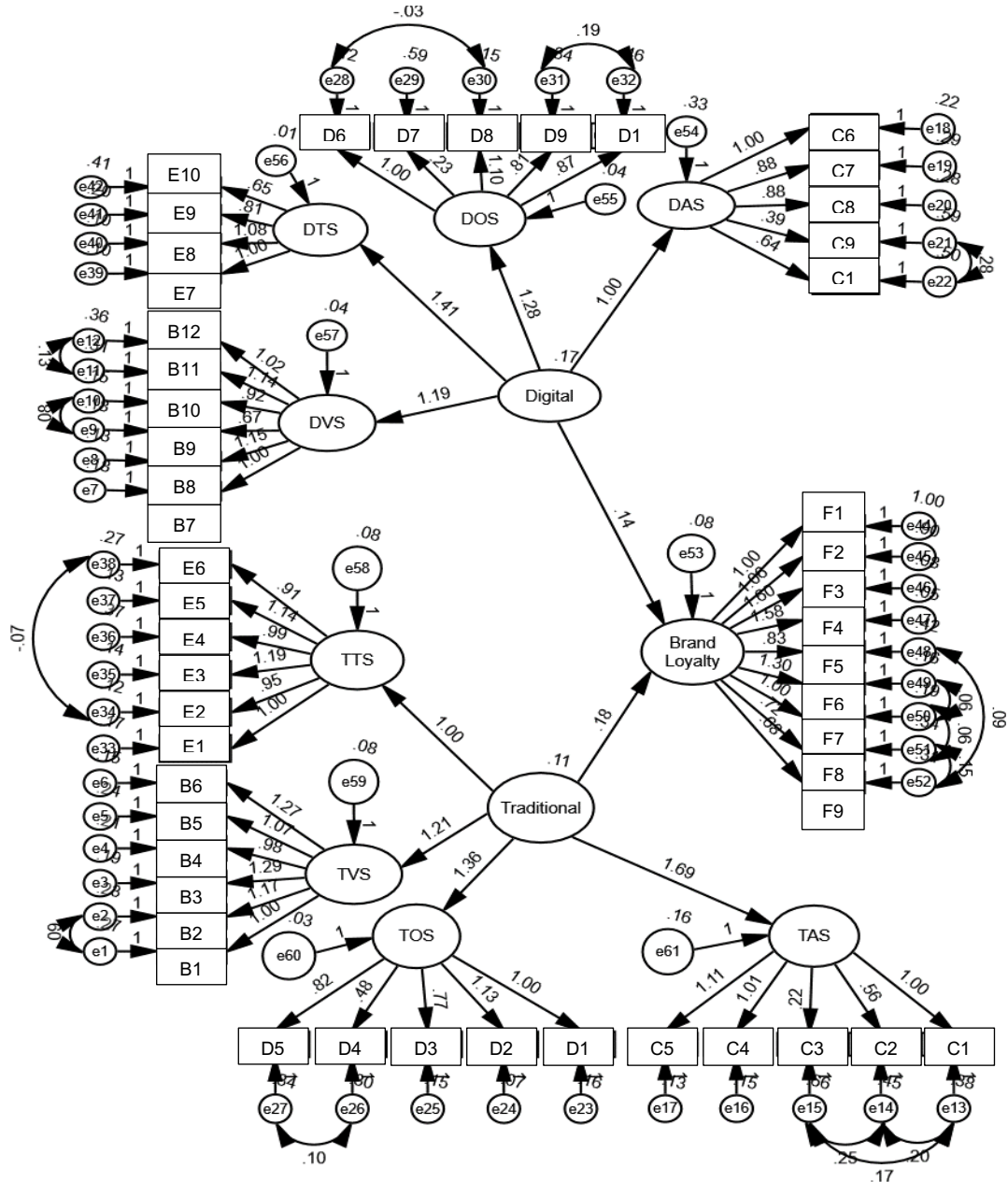
6.6.4   Primary factor model models

As previously stated, the independent variables of this study (traditional and digital sensory branding) constituted four sub-variables (visual, auditory, olfactory and tactile stimuli). Therefore, the consistently weak relationship

observed between traditional and digital sensory branding and brand loyalty could indicate that one or more of the sub-variables were not related to brand loyalty (EF122). To investigate the relationship between the various sub-variables of this study and the dependent variable, primary models were conducted, which are presented in the sections to follow.

6.6.4.1 Primary model for traditional sensory stimuli

The first primary model created was for traditional visual, auditory, olfactory and tactile stimuli and brand loyalty, the results of which are presented in Table 6.23.

TABLE 6.23

REGRESSION WEIGHTS FOR TRADITIONAL SENSORY STIMULI

Factor	Regression weights summary				
	Est.	S.E.	C.R.	P	Std. Est.
Brand loyalty <--- Traditional visual stimuli	0.01	0.04	0.37	0.71	0.02
Brand loyalty <--- Traditional auditory stimuli	-0.03	0.03	-1.00	0.32	-0.06
Brand loyalty <--- Traditional olfactory branding	0.06	0.04	1.55	0.12	0.09
Brand loyalty <--- Traditional tactile branding	0.27	0.07	4.01	<0.01	0.38

From Table 6.23, it can be seen that of all of the traditional sensory stimuli, only traditional tactile stimuli had a significant ($p < 0.05$) relationship with brand loyalty, where $p < 0.01$ (EF123). However, the relationship observed between traditional tactile stimuli and brand loyalty is relatively weak, as determined by the standardized regression weight value of 0.38 (EF124). Haptics, or the sense of touch, has been identified as one of the principal sources of stimuli and is linked to ownership and valuation of a product (Chapter 3: Section 3.8). Additionally, touch is especially relevant to physical products (Chapter 3: Section 3.8), which could explain why tactile stimuli was identified as the most significant sub-variable. An explanation as to why the remaining sub-variables had no influence on brand loyalty is because they constitute sensory experiences (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.10), which then has a relationship with brand loyalty (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.11: Figure 2.4). Therefore, their relationship with brand loyalty may be through brand experience, rather than

a direct relationship. Figure 6.8 provides the graphical representation of the Primary model for traditional sensory stimuli and brand loyalty. In Figure 6.8 and 6.10 the following abbreviations are utilised; traditional sensory strategies (traditional); traditional tactile stimuli (TTS); traditional visual stimuli (TVS); traditional olfactory stimuli (TOS), and; traditional auditory stimuli (TAS).

FIGURE 6.8

THE PRIMARY MODEL FOR TRADITIONAL SENSORY STIMULI
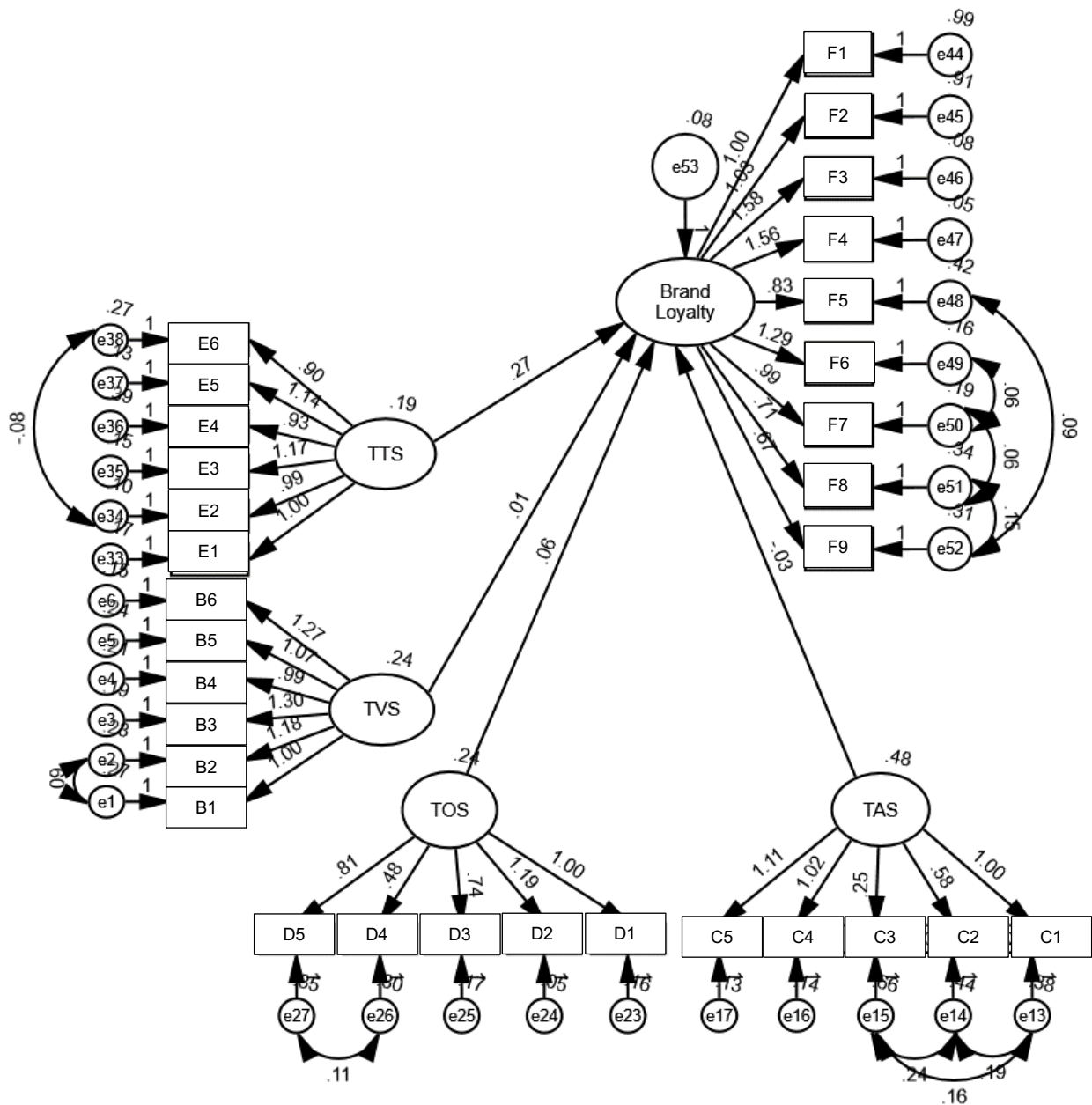
6.6.4.2 Primary model for digital sensory stimuli

The second primary model created was for digital visual, auditory, olfactory and tactile stimuli and brand loyalty, the results of which are presented in Table 6.24.

TABLE 6.24

REGRESSION WEIGHTS FOR DIGITAL SENSORY STIMULI

Factor	Regression weights summary				
	Est.	S.E.	C.R.	P	Std. Est.
Brand loyalty <--- Digital visual stimuli	-0.02	0.04	-0.58	0.56	-0.03
Brand loyalty <--- Digital auditory stimuli	-0.01	0.03	-0.30	0.76	-0.02
Brand loyalty <--- Digital olfactory branding	-0.03	0.06	-0.49	0.62	-0.03
Brand loyalty <--- Digital tactile branding	0.21	0.05	4.23	<0.01	0.40

From Table 6.24, it can be seen that of all of the digital sensory stimuli, only digital tactile stimuli had a significant ($p < 0.05$) relationship with brand loyalty, where $p < 0.01$ (EF125). However, the relationship observed between digital tactile stimuli and brand loyalty is relatively weak, as determined by the standardized regression weight value of 0.40 (EF126). Once again, tactile stimuli are highlighted as the only sub-variable to have a significant relationship with brand loyalty (EF127), and as the case with traditional tactile stimuli, this may be attributed to the fact that touch is one of the principal sources of stimuli and is linked to ownership and valuation of a product (Chapter 3: Section 3.8). It can therefore be deduced that consumers are seeking tactile stimuli even when shopping online, solidifying the literature that posits that the lack of tactile stimuli online is a challenge for brands with physical touch-related products (Chapter 3: Section 3.8.2). Once again, the remaining sub-variables constitute sensory experiences, a segment of brand experience, and therefore do not have a significant relationship with brand loyalty. Figure 6.9 provides the graphical representation of the primary model for digital sensory stimuli and brand loyalty. In Figure 6.9 and 6.10 the following abbreviations are utilised; digital sensory strategies (digital); digital auditory stimuli (DAS); digital olfactory stimuli (DOS); digital tactile stimuli (DTS), and; digital visual stimuli (DVS).

FIGURE 6.9

THE PRIMARY MODEL FOR DIGITAL SENSORY STIMULI
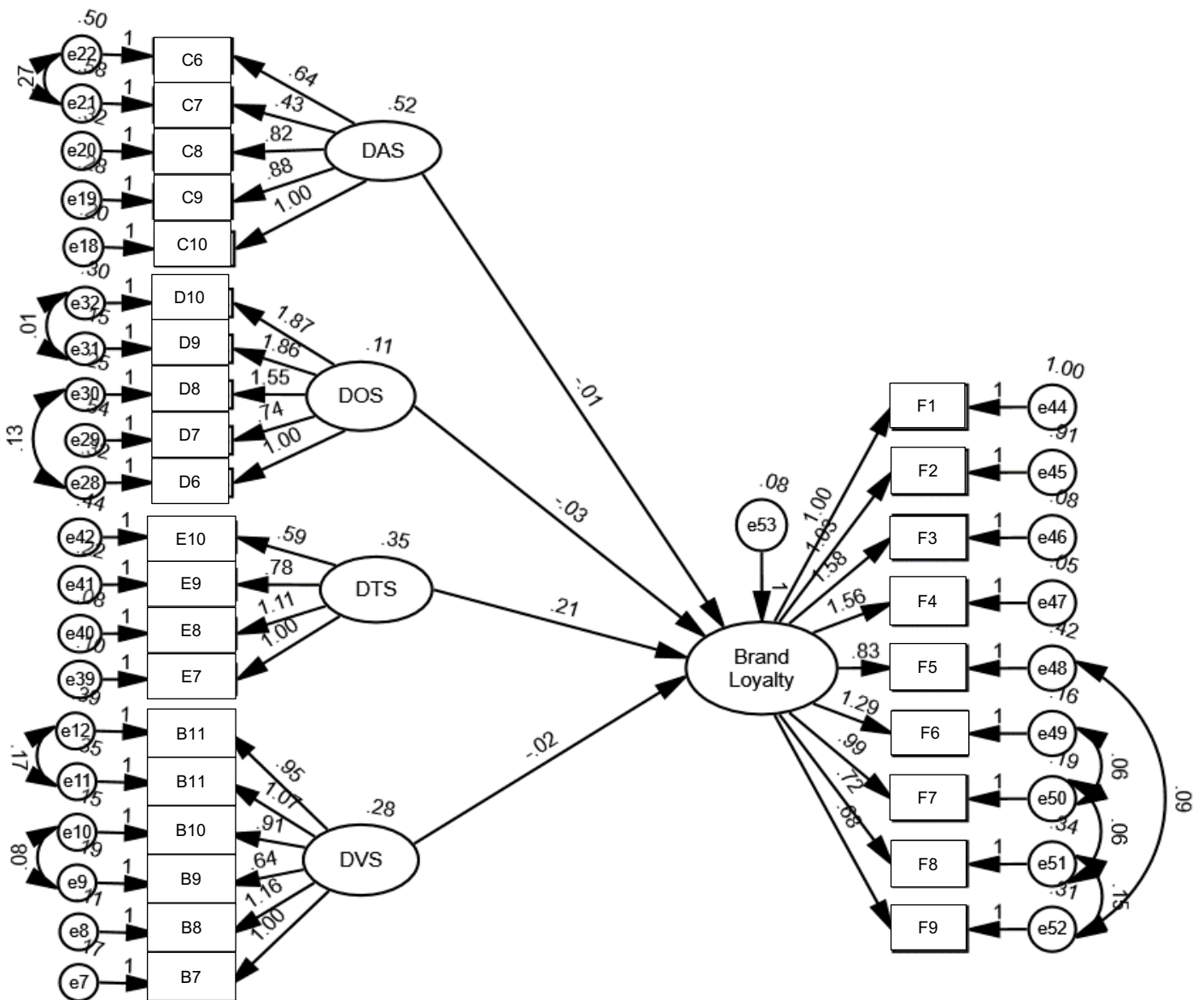
6.6.4.3 Full primary model for both traditional and digital sensory stimuli

The final primary model created included both traditional and digital visual, auditory, olfactory and tactile stimuli and brand loyalty, the results of which are presented in Table 6.25.

TABLE 6.25

REGRESSION WEIGHTS FOR THE FULL PRIMARY MODEL

Factor	Regression weights summary				
	Est.	S.E.	C.R.	P	Std. Est.
Brand loyalty <--- Traditional visual stimuli	0.03	0.04	0.71	0.48	0.04
Brand loyalty <--- Traditional auditory stimuli	-0.03	0.03	-1.26	0.21	-0.07
Brand loyalty <--- Traditional olfactory branding	0.06	0.04	1.65	0.10	0.10
Brand loyalty <--- Traditional tactile branding	0.23	0.06	3.85	<0.01	0.33
Brand loyalty <--- Digital visual stimuli	-0.07	0.04	-1.82	0.07	-0.11
Brand loyalty <--- Digital auditory stimuli	0.00	0.03	-0.01	0.99	0.00
Brand loyalty <--- Digital olfactory branding	-0.10	0.06	-1.77	0.08	-0.11
Brand loyalty <--- Digital tactile branding	0.13	0.04	3.32	<0.01	0.24

From the results relating to the full Primary Model presented in Table 6.25, it can be seen that of all the traditional and digital sub-variables, only traditional ($p < 0.01$) and digital ($p < 0.01$) tactile stimuli had a significant relationship with brand loyalty (EF128), the possible reasoning for this is discussed in Sections 6.6.4.1 and 6.6.4.2. Both of these relationships were however weak, as determined by the standardised regression weight values of 0.33 and 0.24 respectively (EF129). It can further be seen that significant relationships at a 10% level exist between traditional olfactory stimuli ($p < 0.10$) (EF130), digital visual stimuli ($p < 0.07$) (EF131) and digital olfactory stimuli ($p < 0.08$) (EF132) and brand loyalty.

Visual stimuli are the most common sensory stimuli made use of online (Chapter 3: Section 3.4), which may explain why this had some direct relationship with brand loyalty. Furthermore, this study makes specific reference to the skincare industry, where fragrance is a key factor in the decision on which product to purchase made by consumers (Chapter 3: Section 3.2.2), which could explain why both traditional and digital olfactory stimuli were highlighted in relation to brand loyalty. The remaining sub-variables indicated no significant relationship with brand loyalty (EF133); possible attributions for this finding are also discussed in Sections 6.6.4.1 and 6.6.4.2. Figure 6.10 provides the graphical representation of the full primary model for both traditional and digital sensory stimuli and brand loyalty.

FIGURE 6.10

THE FULL PRIMARY MODEL
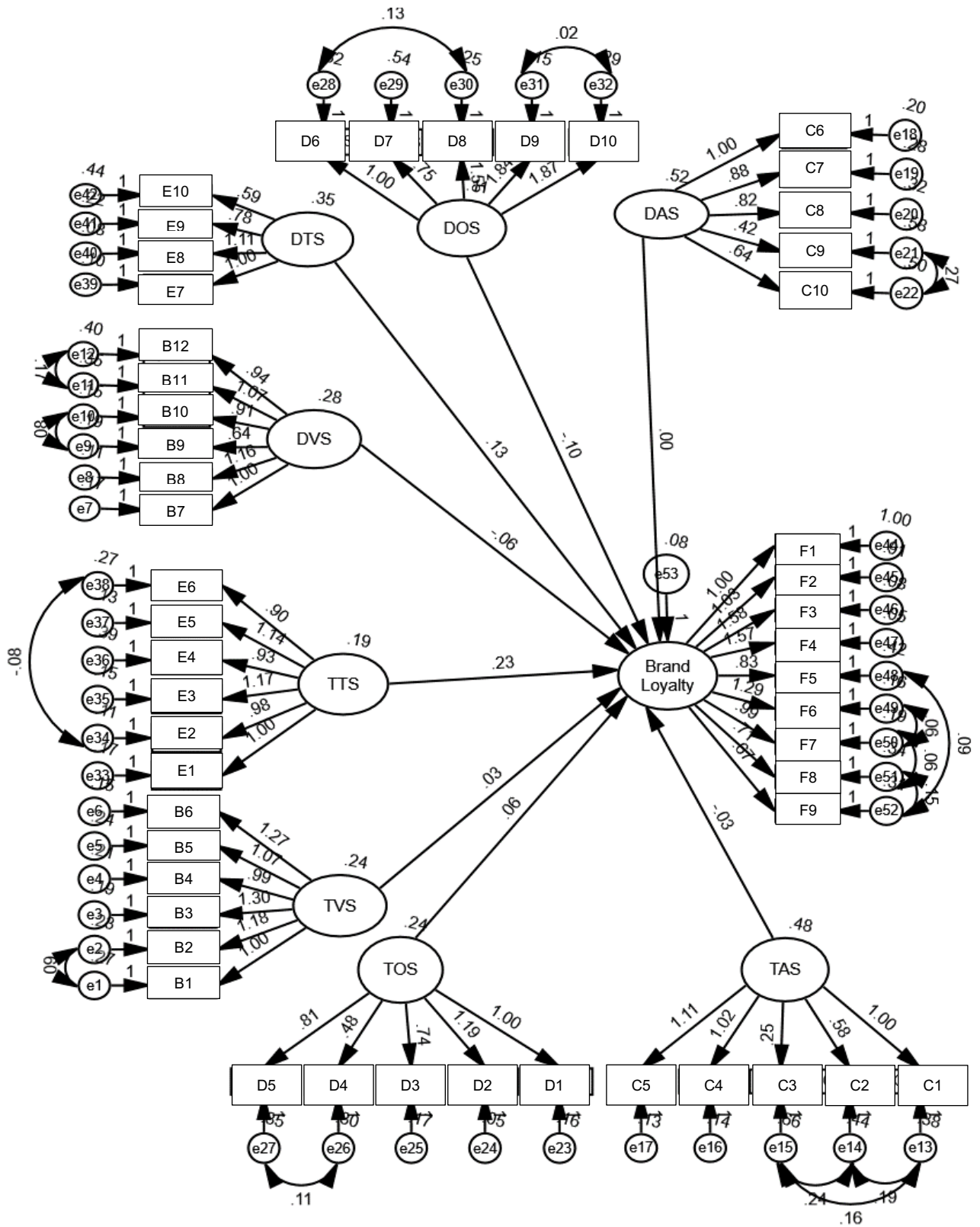
This study had the purpose of investigating the relationships between the independent variables (traditional and digital sensory branding strategies) and

the dependent variable (brand loyalty) relative to this study, as illustrated in the conceptual model (Chapter 4: Figure 4.7). The sets of hypotheses of this study consist of a primary hypothesis as well as a number of secondary hypotheses. The following sections utilise the above-discussed SEM and Primary Models to test the sets of hypotheses of the study (Chapter 4: Table 4.1).

6.6.5 Traditional sensory branding strategies (independent variable) and brand loyalty (dependent variable)

The first set of hypotheses relate to how traditional sensory branding strategies influence brand loyalty in-store, with specific reference to the skincare industry, which constitutes the primary hypothesis:

> H_1 There is a significant relationship between traditional sensory branding strategies and brand loyalty (Chapter 4: Section 4.4: Table 4.1)

From the SEM model created in Section 6.6.3.1, it was found that there was a significant ($p < 0.05$) relationship between traditional sensory branding and brand loyalty, where $p = 0.01$ (EF113). However, the relationship is relatively weak, as determined by a standardized regression weight estimate of 0.20 (EF114) (Table 6.21).

Hypothesis H_1 is supported through the above discussed statistics (EF134)*.*

The first set of hypotheses constitutes four secondary hypotheses, that relate to traditional visual, auditory, olfactory and tactile stimuli:

> H_{1a} There is a significant relationship between traditional visual stimuli and brand loyalty (Chapter 4: Section 4.4: Table 4.1)

From the full Primary Model created (Section 6.6.4.3), there was no significant (p < 0.05) relationship between traditional visual stimuli and brand loyalty (EF133), where p = 0.48 (Table 6.25).

Hypothesis H1a is rejected through the above discussed statistics (EF135).

> H1b   There is a significant relationship between traditional auditory stimuli and brand loyalty (Chapter 4: Section 4.4: Table 4.1)

From the full Primary Model created (Section 6.6.4.3), there was no significant (p < 0.05) relationship between traditional auditory stimuli and brand loyalty (EF133), where p = 0.21 (Table 6.25).

Hypothesis H1b is rejected through the above discussed statistics (EF136).

> H1c   There is a significant relationship between traditional olfactory stimuli and brand loyalty (Chapter 4: Section 4.4: Table 4.1)

From the full Primary Model created (Section 6.6.4.3), there was a significant (p < 0.10) relationship between traditional olfactory stimuli and brand loyalty (p = 0.10) (Table 6.25) (EF130). However, the relationship is relatively weak, as determined by a standardized regression weight estimate of 0.10 (Table 6.25).

Hypothesis H1c is supported through the above discussed statistics (EF137).

> H1d   There is a significant relationship between traditional tactile stimuli and brand loyalty (Chapter 4: Section 4.4: Table 4.1)

From the full Primary Model created (Section 6.6.4.3), there was a significant (p < 0.05) relationship between traditional tactile stimuli and brand loyalty (EF128), where p < 0.01 (Table 6.25). However, the relationship is relatively weak, as determined by a standardized regression weight estimate of 0.33 (EF129) (Table 6.25).

Hypothesis H₁ₐ is supported through the above discussed statistics (EF138).

6.6.6   Digital sensory branding strategies (independent variable) and brand loyalty (dependent variable)

The second set of hypotheses relates to how digital sensory branding strategies influence brand loyalty online, with specific reference to the skincare industry, which constitutes the primary hypothesis:

> H₂   There is a significant relationship between digital sensory branding strategies and brand loyalty (Chapter 4: Section 4.4: Table 4.1)

From the SEM model created in Section 6.6.3.2, it was found that there was a significant (p < 0.05) relationship between digital sensory branding and brand loyalty, where p = 0.01 (EF113) (Table 6.21). However, the relationship is relatively weak, as determined by a standardized regression weight estimate of 0.19 (EF114) (Table 6.21).

Hypothesis H₂ is supported through the above discussed statistics (EF139).

The second set of hypotheses constitutes four secondary hypotheses, that relate to digital visual, auditory, olfactory and tactile stimuli:

> H₂ₐ   There is a significant relationship between digital visual stimuli and brand loyalty (Chapter 4: Section 4.4: Table 4.1)

From the full Primary Model created (Section 6.6.4.3), there was a significant (p < 0.10) relationship between digital visual stimuli and brand loyalty (p = 0.10) (Table 6.25) (EF131) However, the relationship is relatively weak, as determined by a standardized regression weight estimate of 0.11 (Table 6.25).

Hypothesis H₂ₐ is supported through the above discussed statistics (EF140)*.*

> H$_{2b}$ There is a significant relationship between digital auditory stimuli and brand loyalty (Chapter 4: Section 4.4: Table 4.1)

From the full Primary Model created (Section 6.6.4.3), there was no significant (p < 0.05) relationship between digital auditory stimuli and brand loyalty (EF133), where p = 0.99 (Table 6.25).

Hypothesis H₂ᵦ is rejected through the above discussed statistics (EF141)*.*

> H$_{2c}$ There is a significant relationship between digital olfactory stimuli and brand loyalty (Chapter 4: Section 4.4: Table 4.1)

From the full Primary Model created (Section 6.6.4.3), there was a significant (p < 0.10) relationship between digital olfactory stimuli and brand loyalty (p = 0.08) (Table 6.25) (EF132). However, the relationship is relatively weak, as determined by a standardized regression weight estimate of 0.11 (Table 6.25).

Hypothesis H₂c is supported through the above discussed statistics (EF142)*.*

> H$_{2d}$ There is a significant relationship between digital tactile stimuli and brand loyalty (Chapter 4: Section 4.4: Table 4.1)

From the full Primary Model created (Section 6.6.4.3), there was a significant (p < 0.05) relationship between digital tactile stimuli and brand loyalty (p < 0.01) (Table 6.25) (EF128). However, the relationship is relatively weak, as determined by a standardized regression weight estimate of 0.24 (EF129) (Table 6.25).

Hypothesis H2d is supported through the above discussed statistics (EF143)**_._**

The following section discusses the correlations identified between the variables of the study.

6.6.7   Pearson's correlations between variables of this study

As stated by Schober, Boer and Schwarte (2018:1763), correlations signify a monotonic measurement of association between two variables in a study. This implies that as the magnitude of change occurs in one variable, so will that of the second variable, which could be either in the same or opposite direction (Schober et al 2018:1763). Pearson's correlation coefficient, denoted by "*r*", is often made use of to interpret correlations and can have a value between +1 and -1, where a value of 0 implies that there is no correlation between the variables (Laerd Statistics 2018; Okwonu, Asaju & Arunaye 2020:1; Schober et al 2018:1763; Stapor 2020:148; Walker & Maddan 2019:212). Ramzai (2020), along with Schober et al (2018:1763), Stapor (2020:148) and Walker and Maddan (2019:212), further explain that the closer the value is to being a perfect correlation, the stronger the correlation becomes, which can be either positive or negative in nature. An acceptable guideline for interpreting Pearson's correlation coefficient values is put forward by Akoglu (2018:92) and Ramzai (2020), as well as Schober et al (2018:1765), where a value of <0.30 indicates a weak correlation, 0.30-0.49 indicates a moderate correlation and 0.50+ a strong correlation.

This study made use of Pearson's correlation coefficients (presented in Table 6.26) in order to test the relationships that existed amongst the various

variables and sub-variables of this study. Furthermore, it was used to determine the relationship between the various variables and sub-variables of the study and the dependent variable, thereby testing the formulated hypotheses (Chapter 5: Figure 5.3).

TABLE 6.26

PEARSON'S CORRELATIONS BETWEEN THE VARIABLES OF THE STUDY

Variable	Trad. Visual Stimuli	Dig. Visual Stimuli	Trad. Auditory Stimuli	Trad. Olfactory Stimuli	Dig. Olfactory Stimuli	Trad. Tactile Stimuli	Dig. Tactile Stimuli	Brand Loyalty	Dig. Auditory Stimuli	Dig. Sensory Strategies	Trad. Sensory Strategies
Trad. Visual Stimuli	1.00	.68*	.52*	.65*	.55*	.60*	.58*	.17	.34*	.64*	.85*
Dig. Visual Stimuli		1.00	.54*	.57*	.67*	.66*	.79*	.20	.39*	.85*	.74*
Trad. Auditory Stimuli			1.00	.59*	.54*	.47*	.57*	.08	.69*	.70*	.81*
Trad. Olfactory Stimuli				1.00	.58*	.62*	.59*	.13	.50*	.67*	.85*
Dig. Olfactory Stimuli					1.00	.60*	.72*	.16	.51*	.86*	.68*
Trad. Tactile Stimuli						1.00	.70*	.28	.33*	.68*	.79*
Dig. Tactile Stimuli							1.00	.22	.48*	.89*	.73*
Brand Loyalty								1.00	.08	.19*	.19*
Dig. Auditory Stimuli									1.00	.73*	.57*
Dig. Sensory Strategies										1.00	.81*
Trad. Sensory Strategies											1.00

* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
For practical significance of the correlation;
If correlation coefficient is
<0.30: Weak correlation
0.30-0.49: Moderate correlation
0.50+: Strong correlation

It is notable from Table 6.26 that traditional visual (0.85) (EF144), auditory (0.81) (EF145), olfactory (0.85) (EF146) and tactile (0.79) (EF147) stimuli are

all strongly correlated with traditional sensory branding. Likewise, digital visual (0.85) (EF148), auditory (0.73) (EF149), olfactory (0.86) (EF150) and tactile (0.89) (EF151) stimuli are all strongly correlated with digital sensory strategies. These correlations can be attributed to the fact that both of the main independent variables (traditional and digital sensory branding) constituted the sub-variables visual, auditory, olfactory and tactile stimuli (EF152).

Additionally, it can be seen in Table 6.26 that there was a strong correlation (0.81) between digital sensory strategies and traditional sensory strategies (EF153). This result may be attributed to the fact that within each of the sub-variables (visual, auditory, olfactory and tactile stimuli) for traditional sensory branding and digital sensory branding, there are some strategies which overlap or that are similar (EF154). For example, with reference to visual stimuli, the aesthetics of the products packaging is a sensory strategy utilised for both in-store and online shopping. Moreover, regardless of the experience being in-store or online, consumers who are purchasing skincare are wanting sensory experiences (Cosmetics Business 2020; Whitehouse 2017) (Chapter 3: Section 3.2.2) (LF143) and because this study is comparing the same type of sensory stimulation in-store versus online (for example, traditional visual stimuli versus digital visual stimuli) it may explain why a high correlation between the two variables exists (EF155).

Of further interest from Table 6.26 is that both traditional (0.28) and digital (0.22) tactile stimuli had the strongest correlation with brand loyalty of all the variables and sub-variables of this study (EF156), which was also found in the full Primary Model conducted in Section 6.6.4.3. Furthermore, it can be seen that both traditional (0.8) and digital (0.8) auditory stimuli presented the weakest correlation with brand loyalty (EF157). These results provide affirmation for the respective values indicated in the Primary Model conducted in Section 6.6.4.3. Finally, traditional (0.19) and digital (0.19) sensory strategies only correlated weakly with brand loyalty (EF158). In the SEM models conducted in Sections 6.6.6.3.1 and 6.6.3.2 the relationship between traditional and digital sensory strategies was also found to be weak, apparent

from the standardised regression weight values of 0.20 and 0.19 respectively (Table 6.21) (EF114).

The overall weak correlations between the variables and sub-variables of this study may be attributed to the fact that sensory branding directly aids in the creation of memorable brand experiences (Hulten 2020:13) (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.11) (LF93), which in turn has an impact on brand loyalty (Brakus et al (2009:54) (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.12) (LF94 & LF95). Therefore the relationship may be weak due to the relationship being indirect, rather than direct.

In the section that follows, the results of the calculation of the Chi-Square Test of Association are presented, which was utilised to assess the association between age and budget of the respondents. This statistical calculation was deemed necessary as literature suggested that these two demographic factors may be related. Additionally, the outcomes of the ANOVA's calculated for budget as well as age group of the respondents (Chapter 6: Section 6.6.8.3 & Section 6.6.8.2), suggested that there may be a relation between the two.

6.6.8 Chi-Square Test of Association between age and budget of the respondents

The Chi-square test of association provides researchers with the means to test hypothesis by determining whether two variables are independent or related (Berman & Wang 2017:178; Frost 2022a; Kent State University 2021; Rana & Singhal 2015:69; Turney 2022). Furthermore, Turney (2022) explains that the Chi-square test allows a researcher to make conclusions about an entire population based on a sample thereof. Frost (2022a) adds that the Chi-square test has both a null hypothesis, whereby the value of one variable does not allow the researcher to predict the value of the other, and an alternative hypothesis, whereby the value of one variable allows the researcher to predict the value of another.

When interpreting the Chi-square test results, should the significance level be less than or equal to 1, then it can be assumed that the two variables are related (Frost 2022a). Berman and Wang (2017:180) go further to state that the greater the value of chi-square (χ^2), the stronger the observed relationship will be, while an χ^2 value of 0 will imply that no relationship exists between the two varibles. For the purpose of this study the Chi-Square test of association is used to determine whether two variables of the population, namely age and average monthly budget for skincare, are related. From the calculation of the Chi-Square test of association between the age of the respondents and their average monthly budget for skincare, it was found that that there is a significant association (χ^2=128.175, df = 12, p < 0.001, Cramer's V = 0.365) between the age of respondents and their average monthly budget for skincare products (EF159). To determine the specific association, a cross tabulation was conducted, which is presented in Table 6.27.

TABLE 6.27

CROSS TABULATION BETWEEN AGE AND BUDGET

			Budget				
			R50-R500	R501-R1000	R1001-R1500	R1501+	Total
Age	18-24 years	Count	20	9	0	0	29
		% of Total	6,20%	2,80%	0,00%	0,00%	9,00%
	25-34 years	Count	19	55	13	4	91
		% of Total	5,90%	17,10%	4,00%	1,20%	28,30%
	35-44 years	Count	5	18	7	1	31
		% of Total	1,60%	5,60%	2,20%	0,30%	9,70%
	45-54 years	Count	6	23	57	5	91
		% of Total	1,90%	7,20%	17,80%	1,60%	28,30%
	55-60 years	Count	6	29	32	12	79
		% of Total	1,90%	9,00%	10,00%	3,70%	24,60%
Total		Count	56	134	109	22	321
		% of Total	17,40%	41,70%	34,00%	6,90%	100,00%

From Table 6.27 it can be seen that respondents constituting the younger age categories (18 – 44 years) accounted for 47% of the 321 respondents of this study, while respondents constituting the older age categories (45 – 60 years) accounted for 53% of the respondents of the 321 respondents (EF160). Of the 47% of younger respondents, the majority had a monthly budget for skincare of between R50 – R1000 (39%) (EF161). Contradictorily, the majority of older

respondents had a monthly budget for skincare of between R501 – R1500 (44%) (EF162). It can therefore be concluded that, in general, older respondents of this study were willing to, or were able to, spend larger amounts on skincare products monthly than younger respondents (EF163). The following section discusses ANOVAs relevant to this study.

6.6.9 ANOVAs, Welch Robust, Tukey's and Games-Howell post hoc tests and Cohen's d

For the purpose of this study, based on the results of the assumption of homogenous variance, either ANOVA tables or the Welch Robust test were utilised to assess the overall difference between groups. Should the assumption of homogeneity be accurate, or the result be insignificant (sig > 0.05), an ANOVA table was utilised to assess whether there is an overall difference between groups.

As declared by Favero and Belfiore (2019:232), Kim (2017b:22), Mackenzie (2018), as well as (Singh 2018a), ANOVAs make use of sample variances to identify differences in means between three or more groups of people, and Gursoy and Nunkoo (2019:458) add that ANOVA is the most popular means to analyse group means. Further than just identifying differences in means, ANOVAs aim to determine if these differences are significant or just coincidental (Favero & Belfiore 2019:232; Taylor 2018). Another benefit of making use of ANOVA is that it allows researchers to test their hypotheses (Kim 2017b:23; Singh 2018a). In addition, Favero and Belfiore (2019:232), along with Mackenzie (2018), Mood, Morrow and McQueen (2019:209) and Ostertagova, Ostertag and Kovac (2014:115), explain that in order for ANOVA calculations to be appropriate, the samples being compared must be independent, the dependent variables should be continuous and the variances must be homogeneous. While the use of ANOVA is robust, for the results to be of value, the researcher needs to interpret them correctly. The guidelines which a researcher should follow when interpreting ANOVA results are detailed by Filho et al (2013:34), where a value of $p > 0.10$ indicates no

statistical significance, a value of $p \leq 0.05$ indicates marginal significance and a value of $p \leq 0.01$ indicates a high level of significance.

However, should the assumption of homogeneity be violated, or the result be significant ($sig < 0.05$), the Welch Robust test will be used to assess overall difference between groups. The Welch Robust test, or Welch ANOVA, essentially is used for the same reasons as one-way ANOVA; however, the benefit lies in the fact that the Welch Robust test can be utilised when the different groups being tested have differing or unequal variances (Frost 2022b; Lu & Yuan 2010:1620). As in the case when considering the results of ANOVA, if the result is significant ($sig < 0.05$), it is indicative of the fact that there is an overall difference in the factor score (Frost 2022b; Lu & Yuan 2010:1620). ANOVA and Welch Robust test do however present a limitation in that, while they can be used to identify significant differences, they do not specifically locate between which groups the difference lies (Singh 2018a). For this reason, additional post hoc tests should be conducted, such as Tukey's, Games-Howell and Cohen's d test.

The Tukey post hoc test, goes further than ANOVA by identifying specifically between which groups of respondents the detected significant difference lies (Foster et al 2021; Kim 2017b:26; Lee & Lee 2018:355; Schlegel 2018) and is appropriate when a large number of differences are being tested (Freeman & Obasohan 2020:3). Additionally, Beck (2018) explains that Tukey's post hoc test establishes causality between values and a statistically significant difference can be assumed where $p < 0.05$ (Kim 2015:172). The Games-Howell test, similarly to Tukey's post hoc test, aids in determining specifically between which groups of respondents the detected significant difference lies, as determined by Welch Robust Test (Bourne, James, Wilson-smith & Fairlamb 2021:166; Grande 2015). However, Bourne et al (2021:166) and Grande (2015) further explain that the Games-Howell post hoc test is utilised when the assumption of homogeneous variance has been violated. Erdem, Nilufer and Gunduz (2021:351), along with Grande (2015), add that as the case with Tukey's post hoc test, Games-Howell output values can be assumed to be significant where $p < 0.05$.

As stipulated by Goulet-Pelletier and Cousineau (2018:243), Lenhard and Lenhard (2017:1), Magnusson (2020) and McLeod (2019), Cohen's d is a statistical calculation that can be used to determine effect size or magnitude of difference. As with interpreting ANOVA or Tukey post hoc test results, there are guidelines for interpreting Cohen's d, namely a result of 0.2 indicates a small effect, a result of 0.5 indicates a medium effect and a result larger than 0.8 indicates a large effect (Goulet-Pelletier & Cousineau 2018:243; Magnusson 2020). For the purpose of this study, ANOVAs were calculated in order to determine the significant differences between gender, age, monthly budget for skincare products as well as frequency with which the respondent purchases skincare products in-store and online. Following the calculation of ANOVAs, post hoc tests were conducted for the variables where significant differences were identified. The statistical differences of the individual factors of the study are presented and discussed in the sections that follow, where $p < 0.05$ and $p < 0.10$.

6.6.9.1 Independent sample t-test comparing mean factor scores of the gender groups

Independent sample t-test was performed to identify if any of the factors differed significantly between gender and the factors of the variables exist. Additionally, Cohen's d was calculated to determine the practical significance. The independent sample t-test results were calculated to compare mean factor scores of the factors of the various gender groups are illustrated in Table 6.28.

TABLE 6.28

ANOVAS COMPARING THE MEAN FACTOR SCORES OF THE FACTORS OF THE VARIABLES AND THE GENDER GROUPS

	Mean		T-value	P	Cohens d	Practical sig.
	Male	Female				
Traditional visual stimuli	1.92	1.55	4.55	0.03	0.64	Medium
Digital visual stimuli	1.88	1.47	5.45	0.25	0.76	Medium
Traditional auditory stimuli	2.19	1.99	2.23	0.84	0.31	Small
Traditional olfactory stimuli	1.91	1.62	4.66	0.41	0.65	Medium
Digital olfactory stimuli	2.12	1.85	3.57	0.55	0.50	Medium

	Mean		T-value	P	Cohens d	Practical sig.
	Male	Female				
Traditional Tactile stimuli	1.86	1.48	5.98	0.22	0.84	Large
Digital tactile stimuli	1.96	1.59	4.87	0.30	0.68	Medium
Digital auditory stimuli	2.39	2.27	1.38	0.09		
Brand loyalty	2.15	2.01	2.44	0.00	0.34	Small
Digital sensory branding	2.09	1.79	4.51	0.34	0.63	Medium
Traditional sensory branding	1.97	1.66	5.12	0.18	0.72	Medium
Marked effects (in pink) are statistically significant at p < 0.05 Marked effects (in orange) are statistically significant at p < 0.10 Marked effects (in blue) have a small effect where d ≤ 0.2 Marked effects (in green) have a medium effect where d ≤ 0.5 Marked effects (in red) have a large effect where d ≤ 0.8						

As seen in Table 6.28, there was a statistically significant (p < 0.05) difference between how males (mean = 1.92) and females (mean = 1.55) felt regarding traditional visual stimuli, where p = 0.03 (EF164). From the mean values observed it can be deduced that female respondents of this study agreed more strongly that traditional visual stimuli had a positive influence on their experience of shopping for skincare in-store than the male respondents (EF165). Additionally, there is a statistically significant (p < 0.10) difference between how males (mean = 2.39) and females (mean = 2.27) felt regarding digital auditory stimuli, where p = 0.09 (EF166) and based on the mean values observed, females felt slightly more strongly regarding the positive influence that digital auditory stimuli had on the experience of shopping for skincare online then males (EF167). The differing views observed between gender and sensory stimuli can be attributed to the fact that consumers' perception of sensory stimuli is guided by their own personal context, such as their gender (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.10; Chapter 3: Section 3.5).

Finally, a statistically significant (p < 0.05) difference can be observed between how males (mean = 2.15) and females (mean = 2.01) felt regarding brand loyalty, where p = 0.00 (EF168). Again, from the mean values it can be seen that females felt more strongly regarding brand loyalty then males (EF169). The difference between gender and brand loyalty observed can be explained by the fact that females have been found to be more likely to be loyal to a brand than men (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.2.4).

Moreover, with the exception of digital auditory stimuli, all variables and sub-variables of this study presented practical significance, according to Cohen's d (EF170). qTraditional tactile stimuli presented the only large (d $\leq$ 0.8) practical significant difference between gender, where d = 0.84 (EF171). From Table 6.28 it is evident that medium (d $\leq$ 0.5) practically significant differences were observed between gender and traditional visual stimuli (d = 0.64) (EF172); traditional olfactory stimuli (d = 0.65) (EF173); and traditional sensory branding (d = 0.72) (EF174). Additionally, medium (d $\leq$ 0.5) practically significant differences were observed between gender and digital visual stimuli (d = 0.76) (EF175); digital olfactory stimuli (d = 0.50) (EF176); digital tactile stimuli (d = 0.68) (EF177); digital sensory branding (d = 0.63) (EF178). There are further small (d $\leq$ 0.2) practically significant difference between gender and traditional auditory stimuli (0.31) (EF179), as well as between gender and brand loyalty (0.34) (EF180). As traditional and digital sensory branding comprise the sub-variables of this study, this explains the practical difference observed between gender and traditional sensory branding, as well as digital sensory branding (EF181).

The following conclusions, regarding the ANOVAs and Cohen's d calculated between the different gender groups and the variables of this study, can be drawn.

- It can be concluded that there were statistically significant (p < 0.05) differences between how males and females felt regarding traditional visual stimuli, where p = 0.03 (EF164), as well as brand loyalty, where p = 0.00 (EF168).
- There was a further statistically significant (p < 0.10) difference between how males and females felt regarding digital auditory stimuli, where p = 0.09 (EF166).
- Moreover, with the exception of digital auditory stimuli, all variables and sub-variables of this study presented practical significance, according to Cohen's d (EF170), which is linked to the fact that consumers' perception of sensory stimuli is guided by their own personal context as well as by the

fact that females have been found to be more likely to be loyal to a brand than men.

6.6.9.2 ANOVAs comparing mean factor scores of the age groups

In this section, the descriptive statistics of the various age groups are compared and the mean factor scores determined. In Table 6.29, the descriptive statistics comparing the mean factor scores of the various age groups are illustrated. Smallest standard deviations (std. dev.) are represented in green while the highest std. dev. is represented in yellow. Moreover, the lowest mean values, which represent a positive response, are highlighted in blue and the highest mean values, which represent a negative response, in pink.

TABLE 6.29

ANOVAS COMPARING THE MEAN FACTOR SCORES OF THE
VARIABLES AND AGE GROUPS

		18-24 years	25-34 years	35-44 years	45-54 years	55-60 years
Traditional visual stimuli	Means	1.61	1.69	1.92	1.42	1.67
	N	29	91	31	91	79
	Std. Dev	0.43	0.46	0.61	0.61	0.69
Traditional auditory stimuli	Means	2.00	2.00	2.08	1.90	2.18
	N	29	91	31	91	79
	Std. Dev	0.68	0.65	0.73	0.57	0.68
Traditional olfactory stimuli	Means	1.59	1.70	1.86	1.51	1.80
	N	29	91	31	91	79
	Std. Dev	0.38	0.39	0.51	0.38	0.58
Traditional tactile stimuli	Means	1.45	1.70	1.79	1.35	1.58
	N	29	91	31	91	79
	Std. Dev	0.37	0.39	0.59	0.45	0.50
Traditional sensory branding	Means	1.67	1.78	1.91	1.55	1.81
	N	29	91	31	91	79
	Std. Dev	0.32	0.36	0.49	0.43	0.53
Digital visual stimuli	Means	1.53	1.68	1.76	1.30	1.63
	N	29	91	31	91	79
	Std. Dev	0.52	0.44	0.51	0.54	0.63
Digital auditory stimuli	Means	2.12	2.20	2.30	2.26	2.50
	N	29	91	31	91	79
	Std. Dev	0.55	0.65	0.72	0.58	0.60
Digital olfactory stimuli	Means	1.65	1.90	1.97	1.83	2.05
	N	29	91	31	91	79
	Std. Dev	0.41	0.50	0.61	0.53	0.59
Digital tactile stimuli	Means	1.44	1.73	1.81	1.52	1.77
	N	29	91	31	91	79

		18-24 years	25-34 years	35-44 years	45-54 years	55-60 years
	Std. Dev	0.37	0.43	0.60	0.61	0.64
Digital sensory branding	Means	1.69	1.88	1.96	1.73	1.99
	N	29	91	31	91	79
	Std. Dev	0.34	0.37	0.50	0.50	0.54
Brand loyalty	Means	2.33	2.11	2.25	1.98	1.92
	N	29	91	31	91	79
	Std. Dev	0.33	0.41	0.43	0.39	0.41

As seen in Table 6.29, the lowest mean values, which represent a positive response, for most groups of respondents, occurred in digital visual stimuli, with the exception of those respondents between the ages of 18 and 24 years and 25 and 34 years (EF182). While the lowest mean value for the ages of 18-24 years and 25-34 years occurred in digital tactile stimuli (1.44) and traditional visual stimuli (1.69) respectively, both groups of respondents both still agreed that digital visual stimuli have a positive influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products (EF183). These sub-variables were similarly highlighted in the full Primary Model conducted in Section 6.6.4.3 (Table 6.25). From the literature review of this study, it was concluded that visual cues are the most common form of sensory marketing used and are amongst the most influential stimuli of sensory branding (Chapter 3: Section 3.5). In addition, visual stimuli are the most widely used form of sensory marketing when considering digital spaces (Chapter 3: Section 3.5.2). It is, therefore, understandable that respondents of this study in general agreed that digital visual stimuli have the most positive influence on their experience (EF184). This would also provide an explanation for traditional visual stimuli presenting a more positive mean value (EF185). The positive response by the younger generation of respondents (18-24 years) towards digital tactile stimuli may be attributed to the fact that younger individuals are perceived to be more technology friendly and accepting of innovative technology (EF186).

Interestingly, as seen from Table 6.29, the highest mean values, which represent a more negative response, occurred in digital auditory stimuli, where all groups of respondents agreed that digital auditory stimuli have the least positive influence on their experience (EF187). However, the mean values varied between 2.12 – 2.50, which is still indicative of agreement amongst respondents that the factor has an influence on their experience (EF188). This

was also found in the Pearson's correlation calculated (Section 6.6.7: Table 6.26), whereby both traditional and digital auditory stimuli had the weakest influence on brand loyalty.

In Table 6.29, it can be seen that the smallest std. dev. for respondents aged 18 – 24 years (0.32), 25 – 34 years (0.36) and 35 – 44 years (0.49) occurs in traditional sensory branding (EF189). Additionally, the smallest std. dev. for respondents between the ages of 45 and 54 years (0.38) occurs in traditional olfactory stimuli (EF190), while the smallest std. dev. for respondents aged 55 – 60 years (0.50) occurs in traditional tactile stimuli (EF191), both of which constitute traditional sensory branding. It is also notable that while not their lowest std. dev, respondents in the age groups of 45 – 54 years (0.43) and 55 – 60 years (0.53) also present low std. dev. values for traditional sensory branding. This indicates that, in general, answers differed the least from respondents with regard to traditional sensory branding (EF192). Traditional sensory branding has been successfully used as a marketing tool for centuries to adjust consumer behaviour through the understanding of human inner motivations, which is linked to the five human senses (Chapter 3: Section 3.3). Therefore, it can be deduced that most consumers would have been exposed to traditional sensory branding strategies while shopping, and this would therefore explain why the respondents felt similarly regarding this variable, regardless of their age. The clustered answers by respondents between the ages of 55 and 60 years with regard to traditional tactile stimuli may also be explained by the finding that older consumers more commonly visit stores to feel and assess a product before being ready to purchase it online (Chapter 3: Section 3.8.2).

Further seen in Table 6.29, the highest std. dev. for respondents aged 18 – 24 years (0.68), 25 – 34 years (0.65) and 35 – 44 years (0.73) occurs in traditional auditory stimuli (EF193). While not their lowest std. dev, respondents in the age groups of 45 – 54 years (0.57) and 55 – 60 years (0.68) also presented high std. dev. values for traditional auditory stimuli (EF194). This indicates that in general, respondents' answers were not clustered around the mean answer with regard to traditional auditory stimuli (EF195). The differing views with

regard to traditional auditory stimuli could be linked to the way that each individual perceives an environment differently based on how they interpret sounds (Chapter 3: Section 3.6). When considering the outcome in Table 6.6, it was found that in general, respondents agreed that all factors constituting traditional auditory stimuli have an influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products in-store, with the exception of the sound or pronunciation of the brand's name. This may also explain the higher std. dev results observed.

Lastly, it was observed that there is be a correlation between age and digital tactile stimuli, whereas age increased so did the std. dev observed: 18 – 24 years (0.37); 25 – 34 years (0.43); 35 – 44 years (0.60); 45 – 54 years (0.61); and 55 – 60 years (0.64) (EF196). The trend indicated by respondents regarding this factor may be linked to the fact that technology being used to replicate touch in the digital space is not yet widespread and older consumers often show resistance towards it as they are not considered to be as tech-savvy as younger consumers (Chapter 3: Section 3.8; 3.8.2).

Based on the results of the tests of homogeneity of variances, ANOVA was performed for the variables, and sub-variables of traditional auditory stimuli (sig = 0.1), digital auditory stimuli (sig = 0.18) and brand loyalty (sig = 0.43) (EF197). The remainder of the variables and sub-variables were subjected to the Welch Robust test as they conformed with the assumption of homogeneity (sig < 0.05) (EF198). Table 6.30 indicates the results of the ANOVAs of the variables of the study and the age groups of respondents.

TABLE 6.30

RESULTS OF THE ANOVAS OF THE VARIABLES OF THE STUDY AND THE AGE GROUPS OF RESPONDENTS

Marked effects (in red) are significant at p<.05		
	F Value	P Value
Traditional auditory stimuli	2.01	0.09
Digital auditory stimuli	3.29	0.01
Brand loyalty	13.10	0.00

There were statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) differences between group means for digital auditory stimuli ($F(4,316) = 2.01$, $p = 0.01$) (EF199) as well as for brand loyalty ($F(4,316) = 3.29$, $p = 0.00$) (EF200) between age groups as determined by one-way ANOVA. Therefore, it can be said that respondents had differing views regarding both of these factors (EF201). The differing views of respondents towards digital auditory stimuli may be attributed to how older individuals perceive sound differently than younger individuals (Chapter 3: Section 3.6). Additionally, it was discussed in Chapter 2: Section 2.2.2.4 that brand loyalty was found to differ between consumers based on their age, which could explain the difference observed.

The results of the Tukey test performed for digital auditory stimuli and the age of respondents indicates a statistically significant difference ($p < 0.05$) between two groups, namely group one (18 – 24 years, mean = 2.12, Table 6.29) and group 5 (55 – 60 years, mean = 2.50, Table 6.29), where $p = 0.05$ (EF202); and group 2 (25 – 34 years, mean = 2.20, Table 6.29) and group 5 (55 – 60 years, mean = 2.50, Table 6.29), where $p = 0.02$ (EF203). The statistically significant differences between answers from respondents regarding digital auditory stimuli are all with respondents between the ages of 55 and 60 years (EF204). This may be explained by the fact that consumers of different ages perceive sound differently (Chapter 3: Section 3.6). It is also notable that the younger respondents indicated a stronger level of agreement that digital auditory stimuli have an influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products online than the older respondents, as determined by the mean values for each group (EF205). Table 6.31 provides the results of the Tukey test of digital auditory stimuli and the age group of respondents, where p values are provided in the bottom diagonal.

TABLE 6.31

THE RESULTS OF THE TUKEY-TEST OF BRAND LOYALTY AND THE

AGE OF RESPONDENTS

Tukey HSD test; Variable: Brand loyalty					
	{1}	{2}	{3}	{4}	{5}
18-24 years {1}					
25-34 years {2}	0.09				
35-44 years {3}	0.96	0.43			
45-54 years {4}	0.00	0.16	0.01		
55-60 years {5}	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.08	
Marked effects (in red) are significant where p < 0.05					
Marked effects (in blue) are significant where p < 0.10					

Table 6.31 indicates a statistically significant difference (p < 0.5) between five groups, namely group 1 (18 – 24 years, mean = 2.33, Table 6.29) and group 4 (45 – 54 years, mean = 1.98, Table 6.29), where p = 0.00 (EF206); group 1 (18 – 24 years, mean = 2.33, Table 6.29) and group 5 (55 – 60 years, mean = 1.92, Table 6.29), where p = 0.00 (EF207); group 2 (25 – 34 years, mean = 2.11 Table 6.29) and group 5 (55 – 60 years, mean = 1.92, Table 6.29), where p = 0.00 (EF208); group 3 (35 – 44 years, mean = 2.25, Table 6.29) and group 4 (45 – 54 years, mean = 1.98, Table 6.29), where p = 0.01 (EF209); and group 3 (35 – 44 years, mean = 2.25, Table 6.29) and group 5 (55 – 60 years, mean = 1.92, Table 6.29), where p = 0.00 (EF210).

The statistically significant differences between answers from respondents with reference to brand loyalty are mainly with those aged 55 – 60 years (EF211). It is further notable from the mean values observed for each age group that, while all respondents were in agreement regarding brand loyalty, the older respondents were more positive towards the variable, which could be attributed to the fact that older consumers are, in general, more loyal to brands (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.2.4). Table 6.32 indicates the results of the Welch Robust test of the variables of the study and the age groups of respondents.

TABLE 6.32

RESULTS OF THE WELCH ROBUST TEST OF THE VARIABLES OF THE
STUDY AND THE AGE GROUPS OF RESPONDENTS

Marked effects (in red) are significant at p<.05	
	Sig. value
Traditional visual stimuli	0.00
Digital visual stimuli	0.00
Traditional olfactory stimuli	0.00
Digital olfactory stimuli	0.00
Traditional tactile stimuli	0.00
Digital tactile stimuli	0.00
Digital sensory branding	0.00
Traditional sensory branding	0.00

There were statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) differences between group means for traditional visual stimuli $F_{WELCH}(4, 107.67) = 5.01$, $p = 0.00$ (EF212); digital visual stimuli $F_{WELCH}(4, 105.38) = 8.39$, $p = 0.00$ (EF213); traditional olfactory stimuli $F_{WELCH}(4, 104.93) = 6.19$ $p = 0.00$ (EF214); digital olfactory stimuli $F_{WELCH}(4, 107.92) = 4.33$, $p = 0.00$ (EF215); traditional tactile stimuli $F_{WELCH}(4, 105.26) = 9.39$, $p = 0.00$ (EF216); digital tactile stimuli $F_{WELCH}(4, 108.87) = 5.30$, $p = 0.00$ (EF217); digital sensory branding $F_{WELCH}(4, 107.52) = 4.68$, $p = 0.00$ (EF218); and traditional sensory branding $F_{WELCH}(4, 107.17) = 6.31$, $p = 0.00$ (EF219) between age groups as determined by one-way ANOVA. Therefore, it can be concluded that respondents in different age groups had differing reviews regarding all factors (EF220).

The results of Games-Howell calculated for traditional visual stimuli and the age of respondents indicates a statistically significant difference ($p < 0.05$) between two groups, namely group 2 (25 – 34 years, mean = 1.69, Table 6.29) and group 4 (45 – 54 years, mean = 1.42, Table 6.29), where $p = 0.01$ (EF221) as well as between group 3 (35 – 44 years, mean = 1.92, Table 6.29) and group 4 (45 – 54 years, mean = 1.42, Table 6.29), where $p = 0.00$ (EF222). As can be seen, both statistically significant differences in respondents' answers occur between younger respondents and those aged 45 – 54 years (EF223), deduced by the mean values provided, older respondents agreed more strongly that traditional visual stimuli have a positive influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products in-store (EF224).

The results of Games-Howell calculated for digital visual stimuli and the age of respondents indicates a statistically significant difference ($p < 0.05$) between three groups, namely group 2 (25 – 34 years, mean = 1.68, Table 6.29) and group 4 (45 – 54 years, mean = 1.30, Table 6.29), where $p = 0.00$ (EF225); group 3 (35 – 44 years, mean = 1.76, Table 6.29) and group 4 (45 – 54 years, mean = 1.30, Table 6.29), where $p = 0.00$ (EF226); and group 4 (45 – 54 years, mean = 1.30, Table 6.29) and group 5 (55 – 60 years, mean = 1.63, Table 6.29), where $p = 0.00$ (EF227). While one may assume that younger respondents would be more positive towards digital visual stimuli, a mean value of 1.30 for respondents between the ages of 45 and 54 years indicates that this age group of respondents felt the most strongly about digital visual stimuli having a positive influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products online (EF228). This could be due to the fact that based on demographic factors, such as age, consumers are differently influenced by visual stimuli (Chapter 3: Section 3.5). Another explanation to this may be that visual stimuli is the oldest form of sensory marketing or branding online, and so older consumers would have had more exposure to this stimuli, and therefore, place more worth on it (EF229).

The results of Games-Howell calculated for traditional olfactory stimuli and the age of respondents indicates a statistically significant difference ($p < 0.05$) between three groups, namely group 2 (25 – 34 years, mean = 1.70, Table 6.29) and group 4 (45 – 54 years, mean = 1.51, Table 6.29), where $p = 0.01$ (EF230); group 3 (35 – 44 years, mean = 1.86, Table 6.29) and group 4 (45 – 54 years, mean = 1.51, Table 6.29), where $p = 0.01$ (EF231); and group 4 (45 – 54 years, mean = 1.51, Table 6.29) and group 5 (55 – 60 years, mean = 1.80, Table 6.29), where $p = 0.00$ (EF232). The statistically significant differences between answers from respondents with reference to traditional olfactory stimuli are mainly with the respondents who are aged 45 – 54 years (EF233). It can also be seen by the mean value of 1.51 that respondents aged 45 – 54 years felt most strongly that traditional olfactory stimuli have a positive influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products in-store (EF234). Respondents between the ages of 45 and 54 years constitute "GenXers", while respondents between the ages of 25 and 44 constitute

"millennials", with the former being known to do more in-store shopping than the latter (Chapter 3: Section 3.3). Therefore, the Gen X respondents may be more influenced by traditional sensory stimuli than the millennial respondents (EF235).

The results of Games-Howell calculated for digital olfactory stimuli and the age of respondents indicates that only one statistically significant difference ($p < 0.05$) existed between group 1 (18 – 24 years, mean = 1.65, Table 6.29) and group 5 (55 – 60 years, mean = 2.05, Table 6.29), where p = 0.00 (EF236). Furthermore, as seen in Table 6.29, the mean value for group 1 = 1.65, while the mean value for group 5 = 2.05. This implies that respondents in the age group 18 – 24 years felt more strongly than those between the ages of 55 and 60 years that digital olfactory stimuli have a positive influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products online (EF237). This can be ascribed to the fact that younger shoppers are more accepting of new technology (Chapter 3: Section 3.4) as well as being more frequent online buyers (Chapter 3: Section 3.3). Table 6.33 provides the results of Games-Howell calculated for traditional tactile stimuli and the age group of respondents, where p values are provided in the bottom diagonal.

TABLE 6.33

THE RESULTS OF GAMES-HOWELL OF TRADITIONAL TACTILE STIMULI AND THE AGE OF RESPONDENTS

Games-Howell test; Variable: Traditional tactile stimuli					
	{1}	{2}	{3}	{4}	{5}
18-24 years {1}					
25-34 years {2}	0.03				
35-44 years {3}	0.08	0.94			
45-54 years {4}	0.75	0.00	0.01		
55-60 years {5}	0.62	0.39	0.42	0.02	
Marked effects (in red) are significant where p < 0.05					
Marked effects (in blue) are significant where p < 0.10					

Table 6.33 indicates a statistically significant difference ($p < 0.5$) between four groups, namely group 1 (18 – 24 years, mean = 1.45, Table 6.29) and group 2 (25 – 34 years, mean = 1.70, Table 6.29), where p = 0.03 (EF238); group 2 (25 – 34 years, mean = 1.70, Table 6.29) and group 4 (45 – 54 years, mean =

1.35, Table 6.29), where p = 0.00 (EF239); group 3 (35 – 44 years, mean = 1.79, Table 6.29) and group 4 (45 – 54 years, mean = 1.35, Table 6.29), where p = 0.01 (EF240); and group 4 (45 – 54 years, mean = 1.35, Table 6.29) and group 5 (55 – 60 years, mean = 1.58, Table 6.29), where p = 0.02 (EF241). Once again, the difference in respondents' answers is mainly with group 4, or respondents between the ages of 45 and 54 years (EF242), which is also observable in the mean value being substantially lower than that of the other age groups (mean = 1.35, Table 6.29) (EF243). It was further discussed in Chapter 3: Section 3.8.2, that GenXers have a high need for touch (NFT) when assessing products, which could explain why this age group indicated a strong agreement that traditional tactile stimuli have a positive influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products in-store. Interestingly, the group of respondents who presented the second strongest level of agreement that traditional tactile stimuli have an influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products in-store were between the ages of 18 and 24 years (EF244). However, literature in Chapter 3: Section 3.8.2, indicates that these consumers have little NFT and shop predominantly online (Chapter 3: Section 3.4).

The results of Games-Howell calculated for digital tactile stimuli and the age of respondents indicates a statistically significant difference (p < 0.05) between three groups, namely group 1 (18 – 24 years, mean = 1.44, Table 6.29) and group 2 (25 – 34 years, mean = 1.73, Table 6.29), where p = 0.01 (EF245); group 1 (18 – 24 years, mean = 1.44, Table 6.29) and group 3 (35 – 44 years, mean = 1.81, Table 6.30), where p = 0.04 (EF246); and group 1 (18 – 24 years, mean = 1.44, Table 6.30) and group 5 (55 – 60 years, mean = 1.77, Table 6.29), where p = 0.01 (EF247). The statistically significant differences between answers from respondents regarding digital tactile stimuli are all with respondents between the ages of 18 and 24 years (EF248). It is further noteworthy that the age group 18 – 24 years presented the lowest mean for digital tactile stimuli, implying that this group of respondents felt most strongly that this factor has a positive influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products online (EF249). This could be accredited to two factors. Firstly, GenZers prefer to shop via online platforms (Chapter 3: Section 3.4).

Secondly, younger consumers are more accepting of new technology (Chapter 3: Section 3.4). Therefore, these consumers would appreciate new technology that simulates touch online more so than the older respondents of this study, explaining the differences seen.

The results of Games-Howell calculated for digital sensory branding and the age of respondents indicates a statistically significant difference ($p < 0.05$) between two groups, namely group 1 (18 – 24 years, mean = 1.69, Table 6.29) and group 5 (55 – 60 years, mean = 1.99, Table 6.29), where p = 0.01 (EF250) as well as group 4 (45 – 54 years, mean = 1.55, Table 6.22) and group 5 (55 – 60 years, mean = 1.99, Table 6.29), where p = 0.01 (EF251). It can be seen that the statistically significant differences between answers from respondents regarding digital sensory branding are all with respondents in the age group 55 – 60 years (EF252). Mirroring the statistically significant differences between answers from respondents with reference to digital sensory stimuli, the differences in answers noted for digital sensory branding are between younger respondents and more mature respondents (EF253). As this variable comprises digital auditory, visual, olfactory and tactile stimuli, the observed statistically significant differences are expected.

The results of Games-Howell calculated for traditional sensory branding and the age of respondents indicates a statistically significant difference ($p < 0.05$) between three groups, namely group 2 (25 – 34 years, mean = 1.78, Table 6.29) and group 4 (45 – 54 years, mean = 1.55, Table 6.29), where p = 0.00 (EF254); group 3 (35 – 44 years, mean = 1.91, Table 6.22) and group 4 (45 – 54 years, mean = 1.55, Table 6.29), where p = 0.01 (EF255); and group 4 (45 – 54 years, mean = 1.55, Table 6.29) and group 5 (55 – 60 years, mean = 1.81, Table 6.29), where p = 0.01 (EF256). The statistically significant differences in answers from respondents are between younger respondents and older respondents (EF257), which mirrors the results above relating to traditional auditory, visual, olfactory and tactile stimuli. As these sub-variables constitute traditional sensory branding, the observed statistically significant differences are not surprising.

Considering the ANOVAs and Tukey tests as well as Welch Robust and Games-Howell tests conducted between the different age groups and the variables of the study. For reference purposes abbreviation EF is used.

- Through the calculation of ANOVAs between the respondents' age and the variables of this study, it can be concluded that the different groups of respondents had differing views regarding digital auditory stimuli and brand loyalty (EF197).
- It was concluded from the results of the Tukey Test calculated for both digital auditory stimuli as well as brand loyalty and the respondents' age, that the statistically significant differences between answers were all with respondents aged between 55 and 60 years (EF204 & EF211).
- Through the calculation of Welch Robust between the respondents' age and the variables of this study, it can be concluded that the different groups of respondents had differing views regarding traditional visual, olfactory and tactile stimuli, digital visual, olfactory and tactile stimuli, as well as digital and traditional sensory branding (EF212 – EF220).
- It was concluded from the results of Games-Howell calculated for traditional visual, olfactory and tactile stimuli, as well as for digital visual stimuli and the respondents' age, that the statistically significant differences between answers were mainly with respondents in the age group 45 – 54 years (EF223, EF228, EF233, EF242).
- However, the Games-Howell calculated for digital olfactory stimuli and the respondents' age indicated that the statistically significant difference in answers occurred between respondents in the 18 – 24 years and 55 – 60 years age groups (EF237). Although between different groups, the difference still lies between younger and older respondents.
- Finally, the Games-Howell calculated for digital tactile stimuli and the respondents' age indicated that all statistically significant differences between answers from respondents were with respondents between the ages of 18 and 24 years (EF248), which again signifies a difference between younger and older respondents.

6.6.9.3 ANOVAs comparing mean factor scores of respondents' monthly budget for skincare products

In the section that follows, the descriptive statistics of the various budget groups are compared and the mean factor scores determined. In Table 6.34, the descriptive statistics comparing the mean factor scores of the various budget groups are illustrated. Smallest standard deviations (std. dev.) are represented in green while the highest std. dev. is represented in yellow. The lowest mean values, which represent a positive response, are highlighted in blue and the highest mean values, which represent a negative response, in pink.

TABLE 6.34

ANOVAS COMPARING THE MEAN FACTOR SCORES OF THE VARIABLES AND BUDGET

		R50 – R500	R501 – R1000	R1001 – R1500	R1501 +
Traditional visual stimuli	Means	1.83	1.75	1.35	1.68
	N	56	134	109	22
	Std. Dev	0.49	0.59	0.53	0.71
Traditional auditory stimuli	Means	2.33	2.02	1.86	2.25
	N	56	134	109	22
	Std. Dev	0.83	0.60	0.47	0.86
Traditional olfactory stimuli	Means	1.79	1.75	1.49	1.81
	N	56	134	109	22
	Std. Dev	0.54	0.47	0.37	0.49
Traditional tactile stimuli	Means	1.75	1.63	1.34	1.72
	N	56	134	109	22
	Std. Dev	0.54	0.46	0.36	0.55
Traditional sensory branding	Means	1.92	1.79	1.51	1.86
	N	56	134	109	22
	Std. Dev	0.46	0.44	0.35	0.54
Digital visual stimuli	Means	1.82	1.64	1.29	1.64
	N	56	134	109	22
	Std. Dev	0.64	0.53	0.40	0.63
Digital auditory stimuli	Means	2.43	2.28	2.22	2.41
	N	56	134	109	22
	Std. Dev	0.81	0.60	0.53	0.69
Digital olfactory stimuli	Means	2.01	1.93	1.79	1.99
	N	56	134	109	22
	Std. Dev	0.63	0.55	0.47	0.60
Digital tactile stimuli	Means	1.92	1.71	1.42	1.83
	N	56	134	109	22
	Std. Dev	0.71	0.51	0.42	0.71
Digital sensory branding	Means	2.02	1.89	1.68	1.97
	N	56	134	109	22
	Std. Dev	0.58	0.45	0.37	0.58

		R50 – R500	R501 – R1000	R1001 – R1500	R1501 +
Brand loyalty	Means	2.81	2.11	1.89	1.73
	N	56	134	109	22
	Std. Dev	0.48	0.35	0.37	0.55

As seen in Table 6.34, traditional tactile stimuli presented the lowest mean values for a budget of both R50 – R500/month (1.75) and R501 – R1000/month (1.63) (EF257). However, the mean values observed for the budget range of R1001 – R1500/month (1.34) as well as R1501+/month (1.72) are still relatively low (EF258), which implies that overall, respondents agreed that traditional tactile stimuli have a positive influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products in-store, regardless of their budget (EF259). This finding coincides with the literature which claims that touch is especially relevant for businesses who sell physical products (Chapter 3: Section 3.8). This may also lend support to the fact that consumers utilise touch to evaluate the quality of a product (Chapter 3: Section 3.8). Further seen from Table 6.34, the lowest mean values for a budget of R1001 – R1500/month (1.29) and R1500+/month (1.64) occurred in digital visual stimuli (EF260). When considering this finding in unison with the low mean values observed for traditional tactile stimuli, it becomes apparent that tactile stimuli have a strong link with visual stimuli (Chapter 3: Section 3.8). This result is strengthened by the fact that in Section 6.6.7 (Table 6.26), it was found that digital visual stimuli and traditional tactile stimuli correlated strongly (0.66) (EF261). Furthermore, in Chapter 3, Section 3.5.2, it was discussed that increased worth is being placed on digital visual stimuli as they allow consumers to better evaluate products and, thereby, solidify buying decisions, which this finding also lends support to.

The highest mean values were mostly indicated for digital auditory stimuli (EF262), where a budget of R501 – R1000/month presented a mean value of 2.28, a budget of R1001 – R1500/month presented a mean value of 2.22 and a budget of R1500+/month presented a mean value of 2.41 (EF263). While a budget of R50 – R500/month presented its highest mean value for brand loyalty (2.81), a relatively high mean value can still be seen for digital auditory stimuli (2.43) (EF264). This indicates that, in general, respondents agreed that

digital auditory stimuli have a positive influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products online (EF265). However, this consensus is considerably lower than observed for other sub-variables, which implies that respondents felt less strongly about digital auditory stimuli (EF266). It is also interesting that the respondents' opinion of brand loyalty becomes more positive as their monthly budget increases (EF267), with respondents who have a budget of R50 – R500/month indicating that they are indifferent to brand loyalty (EF268). This finding may link with the fact that consumers, in general, are willing to pay more for a brand that they are loyal to and that brands can increase their profit margin by creating loyal consumers (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.2.4). Additionally, from Table 6.27 it was established that younger respondents were more likely to spend between R50 – R500/month on skincare, and the fact that this budget category of respondents indicated that they were, in general, indifferent to brand loyalty supports the claim by (Klopotan et al 2014:488; McDougall 2015) (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.2.4) (LF43) that older consumers are more likely to be loyal to a brand.

Also highlighted from Table 6.34, the smallest std. dev. occurred in traditional sensory branding for most groups, with the exception of respondents with a budget of R501 – R1000/month (EF269). However, this group still presented a relatively small std. dev. For traditional sensory branding (0.44), which indicates that respondents of this study differed the least in their opinions regarding how this variable influences their experience of shopping for skincare products in-store (EF270). The variable, traditional sensory branding, constitutes four of the five human senses (visual, auditory, olfactory and tactile stimuli), which all govern buying behaviour (Chapter 3: Section 3.3). This could explain why respondents had similar views regarding this variable. The smallest std. dev. for the budget range of R501 – R1000/month (0.35) occurs in brand loyalty (EF271), which indicates that these respondents have similar opinions regarding brand loyalty (EF272).

Lastly, as seen from Table 6.34, the highest std. dev. for a budget of R50 – R500/month (0.83), a budget of R501 – R1000/month (0.60) and a budget of R1500+/month (0.86) occur in traditional auditory stimuli (EF273), indicating

that respondents in these three groups had differing feelings regarding how traditional auditory stimuli influence their experience of shopping for skincare products in-store (EF274). Consumer spending on skincare has been noted to increase in relation to the age of the consumer (Chapter 3: Section 3.2.1), which was also found in this study (Section 6.6.5.2), so it may be the case that respondents in this study who indicated that they spend between R50 – R500/month fall into the younger age categories. Additionally, younger consumers rely more heavily on digital commerce (Chapter 3: Section 3.4), which may explain why traditional stimuli, such as auditory stimuli, would present differing opinions from respondents.

Based on the results of the tests of homogeneity of variances, all variables, and sub-variables, were subjected to the Welch Robust test as they conformed with the assumption of homogeneity (sig < 0.05) (EF275). Table 6.35 indicates the results of the Welch Robust test of the variables of the study and the respondents' monthly budget for skincare products.

TABLE 6.35

RESULTS OF THE WELCH ROBUST TEST OF THE VARIABLES OF THE STUDY AND THE RESPONDENTS' MONTHLY BUDGET FOR SKINCARE PRODUCTS

Marked effects (in red) are significant at p<.05	
	Sig. value
Traditional visual stimuli	0.00
Digital visual stimuli	0.00
Traditional auditory stimuli	0.00
Traditional olfactory stimuli	0.00
Digital olfactory stimuli	0.05
Traditional tactile stimuli	0.00
Digital tactile stimuli	0.00
Digital auditory stimuli	0.26
Brand loyalty	0.00
Digital sensory branding	0.00
Traditional sensory branding	0.00

As seen in Table 6.35, there were statistically significant (p < 0.05) differences between group means for traditional visual stimuli $F_{WELCH}(3, 81.34) = 14.45$, p = 0.00 (EF276); digital visual stimuli $F_{WELCH}(3, 78.15) = 18.22$, p = 0.00 (EF277); traditional auditory stimuli $F_{WELCH}(3, 76.62) = 6.30$, p = 0.00 (EF278);

traditional olfactory stimuli $F_{WELCH}(3, 81.34) = 14.45$, p = 0.00 (EF279); traditional tactile stimuli $F_{WELCH}(3, 78.50) = 15.91$, p = 0.00 (EF280); digital tactile stimuli $F_{WELCH}(3, 77.10) = 13.11$, p = 0.00 (EF281); brand loyalty $F_{WELCH}(3, 77.36) = 14.58$, p = 0.00 (EF282); digital sensory branding $F_{WELCH}(3, 77.92) = 9.39$, p = 0.00 (EF283) and traditional sensory branding $F_{WELCH}(3, 79.06) = 16.82$, p = 0.00 (EF284) for monthly budget as determined by one-way ANOVA. Therefore, it can be concluded that respondents with different monthly budgets for skincare products had differing reviews regarding all variables and sub-variables, with the exception of digital olfactory and digital auditory stimuli (EF285).

The results of Games-Howell calculated for traditional visual stimuli and the respondents' monthly budget for skincare products indicates a statistically significant difference (p < 0.05) between two groups, namely group 1 (R50 – R500/month, mean = 1.83, Table 6.34) and group 3 (R1001 – R1500/month, mean = 1.35, Table 6.34), where p = 0.00 (EF286) as well as group 2 (R501 – R1000/month, mean = 1.75, Table 6.8) and group 3 (R1001 – R1500/month, mean = 1.35, Table 6.34), where p = 0.00 (EF287). Interestingly, the same is true from the results of Games-Howell calculated for digital visual stimuli and the respondents' monthly budget for skincare, where the statistically significant (p < 0.05) differences were also between group 1 (R50 – R500/month, mean = 1.82, Table 6.34) and group 3 (R1001 – R1500/month, mean = 1.29, Table 6.34), where p = 0.00 (EF288), as well as group 2 (R501 – R1000/month, mean = 1.64, Table 6.8) and group 3 (R1001 – R1500/month, mean = 1.29, Table 6.34), where p = 0.00 (EF289).

It can be seen that in all cases the statistically significant differences in answers from respondents with regard to traditional and digital visual stimuli were with respondents who have a monthly budget of R1001 – R1500/month (EF290). Consumers who spend an increased amount on a product have higher expectations (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.2.3). This may explain why, with all the variables (Table 6.35), this group of respondents felt more strongly about how the factors influenced their experience of shopping for skincare products (EF291). It may also be linked to the age of the respondents (Chapter

3: Section 3.2.1), as depending on the age of the consumer they would appreciate stimuli differently.

The results of Games-Howell calculated for traditional auditory stimuli and the respondents' monthly budget for skincare products indicated that only one statistically significant difference ($p < 0.05$) between two groups existed, namely between group 1 (R50 – R500/month, mean = 2.33, Table 6.34) and group 3 (R1001 – R1500/month, mean = 1.86, Table 6.34), where $p = 0.00$ (EF292). There was also a statistically significant difference ($p < 0.10$) between group means between group 1 (R50 – R500/month, mean = 2.33, Table 6.34) and group 2 (R501 – R1000, mean = 2.02, Table 6.34), where $p = 0.07$ (EF293). From the mean value of 1.86, it can be concluded that respondents who have a monthly budget of R1001 – R1500/month felt more strongly about the influence that traditional auditory stimuli have on their experience of shopping for skincare products in-store than those who have a budget of R50 – R500/month (EF294). This can again be linked to the fact that respondents who are spending larger amounts on skincare products can be assumed to be older than those spending less (Chapter 3: Section 3.2.1) (Section 6.6.5.2) and would therefore shop in-store more soften than younger respondents and be exposed to traditional sensory stimuli more often (Chapter 3: Section 3.4). Table 6.36 provides the results of Games-Howell calculated for traditional olfactory stimuli and respondents' monthly budget for skincare products, where p values are provided in the bottom diagonal.

TABLE 6.36

THE RESULTS OF GAMES-HOWELL OF TRADITIONAL OLFACTORY STIMULI AND THE RESPONDENTS' MONTHLY BUDGET

Games-Howell test; Variable: Traditional olfactory stimuli				
	{1}	{2}	{3}	{4}
R50 – R500/month {1}				
R501 – R1000/month {2}	0.97			
R1001 – R1500/month {3}	0.00	0.00		
R1500+ {4}	0.99	0.96	0.04	
Marked effects (in red) are significant where $p < 0.05$				
Marked effects (in blue) are significant where $p < 0.10$				

Table 6.36 indicates a statistically significant difference ($p < 0.5$) between three groups, namely group 1 (R50 – R500/month, mean = 1.79, Table 6.34) and group 3 (R1001 – R1500/month, mean = 1.49, Table 6.34), where $p = 0.00$ (EF295); group 2 (R501 – R1000/month, mean = 1.75, Table 6.34) and group 3 (R1001 – R1500/month, mean = 1.49, Table 6.34), where $p = 0.00$ (EF296), and group 3 (R1001 – R1500/month, mean = 1.49, Table 6.34) and group 4 (R1500+/month, mean = 1.81, Table 6.34), where $p = 0.04$ (EF297). From the results, it can be seen that the statistically significant differences between respondents' answers regarding traditional olfactory stimuli were again all with respondents who had a budget of R1001 – R1500/month (EF298). From the mean values, it can further be deduced that respondents who have a budget of R1001 – R1500/month felt more strongly about the influence that traditional olfactory stimuli have on their experience of shopping for skincare products in-store than any of the other groups (EF299). As previously discussed, if it is assumed that consumers who have a budget of R1001 – R1500/month are likely to be older consumers (Chapter 3: Section 3.2.1) (Section 6.6.5.2), then it may also be deduced that these consumers shop in-store more often than younger consumers would (Chapter 3: Section 3.4). Therefore, these consumers would be exposed to ambient fragrances as well as the fragrance of the physical product, which may explain why they have a stronger level of agreement that traditional olfactory stimuli have a positive influence on their experience. Table 6.37 provides the results of Games-Howell calculated for traditional tactile stimuli and respondents' monthly budget for skincare products, where p values are provided in the bottom diagonal.

TABLE 6.37

THE RESULTS OF GAMES-HOWELL OF TRADITIONAL TACTILE
STIMULI AND THE RESPONDENTS' MONTHLY BUDGET

Games-Howell test; Variable: Traditional tactile stimuli				
	{1}	{2}	{3}	{4}
R50 – R500/month {1}				
R501 – R1000/month {2}	0.46			
R1001 – R1500/month {3}	0.00	0.00		
R1500+ {4}	1.00	0.90	0.02	
Marked effects (in red) are significant where p < 0.05				
Marked effects (in blue) are significant where p < 0.10				

Table 6.37 indicates a statistically significant difference (p < 0.5) between three groups, namely group 1 (R50 – R500/month, mean = 1.75, Table 6.34) and group 3 (R1001 – R1500/month, mean = 1.34, Table 6.34), where p = 0.00 (EF300); group 2 (R501 – R1000/month, mean = 1.63, Table 6.34) and group 3 (R1001 – R1500/month, mean = 1.34, Table 6.34), where p = 0.00 (EF301), and group 3 (R1001 – R1500/month, mean = 1.34, Table 6.34) and group 4 (R1500+/month, mean = 1.72, Table 6.34), where p = 0.02 (EF302). Additionally, the results of Games-Howell calculated for digital tactile stimuli and the respondents' monthly budget for skincare products indicates a statistically significant difference (p < 0.05) between two groups, namely group 1 (R50 – R500/month, mean = 1.92, Table 6.34) and group 3 (R1001 – R1500/month, mean = 1.42, Table 6.34), where p = 0.00 (EF303) as well as between group 2 (R501 – R1000/month, mean = 1.71, Table 6.34) and group 3 (R1001 – R1500/month, mean = 1.42, Table 6.34), where p = 0.00 (EF304). It can be seen that all statistically significant differences in answers between respondents with regard to both traditional and digital tactile stimuli, were with those who have a budget of R1001 – R1500/month (EF305).

While all respondents agreed that both traditional and digital tactile stimuli have a positive influence on their experience, only respondents who have a budget of R1001 – R1500/month strongly agreed that these sub-variables have an influence on their experience, as determined by the mean values of 1.34 and 1.42 respectively (Table 6.34) (EF306). From the literature in Chapter 3; Section 3.8, consumers use the sense of touch to evaluate the quality of the product, which may explain why consumers who spend more on products

would be more sensitive to how the physical product or product packaging feels. However, the fact that all respondents agreed that these sub-variables have an influence on their experience, may support the fact that the sense of touch is the principal source of stimuli for humans (Chapter 3: Section 3.8). It is of interest that with regard to digital tactile stimuli, older consumers still indicated a stronger influence, when younger consumers are known to rely more heavily on online shopping platforms (Chapter 3: Section 3.4) (Section 6.6.5.2). Table 6.38 provides the results of Games-Howell calculated for brand loyalty and respondents' monthly budget for skincare products, where p values are provided in the bottom diagonal.

TABLE 6.38

THE RESULTS OF GAMES-HOWELL OF BRAND LOYALTY AND THE RESPONDENTS' MONTHLY BUDGET

Games-Howell test; Variable: Brand loyalty				
	{1}	{2}	{3}	{4}
R50 – R500/month {1}				
R501 – R1000/month {2}	0.07			
R1001 – R1500/month {3}	0.00	0.00		
R1500+ {4}	0.00	0.03	0.59	
Marked effects (in red) are significant where p < 0.05 Marked effects (in blue) are significant where p < 0.10				

Table 6.38 indicates a statistically significant difference (p < 0.5) between four groups, namely group 1 (R50 – R500/month, mean = 2.81, Table 6.34) and group 3 (R1001 – R1500/month, mean = 1.89, Table 6.34), where p = 0.00 (EF307); group 1 (R50 – R500/month, mean = 2.81, Table 6.34) and group 4 (R1500+/month, mean = 1.73, Table 6.34), where p = 0.00 (EF308); group 2 (R501 – R1000/month, mean = 2.11, Table 6.34) and group 3 (R1001 – R1500/month, mean = 1.89, Table 6.34), where p = 0.00 (EF309), and group 2 (R501 – R1000/month, mean = 2.11, Table 6.34) and group 4 (R1500+/month, mean = 1.73, Table 6.34), where p = 0.03 (EF310). All statistically significant differences are between respondents who have a smaller monthly budget for skincare and those who had a larger monthly budget for skincare (EF311). It is also apparent from the mean values presented in Table 6.34 that respondents who have a monthly budget of R1001+, agreed more strongly with the statements relating to brand loyalty

(EF312), implying that they are more loyal to their preferred brand, while respondents who have a smaller budget (R50 – R500/month) indicated that they are indifferent towards brand loyalty (mean = 2.81) (EF313).

Within the section of the questionnaire that focused on brand loyalty, the statement for item 1 was "should my preferred brand increase their prices, I would still purchase their brand". This item presented a mean value of 2.51 (Table 6.11), which indicates that in general, respondents are indifferent regarding whether they would continue to purchase a product should the price thereof increase. This is the only item in the section which respondents are indifferent towards, which could explain why consumers who have a higher monthly budget for skincare presented a higher level of brand loyalty (EF314). Additionally, the respondents of this study who had higher monthly budgets for skincare also indicated that they were more loyal to a brand then those respondents who spent less, which could be linked to the difference between attitudinal and behavioural loyalty (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.2.4). Furthermore, a predominant reason for brands wanting to build loyal consumers is that they are less price sensitive (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.2.4), which could also explain the significant differences in answers between respondents with higher budgets and those with lower budgets. Finally, the level of brand loyalty shown by a consumer is influenced by their age (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.2.4) and as seen in Section 6.6.5.2, in general, respondents who have larger budgets for skincare are mostly in the older age categories. Therefore, it can be deduced that with specific reference to the skincare industry, older consumers are more likely to be loyal to a brand (EF315).

The results of Games-Howell calculated for digital sensory branding and the respondents' monthly budget for skincare indicates a statistically significant difference ($p < 0.05$) between two groups, namely group 1 (R50 – R500/month, mean = 2.02, Table 6.34) and group 3 (R1001 – R1500/month, mean = 1.68, Table 6.34), where $p = 0.00$ (EF316), as well as between group 2 (R501 – R1000/month, mean = 1.89, Table 6.8) and group 3 (R1001 – R1500/month, mean = 1.68, Table 6.34), where $p = 0.00$ (EF317). Digital sensory branding comprises both digital visual and digital tactile stimuli, and the above

statistically significant differences in respondents' answers regarding digital sensory branding mirrors those observed for these two sub-variables (EF318). Therefore, as digital visual and digital tactile stimuli constitute the variable digital sensory branding, this would be expected. This is also deducible from the mean values provided (Table 6.34). Table 6.39 provides the results of Games-Howell calculated for traditional sensory branding and respondents' monthly budget for skincare products, where p values are provided in the bottom diagonal.

TABLE 6.39

THE RESULTS OF GAMES-HOWELL OF TRADITIONAL SENSORY BRANDING AND THE RESPONDENTS' MONTHLY BUDGET

Games-Howell test; Variable: Traditional sensory branding				
	{1}	{2}	{3}	{4}
R50 – R500/month {1}				
R501 – R1000/month {2}	0.24			
R1001 – R1500/month {3}	0.00	0.00		
R1500+ {4}	0.97	0.92	0.03	
Marked effects (in red) are significant where p < 0.05 Marked effects (in blue) are significant where p < 0.10				

Table 6.39 indicates a statistically significant difference (p < 0.5) between three groups, namely group 1 (R50 – R500/month, mean = 1.92, Table 6.34) and group 3 (R1001 – R1500/month, mean = 1.51, Table 6.34), where p = 0.00 (EF319); group 2 (R501 – R1000/month, mean = 1.79, Table 6.34) and group 3 (R1001 – R1500/month, mean = 1.51, Table 6.34), where p = 0.00 (EF320); and group 3 (R1001 – R1500/month, mean = 1.51, Table 6.34) and group 4 (R1500+/month, mean = 1.86, Table 6.34), where p = 0.03 (EF321). As in the case with the sub-variables of traditional sensory branding discussed in this section (traditional visual, auditory, olfactory and tactile stimuli), the statistically significant differences in respondents' answers regarding traditional sensory branding were all with respondents who have a monthly budget of R1001 – R1500/month (EF322). As traditional sensory branding constitutes the four sub-variables traditional visual, auditory, olfactory and tactile stimuli, it would be expected that the statistically significant differences are between the same groups of respondents (EF323).

Considering the Welch Robust and Games-Howell tests conducted between the different budget groups and the variables of the study, the following conclusions can be drawn. For reference purposes abbreviation EF is used.

- Through the calculation of Welch Robust between the respondents' monthly budget and the variables of this study, it can be concluded that the different groups of respondents have differing views regarding traditional visual, auditory, olfactory and tactile stimuli, digital visual and tactile stimuli, brand loyalty as well as traditional sensory branding and digital sensory branding (EF276 – EF284).

- It was concluded from the results of Games-Howell calculated for all of the above mentioned variables and sub-variables that the statistically significant differences in respondents' answers were mainly with respondents who had a monthly budget of R1001 to R1500/month (EF290, EF305, EF322). Overall this was attributed to the fact the consumers who spend a larger amount on skincare products per month have higher expectations and would therefore, be more influenced by the sensory branding tactics utilised. This difference was further linked to the possibility that consumers who have a larger monthly budget for skincare products may be older consumers, and would shop in-store more often than younger consumers, and would therefore be more exposed to traditional sensory stimuli.

- From the Games-Howell test performed for brand loyalty and the respondents' monthly budget for skincare, it was concluded that the statistically significant (p < 0.5) difference was between group 1 (R50 – R500/month) and group 3 (R1001 – R1500/month) as well as group 4 (R1500+/month), group 2 (R501 – R1000/month) and group 3 (R1001 – R1500/month) as well as group 4 (R1500+/month) (EF307 – EF310). It was deduced that respondents who have a larger monthly budget are more loyal to their preferred brand (EF313). This was attributed to the fact that consumers who have a larger monthly budget for skincare are less price sensitive. It was further deduced that older consumers, with specific reference to the skincare industry, are in general more loyal to brands (EF315).

- From the results of Games-Howell calculated for digital sensory branding, as well as for traditional sensory branding and the respondents' monthly budget for skincare products, it was concluded that the statistically significant ($p < 0.5$) differences all involved group 3 (R1001 – R1500/month) (EF316 & EF317). The statistically significant differences in respondents' answers were attributed to the fact that both digital and traditional sensory branding constitute the sub-variables discussed in this section, and the differences observed therefore mirror those observed for the relevant sub-variables (EF318 & EF323).

6.6.9.4 ANOVAs comparing mean factor scores of the frequency with which respondents purchase skincare products in-store

In this section, the descriptive statistics of the frequency with which respondents purchase skincare products in-store are compared and the mean factor scores determined. For statistical analysis and reporting purposes, answers given by respondents were categorised into "very often", "frequently" and "seldom". In Table 6.40, the descriptive statistics comparing the mean factor scores of the frequency with which respondents purchase skincare products in-store are illustrated. Smallest standard deviations (std. dev.) are represented in green while the highest std. dev. is represented in yellow. The lowest mean values, which represent a positive response, are highlighted in blue and the highest mean values, which represent a negative response, in pink.

TABLE 6.40

ANOVAS COMPARING THE MEAN FACTOR SCORES OF THE VARIABLES AND FREQUENCY WITH WHICH RESPONDENTS PURCHASE SKINCARE PRODUCTS IN-STORE

		Very Often	Frequently	Seldom
Traditional visual stimuli	Means	1.61	1.60	1.64
	N	125	33	163
	Std. Dev	0.66	0.40	0.57
Traditional auditory stimuli	Means	2.04	1.73	2.09
	N	125	33	163
	Std. Dev	0.67	0.50	0.64

		Very Often	Frequently	Seldom
Traditional olfactory stimuli	Means	1.69	1.58	1.68
	N	125	33	163
	Std. Dev	0.48	0.31	0.48
Traditional tactile stimuli	Means	1.55	1.58	1.56
	N	125	33	163
	Std. Dev	0.42	0.41	0.54
Traditional sensory branding	Means	1.72	1.62	1.74
	N	125	33	163
	Std. Dev	0.46	0.29	0.47
Digital visual stimuli	Means	1.55	1.62	1.54
	N	125	33	163
	Std. Dev	0.53	0.39	0.60
Digital auditory stimuli	Means	2.22	2.02	2.41
	N	125	33	163
	Std. Dev	0.64	0.48	0.62
Digital olfactory stimuli	Means	1.85	1.68	1.98
	N	125	33	163
	Std. Dev	0.52	0.43	0.57
Digital tactile stimuli	Means	1.66	1.62	1.67
	N	125	33	163
	Std. Dev	0.51	0.43	0.63
Digital sensory branding	Means	1.82	1.74	1.90
	N	125	33	163
	Std. Dev	0.44	0.30	0.53
Brand loyalty	Means	1.93	2.20	2.09
	N	125	33	163
	Std. Dev	0.44	0.25	0.43

As seen in Table 6.40, all groups of respondents agreed that traditional tactile stimuli have a positive influence on the experience of shopping for skincare products in-store (EF324). However, respondents who purchase skincare products in-store very often further indicated that digital visual stimuli (1.55) have a strong positive influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products in-store (EF325). Furthermore, respondents who indicated that they purchase skincare products in-store frequently also highlighted traditional olfactory stimuli (1.58) as having a strong positive influence on their experience (EF326) and respondents who purchase skincare products in-store seldom felt that digital visual stimuli have a strong positive influence on their experience (EF327). It can therefore be deduced that respondents of this study felt that traditional tactile, digital visual and traditional olfactory stimuli have the largest influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products via brick-and-mortar stores (EF328). These three sub-variables were similarly noted in the results of the full Primary Model conducted in Section 6.6.4.3 (Table 6.25).

As the item related to in-store shopping, it is logical that traditional tactile and olfactory stimuli were highlighted. The importance of tactile stimuli when shopping via in-store avenues may be attributed to the fact that consumers who prefer to shop via brick-and-mortar stores are often driven by a need for touch (NFT) (Chapter 3: Section 3.8.2). Furthermore, it has been found that tactile stimuli are especially relevant for businesses who sell physical products as consumers use this as a means to evaluate quality (Chapter 3: Section 3.8), and as this would apply to skincare products, this may explain the low means seen. It also stands to reason that respondents who felt that traditional tactile stimuli were important, felt the same about digital visual stimuli, as there is a strong link between tactile stimuli and sight (Chapter 3: Section 3.8). Lastly, olfactory stimuli have been determined to be one of the most sensitive of the human senses (Chapter 3: Section 3.7), and while there is no way to replicate fragrances online, olfactory stimuli are a predominant sensory strategy utilised in brick-and-mortar stores.

It can be further seen in Table 6.40 that while respondents were still in agreement that both traditional and digital auditory stimuli have an influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products in-store, they have a considerably smaller influence than some of the other stimuli (EF329). This result corresponds with the results of the Pearsons correlation conducted in Section 6.6.7 (Table 6.26), where both traditional and digital auditory stimuli presented the weakest correlations with brand loyalty (0.8). It can also be seen that respondents who indicated that they purchase skincare products in-store frequently (2.20) and seldom (2.09) felt the least strongly about brand loyalty (EF330). With regard to auditory stimuli, sound is used by stores to influence people's moods, behaviour and feelings (Chapter 3: Section 3.8), which provides a reason why consumers reported that the stimuli have an influence on their experience. Similarly, while respondents still agreed with the statements relating to brand loyalty, it presented the highest, or least positive, mean values (EF331), which may allude to the fact that consumer commitment to brands is decreasing (Chapter 2: Chapter 2.2.3).

Brand loyalty also presented the smallest std. dev. for respondents who purchase skincare products in-store frequently (0.25) and seldom (0.43) (EF332), and while the smallest std. dev. occurs in traditional tactile stimuli (0.42) for respondents who buy skincare products in-store very often (EF333), a relatively small std. dev was still observed for this group in brand loyalty (0.44) (EF334). This indicates that respondents of this study differed the least in their opinions regarding brand loyalty and traditional tactile stimuli (EF335). The mean values relating to the items constituting brand loyalty ranged from 1.69 to 2.50 (Table 6.11). These are all rounded to 2 (agreed), which indicates that respondents, in general, felt similarly regarding all items in this section, which would explain the small std. dev. observed.

The respondents of this study differed the most in their opinions regarding traditional auditory stimuli, as depicted by the std. dev. for respondents who purchased skincare very often (0.67), frequently (0.50) and seldom (0.64) (EF336). Sound is one of the more complex sensory stimuli as it is interpreted by each individual differently, attributed to the fact that it is based on subjective taste (Chapter 3: Section 3.6). This may explain why respondents of this study, based on the frequency with which they buy skincare products, all had different opinions regarding the factors relating to auditory stimuli. Additionally, as seen from Table 6.4, the response to item C3 (the sound or pronunciation of the brand's name influences my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store) was an outlier when compared to the rest of the data set (EF337). While respondents agreed with all other factors relating to traditional auditory stimuli, they were indifferent regarding whether the sound or pronunciation of the brand's name have an influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products in-store (mean = 2.60), which may explain why the answers of respondents with regard to overall traditional auditory stimuli was widely dispersed.

Based on the results of the tests of homogeneity of variances, ANOVA was performed for the variables, and sub-variables, traditional auditory stimuli (sig = 0.14), digital olfactory stimuli (sig = 0.12), traditional tactile stimuli (sig = 0.07) and digital auditory stimuli (sig = 0.12) (EF338). The remainder of the

variables, and sub-variables, were subjected to the Welch Robust test as they conformed with the assumption of homogeneity (sig < 0.05) (EF339). Table 6.41 indicates the results of the ANOVAs of the variables of the study and the frequency with which the respondents purchase skincare products in-store.

TABLE 6.41

RESULTS OF THE ANOVAS OF THE VARIABLES OF THE STUDY AND THE FREQUENCY WITH WHICH RESPONDENTS PURCHASE SKINCARE PRODUCTS IN-STORE

Marked effects (in red) are significant at p<.05		
	F Value	P Value
Traditional auditory stimuli	4.23	0.02
Digital olfactory stimuli	5.13	0.01
Traditional tactile stimuli	0.04	0.96
Digital auditory stimuli	6.97	0.00

There were statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) differences between group means for traditional auditory stimuli ($F_{(2,318)} = 4.23$, $p = 0.02$) (EF340), digital olfactory stimuli ($F_{(2,318)} = 5.13$, $p = 0.01$) (EF341) and digital auditory stimuli ($F_{(2,318)} = 6.97$, $p = 0.00$) (EF342) and frequency of in-store purchases of skincare products, as determined by one-way ANOVA. Therefore, it can be said that respondents who purchase skincare products with different frequencies had differing views regarding all three of these factors (EF343). Based on how often a consumer shops in-store, they may be influenced at a different level by certain sensory stimuli, which could explain the differing opinions observed (EF344). Furthermore, auditory stimuli are perceived differently by each individual (Chapter 3: Section 3.6), which could explain why respondents had differing views regarding both traditional and digital auditory stimuli. Finally, when shopping in-store, consumers would be exposed to traditional olfactory stimuli rather than digital olfactory stimuli.

The results of the Tukey test performed for traditional auditory stimuli and the frequency with which respondents purchase skincare products in-store indicates a statistically significant difference ($p < 0.05$) between two groups, namely group 1 (very often, mean = 2.04, Table 6.40) and group 2 (frequently, mean = 1.73, Table 6.40), where $p = 0.04$ (EF345), as well as between group

2 (frequently, mean = 1.73, Table 6.40) and group 3 (seldom, mean = 2.09, Table 6.40), where p = 0.01 (EF346). It can be seen that both statistically significant differences in answers are with respondents who purchase skincare products in-store frequently (EF347). However, as deduced from the mean values observed, all respondents agreed that traditional auditory stimuli have a positive influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products in-store (EF348). This may be attributed to the fact that auditory stimuli have been used in traditional sensory branding and marketing extensively and have been proven to be a powerful marketing tool that brands can use to shape buying decision and brand preference (Chapter 3: Section 3.6).

The results of the Tukey test performed for digital olfactory stimuli and the frequency with which respondents purchase skincare products in-store indicated that only one statistically significant difference (p < 0.05) exists - between group 2 (frequently, mean = 1.68, Table 6.40) and group 3 (seldom, mean = 1.98, Table 6.40), where p = 0.01 (EF349). It can be seen that the statistically significant difference in answers is between respondents who purchase skincare products in-store more often and those who purchase skincare products in-store less often (EF350). It can be assumed that those who purchase more frequently would be exposed to digital olfactory stimuli more often than those who purchase less often, which may explain why respondents of this study who indicated that they purchase skincare products in-store frequently felt more strongly regarding how this factor influences their experience.

The results of the Tukey test performed for digital auditory stimuli and the frequency with which respondents purchase skincare products in-store indicate a statistically significant difference (p < 0.05) between two groups, namely group 1 (very often, mean = 2.22, Table 6.40) and group 3 (seldom, mean = 2.41, Table 6.40), where p = 0.02 (EF351), as well as between group 2 (frequently, mean = 2.02, Table 6.40) and group 3 (seldom, mean = 2.41, Table 6.40), where p = 0.00 (EF352). It can be seen that both statistically significant differences in answers from respondents with regard to digital auditory stimuli were between respondents who purchase skincare products

in-store more often than those who purchase less often (EF353). While respondents who purchase skincare products in-store frequently indicated that they agreed that digital auditory stimuli have an influence on their experience, those who purchase skincare products in-store seldom were indifferent towards how this factor influences their experience, as determined by the mean value calculated (EF354). This could again be linked to the fact that consumers who shop more often would be exposed to more sensory branding strategies and would therefore expect more from the platforms they shop from. It may also be due to the fact that, when shopping in-store, consumers would be exposed to traditional auditory stimuli rather than digital auditory stimuli. Table 6.42 indicates the results of the Welch Robust test of the variables of the study and the frequency with which the respondents shop for skincare products in-store.

TABLE 6.42

RESULTS OF THE WELCH ROBUST TEST OF THE VARIABLES OF THE STUDY AND THE FREQUENCY WITH WHICH THE RESPONDENTS SHOP FOR SKINCARE PRODUCTS IN-STORE

Marked effects (in red) are significant at p<.05	
	Sig. value
Traditional visual stimuli	0.87
Digital visual stimuli	0.55
Traditional olfactory stimuli	0.23
Digital tactile stimuli	0.88
Brand loyalty	0.00
Digital sensory branding	0.06
Traditional sensory branding	0.15

Table 6.42 shows that there was only one statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) difference between group means, which was for brand loyalty $F_{WELCH}(2, 114.14) = 10.51$, $p = 0.00$ (EF355) between the frequency with which the respondents shop for skincare products in-store. Therefore, it can be concluded that respondents only had differing reviews regarding brand loyalty (EF356). It has been noted that brand loyalty has seen a significant decrease, mirroring the rise of online shopping or e-commerce (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.3). Furthermore, brand loyalty has also been found to be influenced by consumer motivations, whereby those shopping for fun are seeking

experiential activities and those shopping based on necessity are seeking efficiency (Chapter 3: Section 3.2.1). These two literature results could explain the difference in respondents' opinions with regard to brand loyalty.

The results of Games-Howell calculated for brand loyalty and the frequency with which the respondents shop for skincare products in-store indicates a statistically significant difference ($p < 0.05$) between two groups, namely group 1 (very often, mean = 1.93, Table 6.40) and group 2 (frequently, mean = 2.20, Table 6.40), where p = 0.00 (EF357) as well as group 1 (very often, mean = 1.93, Table 6.40) and group 3 (seldom, mean = 2.09, Table 6.40), where p = 0.00 (EF358). Once again, the difference in opinions is between respondents who purchase skincare products in-store more often and those who purchase less often, where respondents who purchase very often felt more strongly regarding brand loyalty (EF359). This could be linked to the fact that loyal customers have been found to purchase from a brand more regularly (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.2.4).

Considering the ANOVAs and Tukey tests as well as Welch Robust and Games-Howell tests performed between the frequency with which the respondents purchase skincare products in-store and the variables of the study, the following conclusions can be drawn. For reference purposes abbreviation EF is used.

- Through the calculation of ANOVAs between the frequency with which the respondents purchase skincare products in-store and the variables of this study, it can be concluded that the different groups of respondents had differing views regarding traditional auditory stimuli, digital olfactory stimuli and digital auditory stimuli (EF340 – EF342).
- It was concluded from the results of the Tukey Test performed for all three of the above mentioned sub-variables and the frequency with which the respondents purchase skincare products in-store that the statistically significant differences between answers were all between respondents who purchase skincare products in-store more often and those who purchase less often (EF350, EF353, EF354).

- Overall, the significant differences seen between the respondents' opinions regarding traditional auditory stimuli, digital olfactory stimuli and digital auditory stimuli were attributed to the fact that consumers who shop more frequently in-store would be exposed to more sensory branding strategies for longer periods of time and would therefore have higher expectations while shopping as well as be more influenced by the stimuli presented.

- However, it was noted that, although respondents indicated that traditional auditory stimuli have an influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products in-store, a stronger positive response may have been expected. This was attributed to the fact that while auditory stimuli can be a useful tool to marketers in creating a cohesive environment, it is dependent on the interaction of consumers.

- Through the performance of the Welch Robust test for the frequency with which the respondents purchase skincare products in-store and the variables of this study, it can be concluded that the different groups of respondents only had differing views regarding brand loyalty (EF356). This was linked to the literature results that not only has consumer loyalty been decreasing, but that brand loyalty is influenced by consumer motivations, where those shopping for fun are seeking experiential activities and those shopping based on necessity are seeking efficiency.

- It was concluded from the results of the Games-Howell test performed for brand loyalty and the frequency with which the respondents purchase skincare products in-store, that the statistically significant differences between answers were with those respondents who purchase skincare products in-store more often and those who purchase less often (EF359). This was attributed to the fact that loyal customers have been found to purchase from a brand more regularly, which would explain why those respondents who purchase skincare products in-store very often felt the most strongly about brand loyalty.

6.6.9.5 ANOVAs comparing mean factor scores of the frequency with which respondents purchase skincare products online

In this section, the descriptive statistics of the frequency with which respondents purchase skincare products online are compared and the mean factor scores determined. For statistical analysis and reporting purposes, answers given by respondents were categorised into "very often", "frequently" and "seldom". In Table 6.43, the descriptive statistics comparing the mean factor scores of the frequency with which respondents purchase skincare products online are illustrated. Smallest standard deviations (std. dev.) are represented in green while the highest std. dev. is represented in yellow. The lowest mean values, which represent a positive response, are highlighted in blue and the highest mean values, which represent a negative response, in pink.

TABLE 6.43

ANOVAS COMPARING THE MEAN FACTOR SCORES OF THE VARIABLES AND FREQUENCY WITH WHICH RESPONDENTS PURCHASE SKINCARE PRODUCTS ONLINE

		Very Often	Frequently	Seldom
Traditional visual stimuli	Means	1.64	1.62	1.62
	N	76	31	214
	Std. Dev	0.64	0.40	0.60
Traditional auditory stimuli	Means	1.92	1.71	2.12
	N	76	31	214
	Std. Dev	0.60	0.48	0.67
Traditional olfactory stimuli	Means	1.68	1.66	1.67
	N	76	31	214
	Std. Dev	0.47	0.31	0.49
Traditional tactile stimuli	Means	1.59	1.76	1.52
	N	76	31	214
	Std. Dev	0.44	0.50	0.49
Traditional sensory branding	Means	1.71	1.69	1.73
	N	76	31	214
	Std. Dev	0.44	0.33	0.47
Digital visual stimuli	Means	1.56	1.75	1.52
	N	76	31	214
	Std. Dev	0.52	0.43	0.58
Digital auditory stimuli	Means	2.10	2.05	2.40
	N	76	31	214
	Std. Dev	0.54	0.50	0.65
	Means	1.92	1.74	1.92
	N	76	31	214

		Very Often	Frequently	Seldom
Digital olfactory stimuli	Std. Dev	0.51	0.37	0.58
Digital tactile stimuli	Means	1.65	1.68	1.66
	N	76	31	214
	Std. Dev	0.48	0.37	0.62
Digital sensory branding	Means	1.81	1.80	1.88
	N	76	31	214
	Std. Dev	0.42	0.29	0.51
Brand loyalty	Means	1.92	2.14	2.06
	N	76	31	214
	Std. Dev	0.39	0.28	0.45

As seen in Table 6.43, respondents had relatively mixed feelings regarding which stimuli have the most positive influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products online (EF360). Respondents who purchase skincare products online very often (1.56) as well as those who purchased seldom (1.52) felt the most strongly about the influence that digital visual stimuli have on their experience (EF361). Traditional tactile stimuli (1.52) were also highlighted by respondents who seldom purchase skincare products online (EF362). These two sub-variables were also pointed out in the full Primary Model conducted in Section 6.6.4.3 (Table 6.25). Furthermore, respondents who frequently purchase skincare products online indicated that they felt most strongly about the influence that traditional visual stimuli have on their experience (EF363). With regard to digital visual stimuli, this would be expected as visual stimuli are one of the primary methods of sensory branding or marketing utilised by online platforms (Chapter 3: Section 3.4). Furthermore, it has been determined that vision and touch are closely linked (Chapter 3: Section 3.8), which may explain why these two sub-variables were highlighted by the respondents of this study.

Contradictorily, respondents of this study who both very often (2.10) as well as seldom (2.40) purchase skincare products online reported that they felt less strongly regarding the influence that digital auditory stimuli have on their experience of shopping for skincare products online (EF364). Furthermore, respondents who frequently purchase skincare products online felt the least strongly regarding brand loyalty, as determined by the mean value of 2.14

(EF365). Interestingly, respondents who seldom purchase skincare products online also presented a relatively high mean for brand loyalty (2.06) (EF366), which may allude to the fact that consumers who purchase more often are, in general, more loyal to brands (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.2.4). With regard to digital auditory stimuli, the difference in opinions may be linked to the literature that confirms that auditory sensory branding depends on the interaction of consumers as well as that sound is interpreted subjectively (Chapter 3: Section 3.6).

Further seen in Table 6.43, the smallest std. dev. for all groups of respondents occurred in brand loyalty (EF367), implying that respondents differed least in their opinions regarding this variable (EF468). Additionally, the mean values calculated for brand loyalty ranged between 1.92 and 2.14, indicating that in general, respondents agreed with the statements relating to brand loyalty (EF369). Brand loyalty has been highlighted throughout this section when making reference to the smallest std. dev. (EF370). The first item relating to brand loyalty in the questionnaire asked respondents to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the statement, "should my preferred brand increase their prices, I would still purchase their brand", and as seen in Table 6.11, in general, respondents were indifferent regarding this (mean = 2.51). This may be linked to the current economic conditions, where consumers have less disposable income to spend on luxury goods (Chapter 3: Section 3.2.1). However, with regard to all other items in the questionnaire which focused on brand loyalty, respondents agreed with the statements that they were presented with (mean ranged from 1.69 to 2.47, Table 6.11), further supported by the mode value being "2 - agreed" for all items. This finding may contradict the literature which states that brand loyalty is decreasing as a result of e-commerce, and suggests that it may rather be due to economic hardship with specific reference to the skincare industry (EF371).

Respondents in this study who very often purchase skincare products online presented their highest std. dev. in traditional visual stimuli (0.64) (EF372), which is not surprising as, when shopping online, they would be exposed to digital sensory stimuli rather than traditional sensory stimuli. Furthermore,

respondents who indicated that they frequently purchase skincare products online had their highest std. dev. occur in digital auditory stimuli (0.50) (EF373). From Table 6.8, it can be seen that respondents of this study in general agreed that most factors constituting digital auditory stimuli have a positive influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products online (mean ranged between 1.86 and 2.36). However, there is an exception, where respondents indicated that they were indifferent regarding how brand jingles influence their experience, which may explain the difference in opinions of respondents. The difference in opinions regarding digital auditory stimuli may also be linked to the fact that the sense of hearing is subjective, and is therefore interpreted differently by each individual (Chapter 3: Section 3.6). Lastly, respondents who seldom purchase skincare products online presented their highest std. dev. in traditional auditory stimuli (0.64), and while this could also be linked to the fact that sound is a subjective sense (Chapter 3: Section 3.6), it may also be attributed to the fact that, when shopping online, the respondent would be exposed to digital sensory stimuli rather than traditional sensory stimuli.

Based on the results of the tests of homogeneity of variances, an ANOVA test was performed for the variables, and sub-variables, digital visual stimuli (sig = 0.07), traditional auditory stimuli (sig = 0.16) and traditional tactile stimuli (sig = 0.56) (EF374). The remainder of the variables, and sub-variables, were subjected to the Welch Robust test as they conformed with the assumption of homogeneity (sig < 0.05) (EF375). Table 6.44 indicates the results of the ANOVAs of the variables of the study and the frequency with which the respondents purchase skincare products online.

TABLE 6.44

RESULTS OF THE ANOVAS OF THE VARIABLES OF THE STUDY AND
THE FREQUENCY WITH WHICH RESPONDENTS PURCHASE
SKINCARE PRODUCTS ONLINE

Marked effects (in red) are significant at p<.05		
	F Value	P Value
Digital visual stimuli	2.42	0.09
Traditional auditory stimuli	7.06	0.00
Traditional tactile stimuli	3.58	0.03

There were statistically significant (p < 0.05) differences between group means for traditional auditory stimuli (F(2,318) = 7.06, p = 0.00) (EF376) and traditional tactile stimuli (F(2,318) = 3.58, p = 0.03) (EF377) and frequency of online purchases of skincare, as determined by one-way ANOVA. Therefore, it can be said that respondents had differing views regarding both traditional auditory and tactile stimuli (EF378). As this section makes reference to how often the respondent shops for skincare products online, they would be exposed to digital sensory branding rather than traditional sensory branding, which may explain the differing opinions seen (EF379). From Table 6.8, it can be seen that with reference to traditional auditory stimuli, respondents differed in their opinions regarding how the sound or pronunciation of the brand's name influences their experience of shopping for skincare products in-store, which is also known to be an auditory branding technique used online (Chapter 3: Section 3.6.2). Therefore, this may explain the difference observed. Lastly, it was found that many times when consumers shop via online platforms, they will go to a physical store to evaluate the item and then find a supplier online which may be cheaper (Chapter 3: Section 3.8.2), which may explain why respondents still highlighted traditional sensory stimuli in this section.

The results of the Tukey test performed for traditional auditory stimuli and the frequency with which respondents purchase skincare products online indicate a statistically significant difference (p < 0.05) between two groups, namely group 1 (very often, mean = 1.92, Table 6.43) and group 3 (seldom, mean = 2.12, Table 6.43), where p = 0.05 (EF380) and between group 2 (frequently, mean = 1.71, Table 6.43) and group 3 (seldom, mean = 2.12, Table 6.43), where p = 0.00 (EF381). Therefore, it can be deduced that the significant

difference in opinions is between respondents who purchase skincare products online more often and those who purchase skincare products online less often (EF382). The mean values indicate that while all groups of respondents in this section still agree that traditional auditory stimuli have a positive influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products online, those who seldom purchase skincare products online, felt the least strongly (mean = 2.40) (EF383). The difference in opinions may be linked to the fact that consumers are motivated by different things when shopping and those individuals who mostly shop in-store may be more motivated by other sensory stimuli, such as touch, than auditory sensory stimuli. Respondents who value auditory stimuli when shopping in-store, will also value it when shopping online as many of the same techniques or tactics are utilised in both shopping avenues (Chapter 3: Section 3.6.2). This may explain why consumers who shop more frequently online indicated that they felt more strongly about the positive influence that traditional auditory stimuli have on their experience.

The results of the Tukey test performed for traditional tactile stimuli and the frequency with which respondents purchase skincare products online indicate that only one statistically significant difference ($p < 0.05$) occurred between group 2 (frequently, mean = 1.76, Table 6.43) and group 3 (seldom, mean = 1.52, Table 6.43), where $p = 0.03$ (EF384). The significant difference in opinions of respondents is once again between those who purchase skincare products online more often and those who purchase skincare products online less often (EF385). This may be attributed to the fact that those respondents who only seldom shop online for skincare products, are shopping mostly in-store due to their level of need for touch (NFT), as determined by the mean value calculated (mean = 1.52). Table 6.45 indicates the results of the Welch Robust test of the variables of the study and the frequency with which the respondents shop for skincare products online.

TABLE 6.45

RESULTS OF THE WELCH ROBUST TEST OF THE VARIABLES OF THE
STUDY AND THE FREQUENCY WITH WHICH THE RESPONDENT'S
SHOP FOR SKINCARE PRODUCTS ONLINE

Marked effects (in red) are significant at p<.05	
	Sig. value
Traditional visual stimuli	0.97
Traditional olfactory stimuli	0.97
Digital olfactory stimuli	0.06
Digital tactile stimuli	0.94
Brand loyalty	0.01
Digital auditory stimuli	0.00
Digital sensory branding	0.37
Traditional sensory branding	0.79

As seen in Table 6.45, there were two statistically significant (p < 0.05) differences between group means for brand loyalty $F_{WELCH}(2, 90.26)$ = 5.71, p = 0.01 (EF386) and digital auditory stimuli $F_{WELCH}(2, 82.69)$ = 11.19, p = 0.00 (EF387) between the frequency with which the respondents shop for skincare products online, as determined by the Welch Robust test. Therefore, it can be concluded that respondents only had differing reviews regarding brand loyalty and digital auditory stimuli (EF388). Brand loyalty has been found to be decreasing as a result of the rise of online shopping or e-commerce. This could be due to the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the financial status of many individuals as well as creating an inability to shop-instore during the lockdown (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.3), which may explain the differing views that respondents have towards this variable. With regard to digital auditory stimuli, it was identified in Table 6.8 that respondents were, in general, indifferent regarding how the use of brand jingles influences their experience of shopping online for skincare products, which may explain the differing views.

The results of the Games-Howell test performed for brand loyalty and the frequency with which the respondents shop for skincare products in-store indicates a statistically significant difference (p < 0.05) between two groups, namely group 1 (very often, mean = 1.92, Table 6.43) and group 2 (frequently, mean = 2.14, Table 6.43), where p = 0.00 (EF389), as well as between group 1 (very often, mean = 1.92, Table 6.43) and group 3 (seldom, mean = 2.06,

Table 6.43), where p = 0.03 (EF390). This indicates that the significant difference in opinions by respondents is between those who purchase skincare products online more often and those who purchase skincare products online less often (EF391). When considering brand loyalty, it is accepted that consumers who are loyal to a brand will purchase more regularly (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.2.4), which may explain why respondents of this study who purchase skincare products online very often agreed the most strongly with the statements relating to brand loyalty (mean = 1.92).

The results of the Games-Howell test performed for digital auditory stimuli and the frequency with which the respondents shop for skincare products in-store indicates a statistically significant difference ($p < 0.05$) between two groups, namely group 1 (very often, mean = 2.10, Table 6.43) and group 3 (seldom, mean = 2.40, Table 6.43), where p = 0.00 (EF392) as well as between group 2 (frequently, mean = 2.05, Table 6.43) and group 3 (seldom, mean = 2.40, Table 6.43), where p = 0.00 (EF393). Again, it can be deduced that the significant difference in opinions is between those respondents who indicated that they purchase skincare products online more and less often (EF394). In addition, it can be concluded that consumers who shop online for skincare products more often are more strongly influenced by auditory stimuli than those who shop online for skincare products less often (EF395). As auditory stimuli are one of the primary sources of sensory branding used online (Chapter 3: Section 3.4), consumers who shop mostly online may be more influenced by it as there is a lack of other sensory stimuli being presented. Furthermore, those consumers who opt to shop online more often may not be motivated to shop by other sensory stimuli, such as touch, explaining their preference for online shopping.

Considering the ANOVAs and Tukey tests performed between the frequency with which respondents purchase skincare products online and the variables of the study, the following conclusions can be drawn. For reference purposes abbreviation EF is used.

- Through the calculation of ANOVAs between the frequency with which the respondents purchase skincare products online and the variables of this study, it can be concluded that the different groups of respondents had differing views regarding traditional auditory stimuli as well as traditional tactile stimuli (EF378).

- It was concluded from the results of the Tukey Test performed for both traditional auditory and tactile stimuli and the frequency with which the respondents purchase skincare products online that the statistically significant differences between answers were all between respondents who purchase skincare products online more often and those who purchase less often (EF382 & EF385).

- With regard to traditional auditory stimuli, the significant differences in the opinions of the respondents were linked to the fact that consumers who shop online are motivated by different sensory stimuli than those who opt to shop in-store. Furthermore, it was deduced that respondents who shop online more frequently indicated that they felt more strongly about the positive influence that traditional auditory stimuli have on their experience (EF383), which was attributed to the fact that consumers who value auditory stimuli when shopping in-store, will also value it when shopping online as many of the same techniques are utilised in both shopping avenues.

- With regard to traditional tactile stimuli, the significant differences in the opinions of the respondents were attributed to the fact that those respondents who only seldom shop online for skincare products are shopping mostly in-store due to their level of need for touch (NFT), as they exhibited the lowest mean for traditional tactile stimuli (1.52).

- Through the performance of the Welch Robust test between the frequency with which the respondents purchase skincare products online and the variables of this study, it can be concluded that the different groups of respondents had differing views regarding brand loyalty as well as digital auditory stimuli (EF388). With reference to brand loyalty, this was linked to the fact that brand loyalty has been found to be decreasing. The difference in opinions relating to digital auditory stimuli was linked to how indifferent

respondents were towards the influence that brand jingles have on their experience.

- It was concluded from the results of the results of the Games-Howell test performed for both traditional brand loyalty and digital auditory stimuli and the frequency with which the respondents purchase skincare products online, that the statistically significant differences between answers were with those respondents who purchase skincare products online more often and those who purchase less often (EF391 & EF394).

- Further deduced was the fact that respondents who very often purchase skincare products online agreed the most strongly with the statements relating to brand loyalty (EF395), which was attributed to consumers who are loyal to a brand purchasing more regularly.

- Lastly, the significant difference in answers with reference to digital auditory stimuli were attributed to the fact that consumers who shop mostly online may be more influenced by the stimuli as there is a lack of other sensory stimuli being presented. Furthermore, those consumers who opt to shop online more often may be influenced by different stimuli than those who opt to shop in-store.

6.7 SUMMARY OF HYPOTHESES AND RELATED STATISTICAL TESTS PERFORMED TO SUPPORT THE HYPOTHESES

A summary of the hypothesis testing is depicted in Table 6.46.

TABLE 6.46

SUMMARY OF THE HYPOTHESIS TESTING

#	Hypothesis	Status	Statistical test	Evidence	Pearson's correlation $P > 0.30$	Evidence	SEM/Primary Model $P < 0.10$
Traditional sensory branding strategies							
H₁	There is a significant relationship between traditional sensory branding strategies and brand loyalty.	Supported	Pearson's correlation coefficients; SEM model; Primary model	There is a statistically weak correlation between traditional sensory branding strategies and brand loyalty.	0.19	There is a significant relationship between traditional sensory branding and brand loyalty.	<0.01

#	Hypothesis	Status	Statistical test	Evidence	Pearson's correlation P > 0.30	Evidence	SEM/Primary Model P < 0.10
H1a	There is a significant relationship between traditional visual sensory strategies and brand loyalty.	Rejected	Pearson's correlation coefficients; SEM model; Primary model	There is a statistically weak correlation between traditional visual stimuli and brand loyalty.	0.17	There is no significant relationship between traditional visual stimuli and brand loyalty.	0.48
H1b	There is a significant relationship between traditional auditory sensory strategies and brand loyalty.	Rejected	Pearson's correlation coefficients; SEM model; Primary model	There is a statistically very weak correlation between traditional auditory stimuli and brand loyalty.	0.08	There is no significant relationship between traditional auditory stimuli and brand loyalty.	0.21
H1c	There is a significant relationship between traditional olfactory sensory strategies and brand loyalty.	Supported	Pearson's correlation coefficients; SEM model; Primary model	There is a statistically weak correlation between traditional olfactory and brand loyalty.	0.13	There is a significant relationship between traditional olfactory stimuli and brand loyalty.	0.10
H1d	There is a significant relationship between traditional tactile sensory strategies and brand loyalty.	Supported	Pearson's correlation coefficients; SEM model; Primary model	There is a statistically weak correlation between traditional tactile stimuli and brand loyalty.	0.28	There is a significant relationship between traditional tactile stimuli and brand loyalty.	<0.01
	Digital sensory branding strategies						
H2	There is a significant relationship between digital sensory branding strategies and brand loyalty.	Supported	Pearson's correlation coefficients; SEM model; Primary model	There is a statistically weak correlation between digital sensory branding strategies and brand loyalty.	0.19	There is a significant relationship between digital sensory branding and brand loyalty.	<0.01
H2a	There is a significant relationship between digital visual sensory strategies and brand loyalty.	Supported	Pearson's correlation coefficients; SEM model; Primary model	There is a statistically weak correlation between digital visual stimuli and brand loyalty.	0.20	There is a significant relationship between digital visual stimuli and brand loyalty.	0.07
H2b	There is a significant relationship between digital auditory sensory strategies and brand loyalty.	Rejected	Pearson's correlation coefficients; SEM Model; Primary Model	There is a statistically very weak correlation between digital auditory stimuli and brand loyalty.	0.08	There is no significant relationship between digital auditory stimuli and brand loyalty.	0.99
H2c	There is a significant relationship between digital olfactory sensory strategies and brand loyalty.	Supported	Pearson's correlation coefficients; SEM model; Primary model	There is a statistically weak correlation between digital olfactory stimuli and brand loyalty.	0.16	There is a significant relationship between digital olfactory stimuli and brand loyalty.	0.08
H2d	There is a significant relationship between digital tactile sensory strategies and brand loyalty.	Supported	Pearson's correlation coefficients; SEM model; Primary model	There is a statistically weak correlation between digital tactile stimuli and brand loyalty.	0.22	There is a significant relationship between digital tactile stimuli and brand loyalty.	<0.01

The section that follows provides a summary of and conclusion to Chapter 6 of this study.

6.8   SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

In this conclusion, the empirical results relevant to this study are indicated with the abbreviation "EF" and the number of the finding. The following conclusions can be drawn regarding the major results of the study.

- The high Cronbach Alpha values of the variables of this study concluded that the measuring instrument was reliable and valid (EF1).

- The demographic profile of the respondents was reported in Section 6.4 and was graphically depicted in Figures 6.1 to 6.4 (EF2 – EF6).

- The results associated with traditional visual stimuli were reported on in Section 6.5.1.1 (EF7 – EF14).

- The results associated with traditional auditory stimuli were reported on in Section 6.5.1.2 (EF15 – EF22).

- The results associated with traditional olfactory stimuli were reported on in Section 6.5.1.3 (EF23 – EF29).

- The results associated with traditional tactile stimuli were reported on in Section 6.5.1.4 (EF30 – EF33).

- The results associated with digital visual stimuli were reported on in Section 6.5.2.1 (EF34 – EF39).

- The results associated with digital auditory stimuli were reported on in Section 6.5.2.2 (EF40 – EF44).

- The results associated with digital olfactory stimuli were reported on in Section 6.5.2.3 (EF45 – EF51).

- The results associated with digital tactile stimuli were reported on in Section 6.5.2.4 (EF52 – EF59).

- The results associated with brand loyalty were reported on in Section 6.5.3 (EF60 – EF72).

- The results of the descriptive statistics of second order factors of the variables were reported in Section 6.6.1 (EF73 – EF82).

- Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) for traditional sensory branding was presented in Section 6.6.2.1 (EF83 – EF91).

- Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) for digital sensory branding was presented in Section 6.6.2.2 (EF92 – EF99).

- The SEM model for traditional sensory branding and brand loyalty was presented in Section 6.6.3.1 (EF100 – EF105).

- The SEM model for digital sensory branding and brand loyalty was presented in Section 6.6.3.2 (EF106 – EF111).

- The full SEM model for both traditional and digital sensory branding and brand loyalty was presented in Section 6.6.3.3 (EF112 – EF120).

- The Primary Model for traditional sensory stimuli was presented in Section 6.6.4.1 (EF123 & EF124).

- The Primary Model for digital sensory stimuli was presented in Section 6.6.4.2 (EF125 & EF127).

- The full Primary Model for both traditional and digital sensory stimuli was presented in Section 6.6.4.3 (EF128 & EF133).

- The results from the SEM and Primary Models conducted were utilised to test the hypotheses of the study relating to traditional sensory branding in Section 6.6.5 (EF134 – EF138).

- The results from the SEM and Primary Models conducted were utilised to test the hypotheses of the study relating to digital sensory branding in Section 6.6.6 (EF139 – EF143).

- Pearson's correlations between the independent variables, and the sub-variables thereof (EF144 – EF155), as well as the correlations between the variables and sub-variables and the dependent variable (EF156 – EF158), were presented in Section 6.6.7.

- The results from the Chi-Square Test of Association (EF159) as well as the cross tabulation (EF160 – EF163) relating to the respondents' age and their average monthly budget for skincare products is presented in Section 6.6.8.

- The results of the ANOVA tests performed between the different gender groups and the variables of this study were presented and concluded on in Section 6.6.9.1 (EF164 – EF181).

- The results of the ANOVA tests (EF199 – EF201) and the Tukey tests (EF202 – EF211) as well as Welch Robust tests (EF212 – EF220) and Games-Howell tests (EF221 – EF257) performed for the different age groups and the variables were presented in Section 6.6.9.2.

- The results of Welch Robust tests (EF276 – EF285) and Games-Howell tests (EF286 – EF323) performed for the average monthly budget for skincare products and the variables were presented in Section 6.6.9.3.

- The results of the ANOVA tests (EF340 – EF344) and the Tukey tests (EF345 – EF354), as well as Welch Robust test (EF355 & EF356) and Games-Howell test (EF357 – EF359), performed for the frequency with which the respondents shop for skincare products in-store and the variables were presented in Section 6.6.9.4.

- The results of the ANOVA tests (EF376 – EF379) and the Tukey tests (EF380 – EF385), as well as Welch Robust tests (EF386 & EF388) and the Games-Howell tests (EF389 – EF395), performed for the frequency with which the respondents shop for skincare products online and the variables were presented in Section 6.6.9.5.

- A summary relating to whether the hypotheses of this study were supported or not is presented in Section 6.7 (Table 6.46). This included the various statistical techniques utilised as well as the specific evidence consulted in the testing of the hypotheses of this study.

In Chapter 7, a synopsis is provided and the results from the empirical section of this study are utilised in collaboration with the literature findings, to draw conclusions. From the conclusions drawn, recommendations could be developed appropriate for the stakeholders of the study. Structural constraints of the study as well as recommendations for future areas of study conclude the chapter.

CHAPTER 7

SYNOPSIS, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 6, the raw data collected on the topic of this study, namely "*desired sensory branding strategies in-store versus online: The skincare industry*", was coded, analysed and then presented in the form of graphs and tables from where significant results were discussed.

The problem statement of this study surrounds the fact that consumers are migrating to online shopping platforms over traditional in-store purchasing and are expecting more than just functionality from their skincare products. To meet the expectations of consumers, it has become common practice for skincare businesses to make use of sensory marketing in-stores, however, with the rise of technology and online shopping, it is essential for skincare brands to extend these strategies to their online presence. It can therefore be deduced that the use of digital sensory branding by skincare brands is an important concern and more research is needed.

Chapter 7 concludes the study by summarising the foregoing chapters which includes an explanation on how the primary, secondary and methodological objectives were accomplished through conducting this study. Following the synopsis, conclusions, recommendations and practical implications are provided relating to the conceptual and empirical results of this study. The final sections of the chapter detail the contributions, limitations and further suggested research in the field of sensory marketing.

7.2 SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH

The secondary research consists of a literature review on brand experience and brand loyalty (Chapter 2), as well as a literature review on sensory branding strategies, which included visual, auditory, olfactory, tactile and taste sensory stimuli as the independent variables of this study (Chapter 3). The

conceptual model is fortified by the literature reviews of this study and was presented in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 outlines the methodology used to conduct the study and, in Chapter 6, the empirical results collected were presented and then used to either reject the null hypothesis or accept the alternative hypothesis formulated in Chapter 4.

Chapter 1 of the study commenced by providing a brief background to the study (Section 1.1). This was followed by an explanation of the problem statement, which this study addressed (Section 1.2). Hereafter, the aim of the study, which was to conduct an investigation into what sensory experiences customers want to have when purchasing skincare products in-store versus online, was given (Section 1.3). To accomplish this aim, the primary objective was set to investigate what sensory experiences customers want to have when purchasing skincare products in-store versus online (Chapter 1: Section 1.3.1). Additionally, a collection of secondary objectives were set (Chapter 1: Section 1.3.2), as listed below.

Secondary objectives of this study were to:

SO_1: determine how multi-sensory branding lends support to the creation of positive and memorable brand experiences for consumers, thereby increasing their brand loyalty;

SO_2: explore the possible traditional and digital sensory branding strategies that brands can utilise;

SO_3: investigate the relationship between the various traditional sensory branding strategies and brand loyalty;

SO_4: investigate the relationship between the various digital sensory branding strategies and brand loyalty, and

SO_5: investigate consumer loyalty in the skincare industry.

In order to achieve the primary and secondary objectives of this study, a number of methodological objectives were set (Chapter 1: Section 1.3.3), namely to:

MO₁: conduct a comprehensive literature review into the relationship that exists between the various traditional and digital sensory branding strategies and brand experience, and the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty, with specific relation to skincare products;

MO₂: develop a conceptual model of the identified variables' relationship with brand loyalty;

MO₃: determine the appropriate research design and methodology to empirically test the relationships as proposed in the conceptual model;

MO₄: undertake an empirical investigation by means of an online questionnaire to test the relationship between the identified independent variables and dependent variable;

MO₅: analyse data through various statistical methods; and

MO₆: provide recommendations, based on the results obtained in the empirical research of this study, to skincare brands who have both online and offline presences.

The chapter then provided a brief literature review, which focused on brand experience, brand loyalty and sensory branding (Section 1.4). Following this, the conceptual model of this study was introduced (Section 1.5: Figure 1.2), as well as the relevant hypotheses (Table 1.1). Hereafter, the research methodology (Chapter 1: Section 1.6) employed to conduct the study was expanded upon as were the statistical methods utilised to analyse the primary data collected (Chapter 1: Section 1.6.11). The final sections of Chapter 1 addressed the delimitations of the study (Section 1.7), ethical considerations (Section 1.8), contributions (Section 1.9), definitions of key concepts related to the study (Section 1.10) and the outline (Section 1.11) of the study.

Chapter 2 of this study provided a literature review relating to the concept of brand experience. Modern market places have become heavily saturated, leaving retailers with the task of differentiating themselves in the minds of consumers (Chapter 2: Section 2.2). Brand differentiation is directly linked to the ability to build a brand that is notable from the perspective of a target audience (Blankson 2016:162; Davcik & Sharma 2015:766; Paunovic 2018). The importance of creating a strong and successful brand is that it will make

the product offering preferential to customers, thereby achieving a competitive advantage and aid in building brand equity (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.1). It can further be concluded that from a marketing perspective, brand equity constitutes brand awareness (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.2.1), brand association (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.2.2), perceived quality (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.2.3) and brand loyalty (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.2.4). Brand loyalty is of significance as it can be utilised to increase profit margins as well as gain competitive advantage (Aaker 1991:39; Beig & Nika 2019:5; Narteh 2018:385), however, there is a clear decrease in brand loyalty by consumers, attributed to the increase in e-commerce (Robertson 2020). To counteract this, brands should place emphasis on creating memorable brand experiences, as they are an indicator of sustainable competitive advantage (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.5) and are directly linked to brand loyalty (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.11). Schmitt (1999:61) proposed an experiential marketing framework, which categorises experiences into five dimensions, namely feel-related experiences, cognitive experiences, act experiences, relate experiences and sensory experiences. In this study, the influence of brand experience, specifically sensory experiences (Chapter 3), on brand loyalty was focused on, as sensory experience has been highlighted as one of the predominant dimensions of experience (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.10) and brand loyalty as the predominant determinant of brand equity (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.2.4).

In Chapter 3, the literature review relating to sensory branding strategies and the skincare industry was presented. Despite the effects of economic depressions, the global beauty industry has been exceptionally resilient (Chapter 3: Section 3.2) and within that, the skincare industry is expecting its largest growth rate from 2019 – 2025 (Roberts 2021). Due to the rapid growth rate and competitiveness of the skincare industry, competitors are under a great deal of pressure to be innovative, which has only been magnified by the effects of the global COVID-19 pandemic (Chapter 3: Section 3.2.1). Prior to the global COVID-19 pandemic, most sales of beauty products were in-store; however, in 2020, it was recorded that more consumers were moving to online shopping (Gerstell et al 2020:2). The migration of consumers towards online shopping has led to consumers having higher expectations of their personal

care products (Cosmetics Business 2020) (Chapter 3: Section 3.2.2). Moreover, brands are relying more on how their products make the consumer feel to differentiate themselves in the market (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.1). One means which allows brands to build relationships with consumers, and therefore differentiate themselves, by combining both logic and emotion to generate desirable responses by consumers to the product offering is experiential marketing (Beig & Nika 2022:157; Le et al 2018:220; Suardi 2019:15) (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.4), which includes the creation of memorable brand experiences (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.5). However, within the skincare industry, regardless of the purchase being in-store or online, sensory experiences have been highlighted as being of paramount importance (Cosmetics Business 2020; Whitehouse 2017). It was therefore concluded that both traditional (Chapter 3: Section 3.3) and digital (Chapter 3: Section 3.4) sensory branding strategies were of concern to the skincare industry. From this deduction, visual (Chapter 3: Section 3.5), auditory (Chapter 3: Section 3.6), olfactory (Chapter 3: Section 3.7), tactile (Chapter 3: Section 3.8) and taste (Chapter 3: Section 3.9) sensory branding were introduced and numerous specific traditional sensory strategies (Chapter 3: Sections 3.5.1; 3.6.1; 3.7.1; 3.8.1; 3.9.1) as well as digital sensory strategies (Chapter 3: Sections 3.5.2; 3.6.2; 3.7.2; 3.8.2; 3.9.2) were discussed. It should be noted however, that, for the purpose of this study, taste stimuli were excluded, as it was found to have no relevance to the skincare industry (Chapter 3: Section 3.12).

Chapter 4 of this study introduced the concepts of a theoretical framework (Section 4.2.1) and a conceptual framework (Section 4.2.2). Following this, previously existing theories, models and frameworks upon which the conceptual model pertaining to this study was built, were highlighted and discussed. The first theory addressed was the Consumer Behaviour Theory (Chapter 4: Section 4.3.1), which included the Buyer Behaviour Model (Section 4.3.1.1), the Consumer Decision Model (Section 4.3.1.2), the Theory of Reasoned Action Model as well as the Theory of Planned Behaviour Model (Section 4.3.1.3) and the Technology Acceptance Model (Section 4.3.1.4). The second theory discussed was the Experience Economy Theory (Chapter

4: Section 4.3.2), which included the Conceptual Model of Experience Marketing (Section 4.3.2.1), a Model of Sensory Marketing (Section 4.3.2.2) and a Model for Multi-Sensory Experience and Shopping Behaviour (Section 4.3.2.3). Lastly, the Brand Equity Theory is discussed (Chapter 4: Section 4.3.3), which included a Model of the Influence of Brand Experience on Brand Equity (Section 4.3.3.1). Hereafter, the chapter introduced the conceptual model of the study, offering a solution to the research question pertaining to: what are the different sensory marketing strategies desired by consumers when purchasing skincare products in-store versus online? (Chapter 4: Section 4.4). The conceptual model included the independent and dependent variables of this study (Chapter 4: Section 4.4: Figure 4.11), from which the hypotheses of the study were formulated (Chapter 4: Section 4.4: Table 4.1). The independent variables were highlighted, which constituted traditional sensory branding (Chapter 4: Section 4.5.2) and digital sensory branding (Chapter 4: Section 4.5.3), both of which consisted of four sub-variables, namely visual (Chapter 4: Section 4.5.4), auditory (Chapter 4: Section 4.5.5), olfactory (Chapter 4: Section 4.5.6) and tactile (Chapter 4: Section 4.5.7) sensory branding strategies. The final section of Chapter 4 discussed the dependent variable, namely brand loyalty (Section 4.6).

Chapter 5 focussed on the research methodology employed to conduct this study. It was decided that a positivistic research paradigm (Chapter 5: Section 5.2) and a descriptive research design (Chapter 5: Section 5.3) would be utilised as they were appropriate for quantitative research. Non-probability sampling was selected as the sampling procedure and convenience sampling as the specific technique (Chapter 5: Section 5.4.2). Furthermore, it was identified that the target population of this study constituted consumers who had purchased skincare products from both brick-and-mortar stores as well as via digital platforms (Chapter 5: Section 5.4.2) and the final sample consisted of 321 respondents, which equated to a completion rate of 86.3% (Chapter 5: Section 5.4.3). It was detailed that the primary data would be collected via an online survey (Chapter 5: Section 5.5.1) and a web-based, self-administered questionnaire would be utilised as the specific measuring instrument (Chapter 5: Section 5.5.2). It was further discussed in Chapter 5 that Confirmatory

Factor Analysis (CFA) were conducted to prove construct validity of the questionnaire (Chapter 5: Section 5.5.6), while Cronbach alpha coefficients were utilised to test reliability (Chapter 5: Section 5.5.5). It was also detailed within Chapter 5 that both descriptive and inferential statistics were calculated to analyse and interpret the data collected (Chapter 5: Section 5.5.9) and the chapter concluded by listing the problems encountered during the completion of the study (Chapter 5: Section 5.6).

Chapter 6 of this study was dedicated to reporting the primary data collected. Section 6.2.1 of Chapter 6 provided the response rate to the questionnaire and Section 6.2.2 provided an in-depth discussion on the internal reliability of the data collection instrument used in this study. Following this, the descriptive statistics calculated for the study were addressed (Chapter 6: Section 6.3), which included the demographic details of the respondent (Chapter 6: Section 6.4) and the descriptive statistics calculated relating to each variable of the study (Chapter 6: Section 6.5). The descriptive statistics calculated for the variables of the study constituted the measures of central tendency, standard deviation and skewness of the data sets. The sections of Chapter 6 that followed introduced the inferential statistics used in this study to draw conclusions from the data collected. This included:

- CFA calculations, which allowed the researcher to validate the measuring instrument (Chapter 6: Section 6.6.2);
- SEM Models, which allowed the researcher to determine whether or not a relationship existed between the independent variables of the study (traditional and digital sensory branding) and the dependent variable (brand loyalty) (Chapter 6: Section 6.6.3);
- Primary Models, which allowed the researcher to determine whether or not a relationship existed between the sub-variables of the study (traditional and digital visual, auditory, olfactory and tactile stimuli) and the dependent variable (brand loyalty) (Chapter 6: Section 6.6.4);
- Pearson's Correlation Coefficient, which was calculated to identify relationships between the various variables for the study and to test the hypotheses formulated (Chapter 6: Section 6.6.7);

- Chi-Square Test of Association, which was used to identify the association between the respondents' age and their average monthly budget for skincare (Chapter 6: Section 6.6.8), which was done as it was indicated in the literature review that consumer spending on skincare increases as they get older (Chapter 3: Section 3.2.1). Furthermore, there was differences in opinions between respondents who had higher and lower monthly budgets for skincare (Chapter 6: Section 6.6.9.3) and due to the afore-mentioned literature finding, the researcher wanted to establish whether the differences could be linked to the age of the respondents;
- ANOVAs and Welch Robust, which were used to detect significant differences between group means (Chapter 6: Section 6.6.9.2 – 6.6.9.5);
- Tukey Test and Games-Howell, which were used to identify between which specific groups the significant differences in means detected through the calculation of ANOVA's were (Chapter 6: Section 6.6.9.2 – 6.6.9.5); and
- Cohen's d, which was used to quantify the relationships between two groups, as determined through the calculation of ANOVA (Chapter 6: Section 6.6.9.1).

MO_4 was achieved through the statistical analysis conducted on the empirical results of this study. Preluding the items referring to the variables, the respondents were asked to report on their demographic factors.

7.3 MAIN RESULTS: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

The demographic details of respondents collected for the purpose of this study included the gender and age group of the respondents, their average monthly budget for skincare products and the frequency with which they purchase skincare products in-store as well as online. Throughout this section, the empirical result (EF) presented in Chapter 6 are linked to the relevant literature findings (LF) discussed in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3.

7.3.1   Gender of respondents

With regards to the gender of respondents, it was determined that the majority were female (Chapter 6: Section 6.4) (EF2). This result supports the claim by Djordjevic (2021) that the skincare industry's main target market is women (Chapter 3: Section 3.2) (LF101).

7.3.2   Age of respondents

Although the majority of respondents in this study were over the age of 45, there was a number of respondents who were between the ages of 18 years and 34 years (EF3). This contradicts the findings of Djurovic (2021) and Global Cosmetic Industry (2021) who state that the predominant target group in the skincare industry are consumers between the ages of 18 years and 30 years (Chapter 3: Section 3.2) (LF102). However, as the questionnaire was online, one cannot generalise this result to be the predominant target group for South Africa, which may be the cause of the discrepancy.

7.3.3   Average monthly budget for skincare products

Literature suggests, on average, consumers spend between R200 and R800 per month on skincare in South Africa (Rootman et al 2019:452; Stiehler & Jordaan 2019:75) (Chapter 3: Section 3.2.1) (LF111). This is supported by the results of this study that the majority of respondents spent between R50 and R1000 per month on skincare (EF4). However, there were a substantial number of respondents who spent upwards of R1000 per month on skincare (EF4). Furthermore, as discussed in Section 7.3.2, the majority of respondents in this study were over the age of 45 (EF3) and it was additionally found that there is a significant association between the age of respondents and their average monthly budget for skincare (EF159); as the age category of the respondent increased, so did their average monthly budget for skincare (EF163). This empirical result is in line with the literature finding that consumer spending on skincare increases as they get older (Bowling 2020) (Chapter 3:

Section 3.2.1) (LF112), which would also explain why a substantial number of respondents in this study had a budget of upwards of R1000 per month.

7.3.4 Frequency of purchasing skincare products in-store and online

From the results of this study, it was found that, in general, respondents bought more frequently from brick-and-mortar stores than they did from online platforms (EF5 & EF6). This result supports that of Gerstell et al (2020:3) who state that while there has been an estimated 20% - 30% growth in recorded online sales of skincare products, online sales do not exceed in-store purchases (Chapter 3: Section 3.2.2) (LF109). With specific reference to the skincare industry, the result that consumers shop more frequently from brick-and-mortar stores than they do from online platforms (EF5 & EF6) may also be linked to the fact that many consumers are skeptical when shopping online for these types of products (Beck & Jensen 2019) (Chapter 3: Section 3.2.2) (LF118). Wylie (2018) adds that consumers are especially partial to in-store shopping or browsing when looking for a new product with reference to the beauty industry (Chapter 3: Section 3.2.2) (LF119).

7.4   MAIN RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM SECONDARY OBJECTIVES

Throughout this section, the empirical result (EF) presented in Chapter 6 are linked to the relevant literature findings (LF) discussed in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3. Both the empirical results and literature findings aided in achieving the secondary objectives of this study ($SO_1 - SO_5$) (Chapter 1: Section 1.4.2). Recommendations are provided to the parties of this study (skincare businesses), based on the discussed literature findings and empirical results. Furthermore, within this section, the relevant hypotheses are linked to the secondary objectives.

7.4.1 Secondary objective 1: The use of multi-sensory branding to create memorable brand experiences and enhance brand loyalty

The first secondary objective of the study was:

> SO$_1$: To determine how multi-sensory branding lends support to the creation of positive and memorable brand experiences for consumers, thereby increasing their brand loyalty

The literature findings (LF) have reference to Chapter 2.

In Chapter 2, a review of the extant literature was provided, from which it was established that creating a strong memorable brand is of the utmost importance as it allows for a differential advantage in the market (LF7). Furthermore, it was determined that consumers are looking for consumer-centric experiences (LF61), which implies that emphasis should be placed on creating memorable brand experiences (LF60). One of the strongest dimensions for creating memorable brand experiences is through the utilisation of sensory experiences (LF86).

Individuals will have certain emotional and cognitive reactions based on their perceptions of the sensory stimuli of a product or brand (LF88), which in turn influence their overall attitudes, learning and behaviour (LF89). It has additionally been noted that multi-sensory experiences are the most effective use of sensory marketing and branding when creating a memorable brand (LF90) as they appeal to a large number of different consumers (LF87). The effectiveness of making use of multi-sensory branding can be explained with the aid of the Gestalt theory, which in a marketing context explains that various sensory stimuli interact to create memorable brand experiences (LF92). It can therefore be concluded that sensory marketing should be utilised to create positive and memorable brand experiences (LF93), and due to the fact that brand experience is directly related to brand loyalty (LF94), enhances brand equity (LF95).

7.4.2 Secondary objective 2: Traditional and digital sensory branding strategies

The second secondary objective of the study was:

> SO$_2$: Explore the possible traditional and digital sensory branding strategies that brands can utilise

The literature findings (LF) have reference to Chapter 3.

Within Chapter 3 of this study, it was discussed that there are numerous advantages to implementing sensory strategies, including building brand associations (LF135); forming emotional bonds with consumers (LF136); enhancing the familiarity that consumers have with the brand (LF137); generating positive word of mouth (LF138); and increasing the perceived quality and value of a product, thereby allowing for higher pricing (LF139). These findings apply to both brick and mortar stores as well as digital stores and when an individual makes use of online or digital platforms to communicate or exchange information, it should be considered a multi-sensory experience (LF141). Specific traditional sensory branding strategies include:

- visual strategies (Chapter 3: Section 3.5.1) - colours used by a brand (LF174), logo design (LF175), packaging design (LF176), lighting in the store (LF177), the cleanliness of the store (LF178), the design and layout of the store itself (LF179), visible signage and display features (LF180) and the uniform of staff (LF181);
- auditory strategies (Chapter 3: Section 3.6.1) - music in stores (LF212), the jingles used by a brand (LF213), the sound or pronunciation of the brand's name (LF214) and sounds associated with using the physical product itself (LF215);
- olfactory strategies (Chapter 3: Section 3.7.1) – the smell of the product itself (LF238), signature fragrances (LF239), nebulization technology, such

as aerosols or air vents (LF240) and the fragrance of staff in an establishment (LF241);

- tactile strategies (Chapter 3: Section 3.8.1) - touching of a product or product packaging (LF262), the temperature of a store (LF263), different textured paper in advertising (LF264), attention grabbing in store displays (LF265), tester samples of the product (LF266) and the use of unusual packaging (LF267); and

- taste strategies (Chapter 3: Section 3.9.1) – taste samples (LF284), incorporation of taste into services (LF285), aesthetic taste used throughout all the different industries (LF286) and aroma utilised by businesses to create taste experiences (LF287).

Specific digital sensory branding strategies include:

- visual strategies (Chapter 3: Section 3.5.2) - digital photos (LF183), movies and trailers (LF184), colours used by a brand (LF185), logo design (LF186) and packaging design (LF187), the layout (LF188) and user friendliness of websites (LF189), colour as backgrounds (LF190), 3D imaging (LF191), virtual reality environments (VR) and virtual try-ons (VTO), or augmented interactive (AI/AR) technology (LF192);

- auditory strategies (Chapter 3: Section 3.6.2) - traditional in-store auditory strategies used are also used online, (LF216) as well as radio or television (LF217), video adverts (LF218) and background music (LF219);

- olfactory strategies (Chapter 3: Section 3.7.2) - there is no technology that can replace physical smell online (LF242), use of imagery and descriptive words (LF243), the distribution of "scratch-and-sniff" cards (LF244), researchers are continuously working on developing multisensory devices that will enable olfactory stimuli to be delivered to consumers via the internet (LF245);

- tactile strategies (Chapter 3: Section 3.8.2) - the use of high-quality images and descriptive words (LF267), the option to have the item delivered, and then returned within a certain amount of time (LF268), incorporating other human senses to stimulate deep rooted associations that people have to

communicate feel (LF269), consumers touching their mouse or touchscreens (LF270) and numerous technological developments have been made to try and improve the haptic interactions that individuals have when shopping online (LF271); and

- taste strategies (Chapter 3: Section 3.9.2) – aesthetic taste in the digital market space refers to how aesthetically pleasing a consumer finds a brand's website and social media presences (LF288), gastronomic taste is, to date, impossible to replicate virtually (LF289), however, AR technology is being researched to try and bridge this gap online (LF290).

7.4.3 Secondary objective 3: The relationship between traditional sensory branding and brand loyalty

The third secondary objective of the study was:

> SO$_3$: To investigate the relationship between the various traditional sensory branding strategies and brand loyalty

In the sections that follow, the empirical results (EF) relate to Chapter 6 and the literature findings (LF) have reference to Chapter 2 and Chapter 3.

7.4.4 The influence of traditional sensory branding on brand loyalty

As discussed in Chapter 6: Section 6.6.2.1, CFA was computed to test the measurement models relating to traditional sensory branding. From the calculation of CFA for traditional sensory branding, it was established that no items had to be removed (EF83) and that a number of MI had to be applied (EF84 – EF89). Thereafter, it was concluded that the four-factor model (traditional sensory branding) yielded a good fit (EF91), as determined by the model fit information for traditional visual stimuli (CMIN = 2.65; SRMR = 0.02; CFI = 0.99; RMSEA = 0.07), auditory stimuli (CMIN = 2.10; SRMR = 0.01; CFI = 1.00; RMSEA = 0.06), olfactory stimuli (CMIN = 3.87; SRMR = 0.03; CFI = 0.98; RMSEA = 0.10) and tactile stimuli (CMIN = 2.24; SRMR = 0.03; CFI = 0.99; RMSEA = 0.06). Moreover, from the full SEM model constructed (Chapter 6: Section 6.6.3.3), it was established that there was a significant (p

< 0.05) relationship between traditional sensory branding (p = 0.01) and brand loyalty (EF113). The following hypothesis is linked to traditional sensory branding:

H$_1$: There is a significant relationship between traditional sensory branding strategies and brand loyalty. From the SEM model constructed in Section 6.6.3.1, Table 6.17, it was found that there was a significant (p < 0.05) relationship between traditional sensory branding and brand loyalty, where p = 0.01 (EF113). However, the relationship is relatively weak, as determined by a standardized regression weight estimate of 0.20 (EF114) (Table 6.21).

Hypothesis H$_1$ is supported (EF134)

The sections that follow elaborate on the main results relating to the four sub-variables that constitute the variable traditional sensory branding.

7.4.4.1 Main empirical and literature results relating to the influence of traditional visual stimuli on brand loyalty

The descriptive results that relate to the influence of traditional visual stimuli (Chapter 6: Table 6.3) indicate that, in general, respondents agreed to a large extent that all factors in this sub-section, constituting traditional visual stimuli, had a positive influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products in-stores (EF9), implying that all factors represent desirable sensory branding strategies for consumers who shop in-store for skincare products (EF10). It was further deduced that the overall aesthetic ambiance of the store is an important consideration when considering the experience of shopping for skincare products in-store (EF11), which proves the statement by Bitner (1992:66) that visual cues are a segment of ambient conditions (LF164) (Chapter 3: Section 3.5). This conclusion was further supported by Turley and Milliman (2000:194) and Bitner (1992:66), who state that visual cues include layout and design (LF163) (Chapter 3: Section 3.5). Additionally, as seen in Chapter 3: Section 3.5, Cowen-Elstner (2018:23) and Galande (2019:48), along with Huang and Jen (2020:9904), state that colours influence consumer

behaviour (LF165) and finally, it was established that lighting is important in retail outlets (Cowen-Elstner 2018:25; Hulten 2020:70) (LF170).

Cowen-Elstner (2018:24) and Foroudi and Palazzo (2019:136), as well as Hulten (2020:59), recognise that packaging design and colour (LF174 & LF176), as well as display features (LF180), are effective sensory marketing strategies (Chapter 3: Section 3.5.1). These factors are supported by this study, where it was concluded that eye catching or aesthetically pleasing packaging has an influence on purchasing behaviour (EF12) as does the placement of the product on the shelf (EF13). The following are the main conclusions relating to traditional visual stimuli as a result of the inferential statistics calculated.

It was established from the results of this study that a strong correlation exists between traditional visual stimuli and digital visual stimuli (0.68) (Chapter 6: Table 6.26). This is understandable as both represent the sense of sight and strategies to deliver visual sensory stimuli in-store and online overlap (LF174 - LF176, LF179, LF183, LFLF185 - LF188, LF190) (Chapter 3: Section 3.5.1 & 3.5.2). Furthermore, as seen in Table 6.26, there was a strong correlation between traditional visual stimuli and digital olfactory stimuli (0.55) and as stipulated by Alac (2017:143), Cowen-Elstner (2018:31), Hauser (2017) and Hulten (2020:127), marketers make use of imagery and descriptive words in an attempt to deliver olfactory stimuli via online platforms (LF243) (Chapter 3: Section 3.7.2), which could explain the correlation that exists. Finally, the strong correlation observed in Table 6.26, that exists between traditional visual stimuli and traditional tactile stimuli (0.60), as well as digital tactile stimuli (0.58), can be attributed to the fact that tactile sensory stimuli work in close collaboration with sight (Ali & Ahmed 2019:118; Galande 2019:48; Hulten 2020:137; 2017:8; Wala et al 2019:114) (LF251) (Chapter 3: Section 3.8).

The results of the study indicated that there was a medium practically significant (d ≤ 0.5) difference in answers between males and females regarding traditional visual stimuli (d = 0.64) (Chapter 6: Table 6.28) (EF164). This result supports the claim made by Uddin (2011:13) in Chapter 3: Section

3.5, that visual cues will be interpreted differently based on an individual's context, such as their gender (LF158). With regards to the age of respondents, the statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) difference in respondents' answers, with reference to traditional visual stimuli, were mainly between younger respondents and those between the ages of 45 and 54 years (Chapter 6: Section 6.6.9.2) (EF223). Furthermore, from the mean values presented in Table 6.29, it was deduced that older respondents agreed more strongly that traditional visual stimuli had a positive influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products in-store (EF224). In Chapter 3: Section 3.3, it is explained that, in general, GenXers shop mostly in-store rather than online (LF140), which could explain the difference in answers observed.

With regards to the average monthly budget for skincare of the respondents, the statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) difference in respondents' answers, with reference to traditional visual stimuli, were all with respondents who have a monthly budget of R1001 – R1500/month (EF290) (Chapter 6: Section 6.6.9.3). As determined in Chapter 6: Section 6.6.8, most respondents who had an average monthly budget of R501 – R1500 for skincare were older consumers (EF162) and it can therefore be assumed that the difference in answers can be linked to the age of the respondents, as this would affect how they perceive visual stimuli (Uddin 2011:13) (Chapter 3: Section 3.2.1) (LF159). Additionally, consumers who spend an increased amount on a product have higher expectations (Zhao et al 2021:21) (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.2.3) (LF29), which may explain why respondents of this study who had higher monthly budgets placed higher worth on sensory stimuli throughout (EF291).

(a)   Hypothesis linked to traditional visual stimuli

The following hypothesis is linked to traditional visual stimuli (Chapter 4: Table 4.1):

H_{1a}: There is a significant relationship between traditional visual sensory strategies and brand loyalty. From the full Primary Model constructed in

Section 6.6.4.3: Table 6.25, there was no significant ($p < 0.05$) relationship between traditional visual stimuli and brand loyalty (EF133), where $p = 0.48$ (Table 6.25).

Hypothesis H_{1a} is rejected (EF135)

(b)   Implications of the influence of traditional visual stimuli on brand loyalty

Traditional visual stimuli is one of the most frequently used means of implementing sensory marketing or branding, attributed to the fact that it is the most seductive of all the senses. Furthermore, visual cues have the ability to influence behaviour relating to brand preference, consumption quantity and purchasing behaviour. It is also accepted that visual stimuli are utilised by brands to create brand experiences. However, while respondents of this study agreed that traditional visual stimuli positively influenced their experience of shopping for skincare products in-store, the results indicate that there is only a weak relationship between traditional visual stimuli and consumer brand loyalty.

However, Harris et al (2017:1) and Kim and Chao (2019:10) insist that experience has a direct relationship with brand loyalty (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.10) (LF94). Therefore, the results of this study may suggest an indirect or mediating effect of consumer experience on brand loyalty. So, while the relationship between visual stimuli and experience is evident from the results of this study, the relationship between visual stimuli and brand loyalty is indirect through brand experience, which would explain the weaker correlation. This would suggest that visual stimuli is important with regards to the shopping experience, specifically when considering the skincare industry, but may not be as important as an individual factor towards brand loyalty.

It is also known that while colours and design of packaging is important, the text accompanying it is just as, if not more, important (Štěchová 2017:14) (Chapter 3: Section 3.5.1) (LF180). With reference to skincare products,

consumers seek products based on the function that they claim to perform (Romanowski 2020).

(c)   Recommendations and practical implications for businesses operating in the skincare industry

RE$_1$: Skincare brands should realise the influence that traditional visual stimuli have on consumer buying behaviour and find innovative ways to exploit the benefits that they can offer, which are specific to their target audience.

With reference to product packaging, visual cues can further relate to the wording used on the product packaging, and since consumers seek skincare products based on the function that they claim to perform, skincare brands should research key words that their specific target audience would resonate with. For example, if a skincare brand is targeting older consumers, they should conduct extensive market research on key-words that entice that age group of respondents, such as "anti-aging" or "reduce wrinkles and fine-lines". Contradictorily, should the skincare brand be targeting younger consumers they would be more enticed by key-words such as "reduce acne", "reduce dark spots" or "prevent breakouts". By highlighting these desired functions on the product packaging, consumers may be more enticed to pick the product up and read further, allowing the brand to better influence consumer decision making.

7.4.4.2 Main empirical and literature results relating to the influence of traditional auditory stimuli on brand loyalty

The descriptive results that relate to the influence of traditional auditory stimuli (Chapter 6: Table 6.4) indicate that, on average, respondents agreed to a large extent that the factors constituting traditional auditory stimuli had a positive influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products from brick-and-mortar stores, implying that these factors represent desirable sensory branding strategies for consumers who shop in-store for skincare products (EF18). This result validates the claim made by Hulten (2020:84) that how an

individual perceives an environment is largely attributed to sound (Chapter 3: Section 3.6) (LF193). One factor relating to traditional auditory stimuli, which respondents identified as significant, was the tempo of the music (EF204), which was also identified by Cowen-Elstner (2018:29), as well as by Foroudi and Palazzo (2019:137), as being one of the most influential auditory factors on consumer behaviour (Chapter 3: Section 3.6) (LF205). Cowen-Elstner (2018:29) and Foroudi and Palazzo (2019:137) add that the volume of the music is also an essential consideration (Chapter 3: Section 3.6) (LF207), which is proven through the result of this study that respondents agreed that the volume of the music in-store positively influenced their experience (EF20). From these individual results, the conclusion was drawn that the store ambience with reference to auditory stimuli has an influence on consumer behavioural responses when shopping for skincare products in-store (EF20), which was also suggested by Cowen-Elstner (2018:29) along with Foroudi and Palazzo (2019:137) (Chapter 3: Section 3.6) (LF196 – LF198, LF204, LF205, LF212). Finally, as posited by Harris (2016) and Flowers (2020) in Chapter 3: Section 3.6.1, the sound or pronunciation of a brand name is important (LF211), which contradicts the results of this study that suggest that consumers' in-store shopping experience is not influenced by the sound or pronunciation of a brand name (EF22). The following are the main conclusions relating to traditional auditory stimuli as a result of the inferential statistics calculated.

From the results in Chapter 6: Table 6.26, it was found that a strong correlation exists between traditional auditory stimuli and digital auditory stimuli (0.69). This strong correlation may be explained by the fact that, in many cases, the strategies used in brick and mortar stores can be carried through to digital stores (Chapter 3: Section 3.6.2) (LF216). A further strong correlation was found to exist between traditional auditory stimuli and traditional visual stimuli (0.52), which can be attributed to the fact that the brain makes use of both sound and vision in unison to make associations (Chapter 3: Section 3.6) (LF199). With regards to the average monthly budget of the respondents for skincare, the statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) difference in respondents' answers, with reference to traditional auditory stimuli, was identified between

respondents who spent between R50 – R500/month (mean = 2.33) and those who spent between R1001 – R1500/month (mean = 1.86) (Chapter 6: Section 6.6.9.3) (EF294). As explained by Aidnik (2013:4), low-end or cheaper skincare products are sold in different types of stores than high-end or more expensive skincare products (Chapter 3: Section 3.2.2) (LF123). For example, low-end skincare products may be sold in grocery stores or pharmacies and high-end skincare products in speciality or brand specific stores. Each of these types of outlets signifies a different level of luxury and will therefore make use of differing auditory stimuli or music. Therefore, based on the budget that the consumer has for skincare, they are likely to shop in different outlets and would be exposed to different auditory stimuli.

Further deducible from the above-mentioned mean values, respondents of this study with a higher monthly budget for skincare were more influenced by traditional auditory stimuli (EF294) and as determined in Chapter 6: Section 6.6.8, respondents of this study who spent higher amounts per month on skincare were, in general, of an older age group (EF163). This may be linked to the fact that older consumers rely more on traditional or in-store shopping than on online shopping (Chapter 3: Section 3.4) (LF140) and would therefore be more exposed to traditional sensory stimuli. This result may also be linked to the fact skincare brands often do not have their own physical store, but rather occupy a space within a chain store or retail outlet (Aidnik 2013:4; Roberts 2022; Statista 2022b) (Chapter 3: Section 3.2.2) (LF123) and therefore, the auditory stimuli provided are not brand specific and would vary based on the store visited. Furthermore, consumers would shop at different outlets, based on their budget (Aidnik 2013:4; Zulqarnain et al 2015:1167) (Chapter 3: Section 3.2.2) (LF123), which may explain the difference in opinions observed between respondents who had higher monthly budgets for skincare and those who had smaller budgets (EF292 & EF294).

With regards to the frequency with which respondents purchase skincare products in-store, the statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) difference in respondents' answers, with reference to traditional auditory stimuli, was with respondents who purchased skincare products in-store frequently (Chapter 6:

Section 6.6.9.4) (EF347). Bartholme and Melewar (2016:420), Cowen-Elstner (2018:28), Foroudi and Palazzo (2019:136), Galande (2019:48), Hulten (107:6), PH Media (2021), Pogorzelski (2018:86) and Shanthi et al (2019:205) posit that auditory stimuli have been proven to be a powerful marketing tool that brands can use to shape buying decision and brand preference (Chapter 3: Section 3.6) (LF194). In this study, it was found that all respondents agreed that traditional auditory stimuli had a positive influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products in-store (EF348). Therefore, it can be concluded that with specific reference to the skincare industry, auditory stimuli can be used by brands to shape consumer decision making. However, this consensus is considerably lower than observed for other sub-variables of this study, which implies that respondents felt less strongly about traditional auditory stimuli.

(a)   Hypothesis linked to traditional auditory stimuli

The following hypothesis is linked to traditional auditory stimuli (Chapter 4: Table 4.1):

H_{1b}: There is a significant relationship between traditional auditory sensory strategies and brand loyalty. From the full Primary Model constructed in Section 6.6.4.3: Table 6.25, there was no significant ($p < 0.05$) relationship between traditional auditory stimuli and brand loyalty (EF133), where $p = 0.21$ (Table 6.25).

Hypothesis H_{1b} is rejected (EF136)

(b)   Implications of the influence of traditional auditory stimuli on brand loyalty

It is accepted that sound influences how an individual perceives an environment and has a powerful effect on an individual's emotions and moods, making it a powerful marketing tool that brands can use to shape buying decision and brand preference, both in-store and online. Traditional auditory

stimuli have further been used to aid in creating memorable brand experiences. However, throughout this study respondents indicated that they felt the least positively influenced by auditory stimuli when shopping for skincare products and it was determined that only a very weak relationship exists between traditional auditory stimuli and consumer brand loyalty.

(c)   Recommendations and practical implications for businesses operating in the skincare industry

RE$_2$: It is recommended that skincare brands should utilise auditory stimuli in-stores to form multi-sensory experiences, rather than rely solely on the use of auditory stimuli to yield brand loyalty.

Skincare brands should realise that unless their product is being sold at a brand specific outlet, they have little to no control over the auditory stimuli that consumers will be exposed to while shopping for their products. Should a product be sold via brand specific outlets, then the brand can adjust the auditory stimuli of the store to match their target audience, such as in terms of type, volume and tempo of music played in the store. However, as this is rarely the case, it is advisable that skincare brands acknowledge that, while auditory stimuli are useful in the creation of multi-sensory experiences for consumers who shop in-store, they should place larger focus on other avenues of sensory marketing, such as sight, smell and touch or feel.

7.4.4.3 Main empirical and literature results relating to the influence of traditional olfactory stimuli on brand loyalty

The results that relate to the influence of traditional olfactory stimuli (Chapter 6: Table 6.5) indicate that, in general, respondents were in a high level of agreement towards the fact that the factors constituting traditional olfactory stimuli had a positive influence on their experience, which implies that all factors represent desirable sensory branding strategies for consumers who shop in-store for skincare products (EF27). This result proves the claim made by Cowen-Elstner (2018:30), Foroudi and Palazzo (2019:137) and Hulten

(2017:7), along with Pogorzelski (2018:86), Suarez and Gumiel (2014:268), Vega-Gomez et al (2020:2) and Walsh (2020), that olfactory stimuli in branding relate to both the fragrance of the product itself and to those fragrances that constitute the ambiance of the store where it is sold (Chapter 3: Section 3.7) (LF225).

Respondents of this study indicated that olfactory stimuli constituting ambient fragrances had a positive influence on their experience (Chapter 6: Table 6.5) (EF29), which is in line with the claim that a pleasurable fragrance can have an influence on the recall of an experience, as well as on other consumer behaviour (Cao & Duong 2021:134; Cowen-Elstner 2018:30; Foroudi & Palazzo 2019:137; Hulten 2017:7; Randhir et al 2016:280; Sliburyte & Vaitieke 2019:102; Srinivau et al 2021:12553; Suarez & Gumiel 2014:269; Vega-Gomez et al 2020:2) (Chapter 3: Section 3.7) (LF226 – LF229). Another major olfactory strategy, according to Hulten (2020:121), is the fragrance worn by the staff of an establishment, as this will contribute towards the ambient fragrance of the store (Chapter 3: Section 3.7.1) (LF241), which is validated by the fact that most respondents of this study agreed that their in-store shopping experience was influenced by the fragrance worn by the staff members (EF241). The following are the main conclusions relating to traditional auditory stimuli as a result of the inferential statistics conducted.

In Chapter 6: Table 6.25, it was found that a significant ($p < 0.10$) relationship existed between traditional olfactory stimuli and brand loyalty ($p < 0.10$) (EF130). This result was linked to the fact that with specific reference to the skincare industry, fragrance is a key factor in the consumer decision-making process (Singh 2020) (Chapter 3: Section 3.2.2) (LF126). This literature finding may also explain the strong correlation that exists between traditional olfactory stimuli and digital olfactory stimuli (0.58) (Chapter 6: Table 6.26), as consumers are no less demanding of brands online than they are in-store with reference to sensory branding (Sarathy 2020) (Chapter 3: Section 3.4) (LF143).

Additionally, the strong correlations that exist between traditional olfactory stimuli and traditional tactile stimuli (0.62) as well as digital tactile stimuli (0.59) (Chapter 6: Table 6.26) can be attributed to the fact that consumers will interact with a skincare product by picking it up to smell it, such as through the use of testers in retail stores (Khatib 2020; Lim 2020). Furthermore, to deliver tactile stimuli online, marketers make use of descriptive words to draw on consumer associations (Yoganathan et al 2019:388) (Chapter 3: Section 3.8.2) (LF267), which may explain why these two factors would correlate. Moreover, a strong correlation was found between traditional olfactory stimuli and traditional visual stimuli (0.65). This can again be linked to the fact that consumers are drawn to a product based on the product packaging, both aesthetics and text (Štěchová 2017:14), and will choose to interact with it further (Ali & Ahmed 2019:118; Galande 2019:48; Hulten 2020:137; 2017:8; Wala et al 2019:114) (Chapter 3: Section 3.8 & Section 3.5.1) (LF176, LF180 & LF251).

The results of the study indicated that there was a medium practically significant (d ≤ 0.5) difference between answers from males and females, regarding traditional olfactory stimuli (d = 0.65) (Chapter 6: Table 6.28) (EF173), which was attributed to the fact that consumer perceptions of sensory stimuli are guided by their own personal context, such as their gender (Uddin 2011:13) (Chapter 3: Section 3.5) (LF158). Additionally, in Chapter 6; Section 6.6.9.2, with regards to the age of respondents, the statistically significant (p < 0.05) difference in respondents' answers, with reference to traditional olfactory stimuli, is mainly with the respondents who are between the ages of 45 and 54 years (EF233). It was further deduced that respondents aged 45 – 54 years felt most strongly that traditional olfactory stimuli had a positive influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products in-store (EF234). This group of respondents constitute "GenX" who are known to predominantly shop in-store (Kovacevic 2022) (Chapter 3: Section 3.3) (LF140) and therefore may be more influenced by traditional sensory stimuli than those respondents who shop mostly online (EF235).

With regards to the average monthly budget of the respondents for skincare, the statistically significant (p < 0.05) difference in respondents' answers, with reference to traditional olfactory stimuli, was only with respondents who had a budget of R1001 – R1500/month (Chapter 6: Table 6.36) (EF298). Moreover, it was concluded from the mean values presented in Table 6.34, that this group of respondents felt the most strongly about the influence that traditional olfactory stimuli had on their experience of shopping for skincare products in-store (EF299) and that they are, in general, older consumers (Section 6.6.8) (EF163). Therefore, the GenX respondents may be more influenced by traditional sensory stimuli as they shop more frequently in-store (Kovacevic 2022) (Chapter 3: Section 3.3) (LF140) and might be exposed to ambient fragrances as well as the fragrance of the physical product, which could explain why they have a stronger level of agreement towards the fact that traditional olfactory stimuli have a positive influence on their experience.

(a)   Hypothesis linked to traditional olfactory stimuli

The following hypothesis is linked to traditional olfactory stimuli (Chapter 4: Table 4.1):

H_{1c}: There is a significant relationship between traditional olfactory sensory strategies and brand loyalty. From the full Primary Model constructed in Section 6.6.4.3: Table 6.25, there was a significant p < 0.10) relationship between traditional olfactory stimuli and brand loyalty (p = 0.10) (Table 6.25) (EF130). However, the relationship is relatively weak, as determined by a standardized regression weight estimate of 0.10 (Table 6.25).

Hypothesis H_{1c} is supported (EF137)

(b)   Implications of the influence of traditional olfactory stimuli on brand
          loyalty

The sense of smell has been identified as the most sensitive of the five human senses. Furthermore, olfactory stimuli in branding relate to both the fragrance

of the product itself as well as the ambient fragrance of a store, the power of which lies in its longevity in the mind of an individual. This has been attributed to fragrances' influence on an individual's cognitive processes and emotional responses, as well as on their behaviour. Olfactory stimuli have been used to create memorable brand experiences, and are especially relevant in the skincare industry.

(c)   Recommendations and practical implications for businesses operating in the skincare industry

RE$_3$: Skincare brand managers should be aware of the impact that fragrance can have on consumer brand loyalty, with reference to both ambient fragrance as well as the fragrance of the product itself. Furthermore, brand managers should ensure that they completely understand their target audience prior to formulating the fragrance of a product or placing it in a retail store.

As most skincare products are sold via retail outlets, skincare brands have very little to no control over the ambient fragrance of the store itself. Therefore, they should rather focus on the fragrance of the product itself. Skincare brands whose products are sold in high-end stores could provide a sample product, allowing consumers to smell the product prior to purchasing it, while those sold in lower-end outlets could provide fragrance strips where their product is being displayed, as this would be a cheaper option than full-size samples.

7.4.4.4 Main empirical and literature results relating to the influence of traditional tactile stimuli on brand loyalty

The descriptive results that relate to the influence of traditional tactile stimuli (Chapter 6: Table 6.6) indicate that, in general, respondents were in a high level of agreement that the factors constituting traditional tactile stimuli had a positive influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products in-store, implying that all factors represent desirable sensory branding strategies for consumers who shop in-store for skincare products (EF32). This result validates Cowen-Elstner (2018:26), Foroudi and Foroudi (2021:244), Foroudi

and Palazzo (2019:138) and Hulten (2020:138; 2017:8), as well as Iosifyan and Korolkova (2019:81), who opine that haptics allow brands to enhance positive emotional responses thereby influencing purchasing behaviour (Chapter 3: Section 3.8) (LF256).

From this study it was deduced that both diagnostic and non-diagnostic cues play a role in the experience of shopping for skincare products in-store (EF32). This conclusion supports Foroudi and Foroudi (2021:244) and Foroudi and Palazzo (2019:138), along with Stach (2018:321), who state that tactile stimulus comprises of both diagnostic and non-diagnostic cues (Chapter 3: Section 3.8) (LF253). It was, however, noted that respondents signified a stronger opinion regarding the fact that diagnostic cues had an influence on their experience than non-diagnostic cues (EF33). This could be linked to the fact that consumers make use of touch to evaluate the quality of a product and that touch is associated with valuation and ownership of a product (Cowen-Elstner 2018:25; Hoang & Tuckova 2020:1286; Hulten 2020:136; 2017:8; Peck 2020; Perry 2017; Pogorzelski 2018:88; Shanthi et al 2019:206; Stach 2018:320; Suarez & Gumiel 2014:269) (Chapter 3: Section 3.8) (LF249 & LF250). The following are the main conclusions relating to traditional tactile stimuli as a result of the inferential statistics calculated.

From the Primary Model constructed in Chapter 6: Table 6.25, it was deduced that traditional tactile stimuli ($p < 0.01$) had a significant ($p < 0.05$) relationship with brand loyalty (EF128). This result was linked to the fact that haptics have been identified as one of the principal sources of stimuli for consumers and are linked to ownership and valuation of a product (Foroudi & Palazzo 2019:137; Hulten 2020:138; Pramudya & Seo 2019:2) (Chapter 3: Section 3.8) (LF250). Additionally, touch is especially relevant to brands who sell physical products, such as skincare products (Hulten 2020:138; Pogorzelski 2018:88; Randhir et al 2016:281; Shanthi et al 2019:206; Stach 2018:320; Suarez & Gumiel 2014:269; Wala et al 2019:114) (Chapter 3: Section 3.8) (LF248), which could explain why tactile stimuli were identified as the most significant sub-variable of this study.

Furthermore, in Chapter 6: Table 6.26, it was found that a strong correlation existed between traditional tactile stimuli and digital tactile stimuli (0.70) and, as determined in Chapter 3: Section 3.8.2, marketers make use of descriptive language and images (LF267) as well as the other human senses (LF269) to stimulate deep rooted associations that people have in their memory, thereby communicating the feel of a product (Yoganathan et al 2019:388). Furthermore, a strategy that brands make use of is to offer the option to have the item delivered and then returned within a certain amount of time (Hulten 2020:147; Peck 2020) (LF268). However, the phenomenon still exists where consumers evaluate brands in brick and mortar stores and then actually purchase the item online where it may be cheaper (Skrovan 2017) (LF258). These literature findings may explain the strong correlation that exists between traditional and digital tactile stimuli.

Moreover, it was determined that strong correlations exist between traditional tactile stimuli and traditional visual stimuli (0.60), as well as digital visual stimuli (0.66) (Chapter 6: Table 6.26). Once again, the relationship that exists between these sub-variables can be attributed to the fact that tactile sensory stimuli work in close collaboration with sight to create multi-sensory experiences (Ali & Ahmed 2019:118; Galande 2019:48; Hulten 2020:137; 2017:8; Wala et al 2019:114) (LF251) (Chapter 3: Section3.8). The strong correlation between traditional tactile stimuli and traditional visual stimuli could also be linked to the fact that when evaluating a skincare product, a consumer will be drawn to it based on visual stimuli and then proceed to pick it up or interact with it to gain further information, such as ingredient lists and how the product feels or smells (Ali & Ahmed 2019:118; Galande 2019:48; Hulten 2020:137; 2017:8; Wala et al 2019:114) (Chapter 3: Section 3.8) (LF251), often through the use of testers (Khatib 2020; Lim 2020). This literature could also explain the strong correlation that exists between traditional tactile stimuli and traditional olfactory stimuli (0.62) (Chapter 6: Table 6.26). It may be of interest that during the COVID-19 pandemic, the use of testers or samples was banned (Koenig 2020), and since the sense of touch and smell is so essential in the sale of skincare products in-store, this could have an influence on shopping behaviour.

The results of the study indicated that there was a large practically significant (d ≤ 0.8) difference in answers between males and females regarding traditional tactile stimuli (d = 0.84) (Chapter 6: Table 6.28) (EF171), which was attributed to the fact that consumer perceptions of sensory stimuli are guided by their own personal context, such as their gender (Uddin 2011:13) (Chapter 3: Section 3.5) (LF158). Additionally, in Chapter 6: Table 6.33, with regards to the age of respondents, the statistically significant (p < 0.05) difference in respondents' answers, with reference to traditional tactile stimuli, is mainly with respondents between the ages of 45 and 54 years (EF242). It was also determined that this group of respondents felt the most strongly about the positive influence that traditional tactile stimuli had on their experience of shopping for skincare products in-store (EF243) (Chapter 6: Table 6.29). In Chapter 3: Section 3.9.2, it was noted that GenX individuals have a high need for touch (NFT) when assessing products (Raushenbush 2018) (LF260), which explains the strong feelings that this group of respondents has towards traditional tactile stimuli. However, respondents who were between the ages of 18 and 24 years also indicated that they felt strongly about the positive influence that traditional tactile stimuli have on their experience (EF244) (Chapter 6: Table 6.29), which contradicts the literature that claims that this age group of consumers have little NFT (Raushenbush 2018) (Chapter 3: Section 3.4) (LF261).

With regards to the average monthly budget of the respondents for skincare, the statistically significant (p < 0.05) difference in respondents' answers, with reference to traditional tactile stimuli, was all with respondents who had a budget of R1001 – R1500/month (Chapter 6: Table 6.37) (EF305). Furthermore, of the respondents of this study, only those who had a budget of R1001 – R1500/month indicated that they felt strongly regarding the positive influence that the sub-variable had on their experience, as determined by the mean value of 1.34 (EF306) (Chapter 6: Table 6.34). Consumers will shop for cosmetics and skincare at different stores based on the budget that they have (Aidnick 2013:4) (LF123). Furthermore, as explained by Aidnick (2013:6), high-end cosmetic stores often employ trained sales associates to assist consumers as well as provide testers or samples, which is not the case for

lower-end cosmetic stores. Therefore, consumers who have a larger budget may be shopping at higher-end stores and would be exposed to more tactile stimuli than those shopping in lower-end stores.

From the literature in Chapter 3: Section 3.8, consumers use the sense of touch to evaluate the quality of a product (Cowen-Elstner 2018:25; Hoang & Tuckova 2020:1286; Hulten 2020:136; Pogorzelski 2018:88; Shanthi et al 2019:206; Stach 2018:320; Suarez & Gumiel 2014:269) (LF249). With specific reference to the skincare industry, how the product packaging, as well as the product itself, feels signifies quality to the consumer (McCormick 2014:4; Mohamed et al 2018:63; White 2020) (Chapter 3: Section 3.2.2) (LF127). Higher quality products are associated with higher prices (Upadhyaya 2017:354) (Chapter 3: Section 3.3) (LF139), and consumers expect more from products that they pay an increased amount for (Zhao et al 2021:21) (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.2.3) (LF29). This may also explain why respondents of this study who had larger monthly budgets, were more sensitive to how the physical product, or product packaging, felt.

In Chapter 6: Table 6.40, it was found that all groups of respondents agreed that traditional tactile stimuli had one of the largest influences on their experience of shopping for skincare products via brick-and-mortar stores (EF324). The importance of tactile stimuli when shopping via in-store avenues may be attributed to the fact that consumers who prefer to shop via brick-and-mortar stores are often driven by a need for touch (NFT) (Raushenbush 2018) (Chapter 3: Section 3.8.2) (LF260 & LF261). Furthermore, it has been found that tactile stimuli are especially relevant for businesses who sell physical products as consumers use this as a means to evaluate quality (Cowen-Elstner 2018:25; Hoang & Tuckova 2020:1286; Hulten 2020:136; 2017:8; Pogorzelski 2018:88; Shanthi et al 2019:206; Stach 2018:320; Suarez & Gumiel 2014:269) (Chapter 3: Section 3.8) (LF249), and as this would apply to skincare products, this may explain why all respondents of this study felt similarly regarding the influence that traditional tactile stimuli had on their experience. This result also supports the claim that the sense of touch is one

of the principal sources of stimuli for humans (Cowen-Elstner 2018:25; Hulten 2020:142; Wala et al 2019:114) (Chapter 3: Section 3.8) (LF246).

With regards to the frequency with which respondents purchase skincare products online, the statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) difference in respondents' answers, with reference to traditional tactile stimuli, was between respondents who purchased skincare products online more often and those who purchased skincare products online less often (Chapter 6: Section 6.6.9.5) (EF385). It was further determined that those respondents who seldom purchased skincare products online felt the most strongly regarding the positive influence that traditional tactile stimuli had on their experience (Chapter 6: Table 6.43). It can be assumed that respondents who seldom shop online for skincare products, are shopping mostly in-store, which could imply that they have a high level of need for touch, when compared with those respondents who shop more frequently online.

(a)   Hypothesis linked to traditional tactile stimuli

The following hypothesis is linked to traditional tactile stimuli (Chapter 4: Table 4.1):

H_{1d}: There is a significant relationship between traditional tactile sensory strategies and brand loyalty. From the full Primary Model constructed in Section 6.6.4.3: Table 6.25, there was a significant ($p < 0.05$) relationship between traditional tactile stimuli and brand loyalty (EF128), where $p < 0.01$ (Table 6.25). However, the relationship is relatively weak, as determined by a standardized regression weight estimate of 0.33 (EF129) (Table 6.25).

*Hypothesis H_{1d} is supported (*EF138)

(b)   Implications of the influence of traditional tactile stimuli on brand loyalty

Tactile stimuli are one of the principal sources of stimuli for humans and it has been found that consumers make use of touch to assess the quality of a product. Haptics, or the sense of touch, is especially relevant to brands that sell physical products, such as skincare products. With specific reference to the skincare industry, touch has close links to both sight and smell, which in unison, can be used to build consumer brand loyalty.

(c)   Recommendations and practical implications for businesses operating in the skincare industry

RE$_4$: Skincare brands should make use of tactile, visual and olfactory stimuli to create a multi-sensory experience for their target audience.

Firstly, brands should be conscious of the fact that consumers who spend more on skincare, are expecting a higher level of quality. Therefore, the product itself, as well as the product packaging, in terms of feel and aesthetics, should match the expected quality level signified by the price. It is also recommended that brands understand the connection that exists between visual stimuli and consumer interaction. Therefore, marketers should find ways to differentiate their product packaging or display features in retail outlets in such a way that is specific to their target audience, to entice the consumer to interact with the product. This can be done through providing testers for consumers or incorporating digital visual stimuli to catch their attention.

With reference to higher-end skincare brands that are being sold via cosmetic specialty and brand specific stores, the brand can provide samples or test products for consumers. Additionally, brand managers can train sales associates who can recommend their products to appropriate consumers. This could be taken even further in brand specific stores where trained personnel could give mini-treatments to consumers so they could feel the product and see the result on their skin.

The afore-mentioned recommendation would not be appropriate for lower-end skincare products that are being sold via mass retail outlets, such as pharmacies and grocery stores. It would be more beneficial for these skincare brands to focus on standing-out alongside their competitors. Therefore, it may be helpful to use traditional visual stimuli, such as brightly coloured "pop-out" tags asking the consumer to try the product or announcing the most desirable features of the product.

7.4.5 Secondary objective 4: The relationship between digital sensory branding and brand loyalty

The fourth secondary objective of the study was:

> SO$_4$: To investigate the relationship between the various digital sensory branding strategies and brand loyalty

In the sections that follow, the empirical results (EF) relate to Chapter 6 and the literature findings (LF) have reference to Chapter 2 and Chapter 3.

7.4.6 The influence of digital sensory branding on brand loyalty

As discussed in Chapter 6: Section 6.6.2.2, CFA was computed to test the measurement models relating to digital sensory branding. From the calculation of CFA for digital sensory branding, it was established that only one item, E11, was removed (EF92) and that a number of MI had to be applied (EF93 – EF97). Thereafter, it was concluded that the four-factor model (digital sensory branding) yielded a good fit (EF99), as determined by the model fit information for digital visual stimuli (CMIN = 2.90; SRMR = 0.02; CFI = 0.99; RMSEA = 0.08), auditory stimuli (CMIN = 2.89; SRMR = 0.02; CFI = 0.99; RMSEA = 0.08), olfactory stimuli (CMIN = 4.32; SRMR = 0.03; CFI = 0.98; RMSEA = 0.10) and tactile stimuli (CMIN = 4.55; SRMR = 0.03; CFI = 0.99; RMSEA = 0.11). Moreover, from the full SEM model constructed (Chapter 6: Section 6.6.3.3), it was established that there was a significant (p < 0.05) relationship between digital sensory branding (p = 0.01) and brand loyalty (EF113). The following hypothesis is linked to traditional sensory branding:

H$_2$: There is a significant relationship between digital sensory branding strategies and brand loyalty. From the SEM model constructed in Section 6.6.3.2: Table 6.19, it was found that there was a significant (p < 0.05) relationship between digital sensory branding and brand loyalty, where p = 0.01 (EF113) (Table 6.21). However, the relationship is relatively weak, as determined by a standardized regression weight estimate of 0.19 (EF114) (Table 6.21).

Hypothesis H$_2$ is supported (EF139)

The sections that follow elaborate on the main results relating to the four sub-variables that constitute the variable digital sensory branding.

7.4.6.1 Main empirical and literature results relating to the influence of digital visual stimuli on brand loyalty

From the descriptive results that relate to the influence of digital visual stimuli (Chapter 6: Table 6.7) it can be seen that, in general, respondents indicated a high level of agreement towards the fact that factors constituting digital visual stimuli had a positive influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products online, implying that all factors represent desirable sensory branding strategies for consumers who shop online for skincare products (EF37). This result validates the claim by Sarathy (2020) that consumers expect engaging sensory experiences both in-store and online (LF143) and that the use of technology influences shopping patterns and purchasing behaviour both in-store and online (Hulten 2020:9) (LF146) (Chapter 3: Section 3.4). This result, along with the result that visual stimuli are imperative to the sales of skincare products online (EF38), further supports the ideology that the digital space is placing increased worth on the use of visual stimuli, which is stipulated by Hulten (2020:59) as well as by Petit et al (2018:44) (Chapter 3: Section 3.8.2) (LF182).

Furthermore, from the results of this study it was concluded that the webmosphere created is an important consideration (EF39), which was also

found by Petit et al (2018:42) (LF149). In Chapter 6, Section 6.5.2.1, Table 6.7, it can be seen that, with regards to digital visual stimuli, respondents were in the least level of agreement towards the influence that interactive technology (item B11) had on their experience of shopping for skincare products online. This leads to the conclusion that due to the relative newness of interactive technology, consumers may have differing views regarding how this factor influences their experience of shopping for skincare products online, which may speak to the claim by Talwar et al (2020:287) that consumers often show resistance to digital innovations (LF150 & LF151). The following are the main conclusions relating to digital visual stimuli as a result of the inferential statistics calculated.

In Chapter 6: Table 6.13, it was established that respondents of this study agreed that digital visual stimuli had the most positive influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products (EF73), which could be attributed to the fact that digital visual stimuli are utilised in sensory branding both in-store and online (Hulten 2020:9) (Chapter 3: Section 3.4) (LF148). This literature also may explain the strong correlation that exists between digital visual stimuli and traditional visual stimuli (0.68) (Chapter 6: Table 6.26). Additionally, the strategies to deliver visual sensory stimuli in-store and online overlap (LF174 - LF176, LF179, LF183, LFLF185 - LF188, LF190) (Chapter 3: Section 3.5.1 & 3.5.2), which could provide a reason for the strong correlation observed.

Furthermore, a strong correlation exists between digital visual stimuli and digital olfactory stimuli (0.67). As there is no way to deliver olfactory stimuli via online platforms (LF242), marketers make use of descriptive language and images in hopes that just seeing the image or reading about the smell, will enable individuals to make the same associations as if they could physically smell the product (Alac 2017:143; Cowen-Elstner 2018:31; Hauser 2017; Hulten 2020:127) (Chapter 3: Section 3.7.2) (LF243), which could explain the correlation between the two sub-variables. Moreover, the fact that marketers draw on consumer associations with reference to how a product smells, could further explain the strong correlation that exists between digital visual stimuli

and traditional olfactory stimuli (0.57) (Chapter 6: Table 6.26). This correlation may further be attributed to the fact that digital visual stimuli are made use of in brick-and-mortar stores (Hulten 2020:9) (Chapter 3: Section 3.4) (LF146).

Finally, in Chapter 6: Table 6.26, strong correlations were evident between digital visual stimuli and digital tactile stimuli (0.79) as well as traditional tactile stimuli (0.66). In both cases, the correlations may be connected to the fact that the sense of sight is closely linked to the sense of touch (Ali & Ahmed 2019:118; Galande 2019:48; Hulten 2020:137; 2017:8; Wala et al 2019:114) (Chapter 3: Section 3.8) (LF246). Additionally, the correlation between digital visual stimuli and digital tactile stimuli may be attributed to the fact that marketers make use of images and descriptive words to try and simulate that sense of smell online (Alac 2017:143; Cowen-Elstner 2018:31; Hauser 2017; Hulten 2020:127) (Chapter 3: Section 3.7.2) (LF251).

It was further found that there was a medium practically significant (d $\leq$ 0.5) difference in answers between males and females regarding digital visual stimuli (d = 0.76) (Chapter 6: Table 6.28) (EF175), which was attributed to the fact that consumer perceptions of sensory stimuli are guided by their own personal context, such as their gender (Uddin 2011:13) (Chapter 3: Section 3.5) (LF158). Additionally, as seen in Chapter 6; Section 6.6.9.2, with regards to the age of respondents, the statistically significant (p < 0.05) difference in respondents' answers, with reference to digital visual stimuli, lies only with respondents who were between the ages of 45 and 54 years (EF225 – EF227). It was further determined from Table 6.29, that this group of respondents felt the most strongly about digital visual stimuli having a positive influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products online (EF228). This could be due to the fact that based on demographic factors, such as age, consumers are differently influenced by visual stimuli (Kim & Lee 2021:8) (Chapter 3: Section 3.5) (LF159). Another explanation to this may be that visual stimuli are the oldest and most commonly used form of sensory marketing or branding online (Griffith 2020; Petit et al 2018:42; Sarathy 2020) (Chapter 3: Section 3.4) (LF148), and so older consumers would have had more exposure to this stimulus, and therefore, place more worth on it.

With regards to the average monthly budget of the respondents for skincare, the statistically significant (p < 0.05) difference in respondents' answers, with reference to digital visual stimuli, lies only with respondents who have a monthly budget of R1001 – R1500/month (EF290). Consumers who are spending an increased amount on skincare products online may be shopping directly from the brand's website, as higher priced products are associated with higher quality prices (Upadhyaya 2017:354) (Chapter 3: Section 3.3) (LF139) and, as found by Donati (2020), 64% of consumers in the beauty industry who value quality, prefer to shop directly from a brand's website (Chapter 3: Section 3.5.1) (LF120). As skincare brands would have control over their own website, consumers may have a better online shopping experience than if they were to purchase skincare via retail outlet websites. This could be linked to the layout, design or user-friendliness of the different sites.

Additionally, as determined in Chapter 6: Section 6.8, older consumers spend an increased amount on skincare (EF163), and depending on the age of the consumer, they would appreciate stimuli differently (Uddin (2011:13) (Chapter 3: Section 3.5) (LF159). It could be that older consumers of skincare products have higher expectations of a brand and would therefore be more influenced by the various sensory stimuli provided.

(a)   Hypothesis linked to digital visual stimuli

The following hypothesis is linked to digital visual stimuli (Chapter 4: Table 4.1):

H_{2a}: There is a significant relationship between digital visual sensory strategies and brand loyalty. From the full Primary Model constructed in Section 6.6.4.3: Table 6.25, there was a significant (p < 0.10) relationship between digital visual stimuli and brand loyalty (p = 0.10) (Table 6.25) (EF131) However, the relationship is relatively weak, as determined by a standardized regression weight estimate of 0.11 (Table 6.25).

Hypothesis H2$_a$ is supported (EF140)

(b)   Implications of the influence of digital visual stimuli on brand loyalty

Visual stimuli are one of the most common forms of sensory branding utilised online and encompass the entire webmosphere associated with a brand. Digitalisation is rapidly advancing and new means to incorporate online sensory strategy are being created. However, the technology is not yet widespread and consumers are often resistant to the technology that is available to marketers. The importance of digital visual stimuli lies in the fact that it is further used to simulate other sensory stimuli online, such as the feel or smell of the product. Furthermore, the use of digital visual stimuli extends to in-store application and has a direct influence on brand loyalty.

(c)   Recommendations and practical implications for businesses operating in the skincare industry

RE$_5$: Skincare brands should incorporate digital visual stimuli both in-store and online, which is specific to their target audience, so as to avoid consumer resistance.

Skincare brands should consider the level of resistance their target audience will have to innovative technology prior to incorporating it into their sensory branding strategy. For example, a skincare brand targeted at older consumers would gain less from utilising third party technology, such as virtual reality, than those who target younger consumers. However, as indicated by the respondents of this study, skincare brands should make use of high-quality images as well as 360-degree imaging on online platforms to display their products. It is also advisable that brands embrace the benefit that visual stimuli can offer online in terms of portraying the sense of touch and smell. One way that skincare brands could do this is to make use of short "unboxing videos" where a brand ambassador receives, unpacks and gives some information on how the product smells and feels. This will not only portray the information but instil confidence for the consumers. Additionally, skincare brands could make

use of "live photos" of the product being used or of someone putting the product on their skin, which will again make it easier for consumers to imagine or visualise the feel of the product itself.

7.4.6.2 Main empirical and literature results relating to the influence of digital auditory stimuli on brand loyalty

The descriptive results that relate to the influence of digital auditory stimuli (Chapter 6: Table 6.8) indicate that, in general, respondents were in agreement regarding the influence of digital auditory stimuli on their experience of shopping for skincare products online and implies that these factors represent desirable sensory branding strategies for consumers who shop online for skincare products (EF41). This result lends support to the claim that auditory branding has the ability to shape buying decision and brand preference both in-store and online (Bartholme & Melewar 2016:420; Cowen-Elstner 2018:28; Foroudi & Palazzo 2019:136; Galande 2019:48; Hulten 107:6; PH Media 2021; Pogorzelski 2018:86; Shanthi et al 2019:205) (Chapter 3: Section 3.6) (LF194). However, there was an exception whereby respondents of this study felt that brand jingles either had no influence on their experience or were indifferent regarding how this factor influenced their experience (EF42). This may suggest that brand jingles are becoming irrelevant in the digital market space with specific reference to skincare (EF43). It can therefore be said that the results of this study contradicts the respective studies of Biswas (2016:219), Cowen-Elstner (2018:230), Foroudi and Palazzo (2019:136), Griffith (2020), Hulten (2020:93; 2017:6) and Upadhyaya (2017:357), along with Wala et al (2019:112), who found that jingles associated with a brand are a useful auditory cue (Chapter 3: Section 3.6.2) (LF213).

It was further highlighted in the results of this study that the majority of respondents agreed that video advert clips had a positive influence on their experience (Chapter 6: Table 6.8), from which the conclusion was drawn that audio and visual cues should be used simultaneously to create multi-sensory experiences for consumers (EF44). The link between auditory and visual cues

was also highlighted in the work of Cowen-Elstner (2018:29) and Hulten (2020:86), as well as Shaed et al (2015:34) (Chapter 3: Section 3.6) (LF202 & LF218). Furthermore, this conclusion was drawn from the fact that multi-sensory experiences have been proven to be the most effective use of sensory marketing or branding (Helmefalk & Berndt 2018:1081; Hulten 2020:13; Imschloss & Kuehnl 2017:931) (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.10) (LF90). The following are the main conclusions relating to digital visual stimuli as a result of the inferential statistics calculated.

Of all of the variables and sub-variables of this study, digital auditory stimuli were identified by the respondents of this study as having the least positive influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products (Chapter 6: Table 6.25). Furthermore, in Chapter 6: Table 6.26, a strong correlation exists between digital auditory stimuli and traditional auditory stimuli (0.69), which may be attributed to the fact that in many cases strategies used to implement traditional auditory stimuli in brick-and-mortar stores are also used online (Biswas 2016:219; Cowen-Elstner 2018:230; Foroudi & Palazzo 2019:136; Griffith 2020; Hulten 2020:93; 2017:6; Upadhyaya 2017:357; Wala et al 2019:112) (Chapter 3: Section 3.6.2) (LF216).

Additionally, as seen in Table 6.29 (Chapter 6: Section 6.6.9.2), while all age groups of respondents agreed that digital auditory stimuli had an influence on their experience (EF188), it was found to have the least positive influence of all the factors in this study (EF187). This was also found to be the case in Table 6.34 (Chapter 6: Section 6.6.9.3), where respondents of all budget groups agreed, in general, that digital auditory stimuli had the least positive influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products online (EF262 & LF266). It is interesting that, in general, the respondents of this study did not highlight digital auditory stimuli as important, as it is commonly used as a sensory branding tactic online (Griffith 2020; Petit et al 2018:42; Sarathy 2020) (Chapter 3: Section 3.4) (LF148).

With regards to the frequency with which respondents purchase skincare products in-store, the statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) difference in

respondents' answers, with reference to digital auditory stimuli, was between respondents who purchased skincare products in-store more often than those who purchased less often (Chapter 6: Section 6.6.9.4) (EF353). Additionally, those respondents who seldom purchased skincare products in-store were indifferent towards how this factor influenced their experience, as determined by the mean value calculated (Chapter 6: Table 6.40) (EF354). This could be linked to the fact that consumers who shop more often would be exposed to more and therefore expect more from the platforms that they shop from. It may also be due to the fact that when shopping in-store, consumers would be exposed to traditional auditory stimuli rather than digital auditory stimuli.

With regards to the frequency with which respondents purchase skincare products online, the statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) difference in respondents' answers, with reference to digital auditory stimuli, was between those respondents who indicated that they purchase skincare products online more often than those who purchase skincare products online less often (Chapter 6: Section 6.6.9.5) (EF394). In addition, from Chapter 6, Table 6.43, it was determined that consumers who shop online for skincare products more often are more strongly influenced by auditory stimuli than those who shop online for skincare products less often (EF364). As auditory stimuli are one of the primary sources of sensory branding used online (Griffith 2020; Petit et al 2018:42; Sarathy 2020) (Chapter 3: Section 3.4) (LF148), consumers who shop mostly online may be more influenced by it as there is a lack of other sensory stimuli being presented.

(a)   Hypothesis linked to digital auditory stimuli

The following hypothesis is linked to digital auditory stimuli (Chapter 4: Table 4.1):

H_{2b}: There is a significant relationship between digital auditory sensory strategies and brand loyalty. From the full Primary Model constructed in Section 6.6.4.3: Table 6.25, there was no significant ($p < 0.05$) relationship

between digital auditory stimuli and brand loyalty (EF133), where p = 0.99 (Table 6.25).

Hypothesis H$_{2b}$ is rejected (EF141)

(b)   Implications of the influence of digital auditory stimuli on brand loyalty

Auditory stimuli have commonly been used online as one of the primary means of sensory branding. However, evident from the results of this study, with reference to the skincare industry, auditory stimuli online do not have a powerful impact on consumer experience or brand loyalty.

(c)   Recommendations and practical implications for businesses operating in the skincare industry

RE$_6$: Skincare brands should incorporate auditory stimuli online but acknowledge that with specific reference to the skincare industry, digital auditory stimuli are not a powerful sensory marketing tool.

Auditory stimuli, with reference to the skincare industry, is most powerful in the form of video adverts or clips and skincare brands should therefore include these into their online sensory branding strategy. Furthermore, skincare brands can include reactive sounds to interact with their consumers online. For example, when a consumer adds an item into their basket, a celebratory tone could play. Skincare brands should also assess their target audience and realise that the consumers' age will play a role in whether or not they appreciate auditory stimuli when shopping online.

7.4.6.3 Main empirical and literature results relating to the influence of digital olfactory stimuli on brand loyalty

The descriptive results that relate to the influence of digital olfactory stimuli (Chapter 6: Table 6.9) indicate that in general, respondents were in agreement

that these factors had a positive influence on the experience of shopping for skincare online (EF47). This would then imply that these factors, constituting digital olfactory stimuli, represent desirable sensory branding strategies for consumers who shop online for skincare products (EF48). One factor which less respondents agreed was influential on their experience of shopping for skincare online was the use of scratch-and-sniff cards (item D7) (EF49). From this result it was deduced that the divide in respondents' answers regarding the use of scratch-and-sniff cards could be attributed to the fact that some consumers may not have been exposed to this marketing tactic and would therefore, be indifferent towards the influence it could have on the experience of shopping for skincare products online. This deduction was supported by Hultens' (2020:128) statement that "scratch-and-sniff" cards are a relatively new sensory branding strategy (Chapter 3: Section 3.7.2) (LF244).

It was further determined in the literature review that marketers make use of imagery and descriptive words to lead consumers to make associations regarding fragrance (Alac 2017:143; Cowen-Elstner 2018:31; Hauser 2017; Hulten 2020:127) (Chapter 3: Section 3.7.2) (LF243). This was affirmed by the result of this study, where the majority of respondents indicated that descriptive language and imagery association (EF50) had a positive influence on their experience. Additionally, Ranasinghe et al (2018), along with Petit et al (2019:53), explain that new technology is being created to deliver olfactory stimuli via the internet (Chapter 3: Section 3.7.2) (LF245) and the majority of respondents in this study indicated that they felt that virtual reality technology and third-party technology devices (EF51) had a positive influence on their experience. The following are the main conclusions relating to digital visual stimuli as a result of the inferential statistics conducted.

In Chapter 6, Table 6.25, it was determined that a significant ($p < 0.10$) relationship exists between digital olfactory stimuli and brand loyalty ($p < 0.08$) (EF1432), which was attributed to the fact that fragrance is a key factor in the decision on which product to purchase, with specific reference to the skincare industry (Singh 2020) (Chapter 3: Section 3.2.2) (LF126). Furthermore, in Chapter 6: Table 6.26, it was concluded that a strong correlation exists

between digital olfactory stimuli and traditional olfactory stimuli (0.58), which may be linked to the fact that online, marketers attempt to get consumers to make the same associations, through the use of images, as if they could physically smell the product (Alac 2017:143; Cowen-Elstner 2018:31; Hauser 2017; Hulten 2020:127) (Chapter 3: Section 3.7.2) (LF243). Additionally, strong correlations exist between digital olfactory stimuli and digital tactile stimuli (0.72) as well as digital visual stimuli (0.67) (Chapter 6: Table 6.26). With reference to the correlation between digital olfactory stimuli and digital tactile stimuli, in both cases, marketers make use of descriptive language and high-quality images as strategies online (Alac 2017:143; Cowen-Elstner 2018:31; Hauser 2017; Hulten 2020:127; Yoganathan et al 2019:388) (Chapter 3: Section 3.7.2 & Section 3.8.2) (LF243 & LF267). Moreover, the fact that marketers make use of high-quality images in an attempt to provide online shoppers with olfactory stimuli may explain the strong correlation between digital olfactory stimuli and digital visual stimuli (Hulten 2020:59; Petit et al 2018:44) (Chapter 3: Section 3.5.2) (LF183).

Finally, the strong correlation that exists between digital olfactory stimuli and digital auditory stimuli (0.51) (Chapter 6: Table 6.26), could be linked to the fact that brands make use of video adverts online (Hulten 2020:99) (Chapter 3: Section 3.6.2) (LF218) that would have sound and allow consumers to imagine what the smell of a product is. It was further found that there was a medium practically significant ($d \leq 0.5$) difference in answers between males and females regarding digital olfactory stimuli ($d = 0.50$) (Chapter 6: Table 6.29) (EF176), which was attributed to the fact that consumer perceptions of sensory stimuli are guided by their own personal context, such as their gender (Uddin 2011:13) (Chapter 3: Section 3.5) (LF158).

Additionally, in Chapter 6: Section 6.6.9.2, with regards to the age of respondents, the statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) difference in respondents' answers, with reference to digital olfactory stimuli, was with respondents aged 18 – 24 years (mean = 1.65, Table 6.29) and those between the ages of 55 and 60 years (mean = 2.05, Table 6.29) (EF2336). The mean values provided imply that younger respondents felt more strongly than the older respondents

that digital olfactory stimuli had a positive influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products online (EF237). With reference to digital olfactory stimuli, two items in the questionnaire related to the use of virtual reality (item D9) and third-party technology (item D10) to convey olfactory stimuli online. The fact that younger shoppers are known to be more accepting of new technology than older consumers (Vaportzis et al 2017:2) (Chapter 3: Section 3.4) (LF151) may explain the difference in opinions. Additionally, younger consumers are known to shop more frequently online (Kovacevic 2022) (Chapter 3: Section 3.3) (LF140), and may therefore be more influenced by digital olfactory stimuli.

With regards to the frequency with which respondents purchase skincare products in-store, the statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) difference in respondents' answers, with reference to digital olfactory stimuli, was between respondents who purchased skincare products in-store more often and those who purchased skincare products in-store less often (Chapter 6: Section 6.6.9.4) (EF350). This may be linked to the fact that consumers who place high value on the sense of smell, may prefer to shop in-store for a physical product, such as for skincare products, which would explain why respondents who shop in-store more often felt more strongly regarding olfactory stimuli.

(a)   Hypothesis linked to digital olfactory stimuli

The following hypothesis is linked to digital olfactory stimuli (Chapter 4: Table 4.1):

H_{2c}: There is a significant relationship between digital olfactory sensory strategies and brand loyalty. From the full Primary Model constructed in Section 6.6.4.3: Table 6.25, there was a significant ($p < 0.10$) relationship between digital olfactory stimuli and brand loyalty ($p = 0.08$) (Table 6.25) (EF132). However, the relationship is relatively weak, as determined by a standardized regression weight estimate of 0.11 (Table 6.25).

Hypothesis H_{2c} is supported (EF142)

(b)   Implications of the influence of digital olfactory stimuli on brand loyalty

Fragrance is especially important with regards to the skincare industry and consumers are no less demanding of brands online than they are in-store. Furthermore, delivering olfactory stimuli online can help a brand in building brand loyalty and while currently there are no direct substitutes for physical smell online, there are strategies that marketers can utilise to aid consumers in imagining a smell.

(c)   Recommendations and practical implications for businesses operating in the skincare industry

RE$_7$: Skincare brands should implement strategies to aid consumers imagine what their products smell like online.

To get consumers to imagine the fragrance of a product, brands can make use of brand ambassador video clips whereby they explain the fragrance of the product. This will not only deliver olfactory stimuli but provide confidence for the consumer towards the brand and product. Additionally, further than just using descriptive language to describe the fragrance of the product, skincare brands could include icons or images of what it smells like. For example, should the product have rose in the fragrance, an animated image of a rose could be inserted. It may also be helpful for skincare brands to make use of "scratch-and-sniff" cards that are linked to certain products via URL links or scannable QR codes, which would be distributed in-store or via magazines. The consumer could then look the product up online, scratch the card, and be able to physically smell the product while viewing it.

7.4.6.4 Main empirical and literature results relating to the influence of digital tactile stimuli on brand loyalty

The descriptive results that relate to the influence of digital tactile stimuli (Chapter 6: Table 6.10) indicate that, in general, respondents were in

agreement that the factors relating to digital tactile stimuli had a positive influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products online (EF55). Moreover, it can be concluded then that these factors represent desirable sensory branding strategies for consumers who shop online for skincare products (EF56). However, in item E11, the majority of responses were indicative of an indifferent response to the influence of interactive technology on the experience of shopping for skincare products online (EF57). The divide seen in the respondents' answers could be attributed to the fact that interactive technology is still relatively new and no yet widespread or cost effective (Olsson 2015:18; Petit et al 2018:51) (Chapter 3: Section 3.8.2) (LF272). It was also determined by the results of this study that respondents felt that high quality images and descriptive language (Table 6.10: Item E7 & E8) had a positive influence on their experience of shopping online for skincare products, which was also postulated by Yoganathan et al (2019:388) (Chapter 3: Section 3.8.2) (LF267).

From the review of the literature, it was highlighted that an effective strategy that businesses use to overcome the challenge of a lack of touch, is the option to have the item delivered, and then returned within a certain amount of time should the consumer not be satisfied (Hulten 2020:147; Peck 2020) (Chapter 3: Section 3.8.2) (LF268). This strategy was also identified by the majority of respondents in this study as having a positive influence on their experience (Table 6.10: item E9). The following are the main conclusions relating to digital tactile stimuli as a result of the inferential statistics calculated.

In Chapter 6, Table 6.25, it was established that digital tactile stimuli had a significant ($p < 0.05$) relationship with brand loyalty ($p < 0.01$) (EF128). This may be attributed to the fact that touch is one of the principal sources of stimuli (Foroudi & Palazzo 2019:137; Hulten 2020:138; Pramudya & Seo 2019:2) (LF246) and is linked to ownership and valuation of a product (Cowen-Elstner 2018:25; Hulten 2017:8; Peck 2020; Perry 2017; Suarez & Gumiel 2014:269) (LF250) (Chapter 3: Section 3.8). It can therefore be deduced that consumers are seeking tactile stimuli even when shopping online, solidifying the literature that posits that the lack of tactile stimuli online is a challenge for brands with

physical touch-related products (Hulten 2020:137; Yoganathan et al 2019:388) (Chapter 3: Section 3.8.2) (LF248 & LF252).

Furthermore, in Chapter 6, Table 6.26, it was found that a strong correlation exists between digital tactile stimuli and traditional tactile stimuli (0.70). From the literature, there may be two possible explanations for this strong correlation. Firstly, in an attempt to overcome the challenge of a lack of tactile stimuli online, marketers make use of visual aids to help consumers envisage how the actual product may feel (Yoganathan et al 2019:388) (Chapter 3: Section 3.8.2) (LF267 & LF269), and secondly, brands often offer the option to have the item delivered and then returned within a certain amount of time (Hulten 2020:147; Peck 2020) (Chapter 3: Section 3.8.2) (LF268). An additional strong correlation was found to exist between digital tactile stimuli and digital visual stimuli (0.79), which is supported by the fact that the sense of sight is closely linked to the sense of touch (Ali & Ahmed 2019:118; Galande 2019:48; Hulten 2020:137; 2017:8; Wala et al 2019:114) (Chapter 3: Section 3.8) (LF251), and could be connected to the fact that marketers make use of images and descriptive words to try and simulate that sense of smell online (Alac 2017:143; Cowen-Elstner 2018:31; Hauser 2017; Hulten 2020:127) (Chapter 3: Section 3.7.2) (LF243). The results mentioned above that touch works in close collaboration with sight may also explain the strong correlation that exists between digital tactile stimuli and traditional visual stimuli (0.58) (Chapter 6: Table 6.26).

Finally, a strong correlation was found to exist between digital tactile stimuli and digital olfactory stimuli (0.72). With reference to both digital tactile stimuli and digital olfactory stimuli, marketers make use of descriptive language and high-quality images as strategies online (Alac 2017:143; Cowen-Elstner 2018:31; Hauser 2017; Hulten 2020:127; Yoganathan et al 2019:388) (Chapter 3: Section 3.7.2 & Section 3.8.2) (LF243 & LF267), which may explain the correlation that exists between the two sub-variables.

It was further found that there was a medium practically significant (d ≤ 0.5) difference in answers between males and females regarding digital tactile

stimuli (d = 0.68) (Chapter 6: Table 6.28) (EF177), which was attributed to the fact that consumer perceptions of sensory stimuli are guided by their own personal context, such as their gender (Uddin 2011:13) (Chapter 3: Section 3.5) (LF158). Additionally, in Chapter 6: Section 6.6.9.2, with regards to the age of respondents, the statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) difference in respondents' answers, with reference to digital tactile stimuli, lie only with respondents who were between the ages of 18 and 24 years (EF248). It is further noteworthy that this age group of respondents felt most strongly that this factor had a positive influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products online (EF249). This could be accredited to two factors. Firstly, GenZ consumers prefer to shop via online platforms (Smith 2021) (Chapter 3: Section 3.4) (LF140). Secondly, younger consumers are more accepting of new technology (Vaportzis et al 2017:2) (Chapter 3: Section 3.4) (LF151). Therefore, these consumers would appreciate new technology that simulates touch online more so than the older respondents of this study, explaining the difference seen.

With regards to the average monthly budget of the respondents for skincare, the statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) difference in respondents' answers, with reference to digital tactile stimuli, lie only with respondents who have a monthly budget of R1001 – R1500/month (Chapter 6: Section 6.6.8.3) (EF305). This group of respondents were also found to be the only group who strongly agreed that digital tactile stimuli had a positive influence on their experience (EF306). In Chapter 2: Section 2.2.2.3, it was posited that consumers' expectations, in terms of quality and service, are heightened when they spend an increased amount on a product (Zhao et al 2021:21) (LF29). Furthermore, in Chapter 3: Section 3.8, it was discussed that consumers use the sense of touch to evaluate the quality of a product (Cowen-Elstner 2018:25; Hoang & Tuckova 2020:1286; Hulten 2020:136; 2017:8; Pogorzelski 2018:88; Shanthi et al 2019:206; Stach 2018:320; Suarez & Gumiel 2014:269) (LF249). When considered in unison, these two literature findings may explain why consumers who spend more on products would be more sensitive to how the physical product or product packaging feels.

(a) Hypothesis linked to digital tactile stimuli

The following hypothesis is linked to digital tactile stimuli (Chapter 4: Table 4.1):

H_{2d}: There is a significant relationship between digital tactile sensory strategies and brand loyalty. From the full Primary Model constructed in Section 6.6.4.3, Table 6.25, there was a significant ($p < 0.05$) relationship between digital tactile stimuli and brand loyalty ($p < 0.01$) (Table 6.25) (EF128). However, the relationship is relatively weak, as determined by a standardized regression weight estimate of 0.24 (EF129) (Table 6.25).

Hypothesis H_{2d} is supported (EF143)

(b) Implications of the influence of digital tactile stimuli on brand loyalty

The sense of touch is especially relevant to brands who sell physical products, which presents a challenge to marketers when selling via online channels or e-commerce. While there are strategies to simulate the sense of touch online, there is no equivalent replacement. Therefore, brands need to find innovative ways to get consumers to envision what a product may feel like when shopping online as this has a direct relationship with consumer brand loyalty

(c) Recommendations and practical implications for businesses operating in the skincare industry

RE_8: Skincare brands should realise that consumers are no less demanding with reference to the sense of touch when shopping online, and they therefore need to implement strategies which are suited to their target audience to simulate physical touch.

Prior to implementing digital tactile sensory branding, the skincare brands need to establish the age group of their target audience, as this will influence how accepting the consumer will be of innovative technology. For example,

making use of interactive software may be wasteful when engaging with older consumers. It is also apparent that the ability to return the product is important to consumers who shop online. However, in the case of skincare, returns would not be viable as once the product has been opened it cannot be resold. Therefore, skincare brands could alternately offer a "30-day money back guarantee" should there be something faulty with the product or should it not do what it claims to.

Additionally, further than the common use of high-quality images and descriptive words to portray the feel of a product, unboxing videos could be used, where a brand ambassador or spokesperson describes the feel of the product as well as the packaging. It may also be helpful to make use of Gifs, showing the product being pumped or poured out onto the hand of a user, which would be accompanied by a description of the feeling thereof, as this will also aid the consumer in imagining the feel of the product when shopping online. Furthermore, to entice new consumers to try the products, affordable sample packs could be offered, which could be created based on skin type, age or gender. This would enable the consumer to test the product without being wary of over spending on a skincare product that they have not tried before.

Finally, brands can offer consumers the option to amortise their order over a period of months through the use of Payflex. PayFlex allows consumers to pay for their order over a number of months, rather than paying a lump sum, which they may not have all at once. This system does not cost the consumer any extra and does not put the brand in debt as they receive their money upfront.

7.4.7 Secondary objective 5: Consumer brand loyalty

The fifth secondary objective of the study was:

SO_5: To investigate consumer brand loyalty in the skincare industry

In the sections that follow, the empirical results (EF) relate to Chapter 6 and the literature findings (LF) have reference to Chapter 2 and Chapter 3.

The descriptive results that relate to brand loyalty (Chapter 6: Table 6.11) indicate that, in general, respondents were in agreement regarding the statements relating to brand loyalty (EF62). More specifically, more than half of the respondents agreed that they would continue to purchase a skincare's brands product should they increase the price, which lends support to the literature finding of Gerstell et al (2020:5) that skincare is considered an affordable luxury (Chapter 3: Section 3.2.1) (LF111). However, a substantial number of respondents reported that they were either indifferent towards, or disagreed with, the fact that they would continue to purchase a product should the price increase (EF63). This result would indicate that these respondents are price sensitive, which could be linked to the age of the respondents (see section 6.6.8), whereby older consumers are willing, or can afford, to spend more per month on their skincare products (EF163).

The results of this study indicated that respondents were in a high level of agreement regarding spreading word-of mouth (EF66) as well as making references to other people (EF67). These results affirm the literature findings of Alexandra and Cerchia (2018:423), Foroudi et al (2018:10), Giovanis and Anthanasopoulou (2016:2), Haung et al (2018:2132), Saif et al (2018:67) as well as Tartaglione et al (2019:1), who state that increased brand loyalty results in the generation of positive word of mouth (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.2.4) (LF35).

From the literature review conducted, it was determined that technology is advancing at an exponential rate (Pathan 2018:189; Ricker & Thatcher 2017:368) and that individuals are spending more and more time online (Deyan 2021; Koetsier 2020) (Chapter 3: Section 3.4). However, there is a lack of sensory branding being implemented online (Kaushik & Gokhale 2021:5377; Petit et al 2018:42) (Chapter 3: Section 3.4) (LF142). This is in-line with the conclusion of this study that consumers are seeking experiences (EF69), however brands may not be fully utilising experiences to differentiate

themselves in the market (EF71). Finally, it was concluded from this study that tangible and functional aspects of the product, such as quality, are influences of overall brand loyalty (EF72), which has likewise been found by Keller (2013:187), Kotler and Armstrong (2010:243) and Narteh (2018:384) (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.2.3) (LF30). The following are the main conclusions relating to brand loyalty as a result of the inferential statistics calculated.

It was found that there was a small practically significant ($d \leq 0.2$) difference in answers between males and females regarding brand loyalty ($d = 0.34$) (Chapter 6: Table 6.28) (EF180). Further reflected in Table 6.28, female respondents of this study indicated a slightly more positive response towards brand loyalty when compared with their male counterparts (EF169). This result validates the statement that females have been found to be more likely to be loyal to a brand than men (Melnyk et al 2009:83; Ndubisi 200:50) (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.2.4) (LF42).

Additionally, in Chapter 6: Table 6.31, with regards to the age of respondents, the statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) difference in respondents' answers, with reference to brand loyalty, is mainly with those who are between the ages of 55 and 60 years (EF211). It is also interesting that this group of respondents were more positive towards brand loyalty (Chapter 6: Table 6.29). This difference could be accredited to the literature finding showing that older consumers are, in general, more brand loyal (McDougall 2015) (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.2.4) (LF43).

With regards to the average monthly budget of the respondents for skincare products, the statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) difference in respondents' answers, with reference to brand loyalty, was between respondents who have a smaller monthly budget for skincare products and those who had a larger monthly budget for skincare products (Chapter 6: Table 6.38) (EF311). It is also apparent from Table 6.34 that respondents who have a monthly budget of R1001+ are, in general, more loyal to their preferred brand (EF312), while respondents who had a smaller budget were, in general, indifferent towards brand loyalty (EF313). In Chapter 6: Table 6.11, it was indicated that, in

general, respondents were indifferent regarding whether they would continue to purchase a product should the price thereof increase (EF63). This was the only item in the section towards which respondents were indifferent, which could explain why consumers who have a higher monthly budget for skincare presented a higher level of brand loyalty (EF314). Additionally, the fact that respondents who spent more on skincare per month were more loyal to a brand than those who spent less, as well as the results in Table 6.11, could be linked to the difference between attitudinal and behavioral loyalty (Beig & Nika 2019:5) (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.2.4) (LF32 & LF33).

Furthermore, in Chapter 2: Section 2.2.2.4, it is discussed that a predominant reason for brands wanting to build loyal consumers is that they are less price sensitive (Alexandra & Cerchia 2018:423; Foroudi et al 2018:10; Giovanis & Anthanasopoulou 2016:2; Haung et al 2018:2132; Saif et al 2018:67; Tartaglione et al 2019:1) (LF36), which is validated by the above empirical results. Finally, it is known that the level of brand loyalty shown by a consumer is influenced by their age (Klopotan et al 2014:488; McDougall 2015) (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.2.4) (LF43) and as seen in Chapter 6: Section 6.6.8, in general, respondents who had larger budgets for skincare were mostly in the older age categories. Therefore, it can be deduced that with specific reference to the skincare industry, older consumers are more likely to be loyal to a brand (EF315).

With regards to the frequency with which respondents purchase skincare products in-store, the statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) difference in respondents' answers, with reference to brand loyalty, was between respondents who purchased skincare products in-store more often and those who purchased less often, where respondents who purchased very often felt more strongly regarding brand loyalty (Chapter 6: Section 6.6.9.4) (EF359). This could be linked to the fact that loyal customers have been found to purchase from a brand more regularly (Peek 2022) (Chapter 2: Section 2.2.2.4) (LF39).

With regard to the frequency with which respondents purchase skincare products online, the statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) difference in respondents' answers, with reference to brand loyalty, was between respondents who purchased skincare products online more often than those who purchase skincare products online less often (Chapter 6: Section 6.6.9.5) (EF391). Additionally, respondents of this study who purchased skincare products online very often, in general, agreed the most strongly with the statements relating to brand loyalty (Chapter 6: Table 6.43), implying that they were more loyal towards their preferred brand. In Chapter 2: Section 2.2.2.4, it was noted that consumers who are loyal to a brand will purchase more regularly (Peek 2022) (LF39), which could explain the difference in opinions between respondents who purchased skincare products online more often than those who purchase skincare products online less often.

7.5 MAIN RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF METHODOLOGICAL OBJECTIVES

To justify how the methodological objectives set in Chapter 1 (Section 1.4.3) were achieved, this section makes reference to the empirical results (EF) identified in Chapter 6, the literature findings (LF) identified throughout Chapters 2 and 3, as well as to the findings relating to the conceptual model (PTF) in Chapter 4 and research methodology findings (RMF) in Chapter 5. Reference is also made to specific sections in this chapter (Chapter 7).

7.5.1 Methodological objective 1: Literature review on the relationships between sensory branding strategies and brand experience and consequently on brand loyalty

The first methodological objective of the study was:

> MO_1: To conduct a comprehensive literature review into the relationship that exists between the various traditional and digital sensory branding strategies and brand experience, and the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty, with specific relation to skincare products

The literature findings (LF) have reference to Chapters 2 and 3.

To achieve this methodological objective, firstly a comprehensive literature review was conducted on the concept of brand experience in Chapter 2 of this study. This literature review included a brief introduction to the influence of sensory branding on brand experience as well as a discussion on brand loyalty. Finally, a link was drawn between brand experience and brand loyalty. A summary of what was discussed within Chapter 2 can be found in Section 7.2.

Following this, Chapter 3 presented a comprehensive literature review, which introduced the concepts of both traditional and digital sensory branding and then contextualised the information to the skincare industry. Furthermore, each of the four human senses relevant to this study, namely visual, auditory, olfactory and tactile stimuli, were discussed and specific strategies that can be employed were listed. A summary of what was discussed within Chapter 3 relating to specific sensory branding strategies with specific reference to the skincare industry can be found in Section 7.2.

7.5.2   Methodological objective 2: Conceptual model

The second methodological objective of the study was:

> MO$_2$: To develop a conceptual model of the identified variables' relationship with brand loyalty

The literature findings (LF) have reference to Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 as well as to the findings on the conceptual model (PFF), identified in Chapter 4. The empirical results (EF) have reference to Chapter 6.

The literature review conducted on the dependent variable of brand loyalty (Chapter 2), as well as on the independent variables, and the sub-variables thereof, namely traditional sensory branding (Chapter 3: Section 3.3), traditional visual stimuli (Chapter 3: Section 3.5.1), traditional auditory stimuli (Chapter 3: Section 3.6.1), traditional olfactory stimuli (Chapter 3: Section 3.7.1), traditional tactile stimuli (Chapter 3: Section 3.8.1), digital sensory branding (Chapter 3: Section 3.4), digital visual stimuli (Chapter 3: Section

3.5.2), digital auditory stimuli (Chapter 3: Section 3.6.2), digital olfactory stimuli (Chapter 3: Section 3.7.2) and digital tactile stimuli (Chapter 3: Section 3.8.2) were used to create a conceptual model in Chapter 5.

The independent variables pertaining to this study were traditional sensory branding (Chapter 3: Section 3.3) (PTF19) and digital sensory branding (Chapter 3: Section 3.4) (PTF20). Traditional sensory branding was selected as a variable of this study as it has been found that sensorial branding creates long-term experiences for consumers that remain in their minds well after the encounter (Foroudi & Palazzo 2019:132) (LF132; LF133) (Chapter 4: Section 4.5.1). Furthermore, consumers gravitate towards favourable brand personalities and experiences (Liegeois & Rivera 2011:16) (LF124) (Chapter 4: Section 4.5.1). Digital sensory branding was selected as a variable of this study as technology has become an important communication tool (Hulten 2020:9) (LF141) and consumers are as demanding of brands online as they are in-store, in terms of expecting engaging sensory experiences (Sarathy 2020) (LF143) (Chapter 4: Section 4.5.2). However, there is a definite lack of digital sensory strategies being employed by businesses, which can be seen as a forgone opportunity (Kaushik & Gokhale 2021:5377; Petit et al 2018:42) (LF142) (Chapter 4: Section 4.5.2). Each of the aforementioned independent variables comprised four sub-variables, namely visual, auditory, olfactory and tactile stimuli.

Visual sensory branding is the first sub-variable of this study (Chapter 4: Section 4.5.3) and was selected as research found that sight is the most commonly used sense by brands to create brand identity and awareness (Foroudi & Palazzo 2019:136; Hulten 2020:59; Pogorzelski 2018:85; Shanthi et al 2019:205) (PTF21). It is further the most seductive and noticeable sense (Biswas 2014:114; Foroudi & Palazzo 2019:136; Galande 2019:48; Hulten 2017:5; Pogorzelski 2018:85; Upadhyaya 2017:353) (PTF22) and has an influence on brand preference (PTF23), consumption quantity (PTF24) and purchasing behaviour (PTF25) (Bjerk 2015:3; Hulten 2020:58; 2017:5; Wang 2013:806). Therefore, visual sensory strategies have been found to have an influence on brand experience (PTF26).

The second sub-variable of this study is auditory sensory branding (Chapter 4: Section 4.5.4), which was selected as research determined that auditory cues have a powerful influence on an individual's emotions, moods and behaviour (Hulten 2020:87) (PTF47), allowing brands to influence a consumer's brand preference (Bartholme & Melewar 2016:420; Cowen-Elstner 2018:28; Foroudi & Palazzo 2019:136; Galande 2019:48; Hulten 107:6; PH Media 2021; Pogorzelski 2018:86; Shanthi et al 2019:205) (PTF48). Auditory cues also create long-lasting memories (PTF49), gain the attention of consumers (PTF50), increase persuasiveness (PTF51), increase sales volume (PTF52), control the pace of consumer shopping (PTF53) and create cohesive environments (PTF54) (Cowen-Elstner 2018:29; Gumiel 2014:264; Hulten 2020:86:94; 2017:6; Israel et al 2019:100232; Randhir et al 2016:280-281; Shaed et al 2015:34; Simha 2019:35; Suarez & Wollner et al 2018:3).

Olfactory sensory branding (Chapter 4: Section 4.5.5) was the third sub-variable of the study and was included as research proved that fragrances have an influence on an individual's cognitive processes, emotional responses as well as their behaviour (Cowen-Elstner 2018:30; Galande 2019:48; Hulten 2020:111; Pogorzelski 2018:87; Vega-Gomez et al 2020:2; Wala et al 2019:112) (PTF64). The sense of smell has the ability to create strong feelings of reminiscence (PTF65) and last for a long time in the minds of consumers (PTF66) (Cowen-Elstner 2018:30; Gomez et al 2020:2; Hulten 2020:110; Pogorzelski 2018:86; Randhir et al 2016:279; Shanthi et al 2019:206; Suarez & Gumiel 2014:267; Upadhyaya 2017:353; Vega-Gomez et al 2020:1). Olfactory senses further have the ability to influence consumers' recall of an experience (PTF67), the time consumers spend in a store (PTF68) and the amount they are willing to spend on a product (PTF69) (Cao & Duong 2021:134; Cowen-Elstner 2018:30; Foroudi & Palazzo 2019:137; Hulten 2017:7; Randhir et al 2016:280; Sliburyte & Vaitieke 2019:102; Srinivau et al 2021:12553; Suarez & Gumiel 2014:269; Vega-Gomez et al 2020:2).

The final sub-variable of this study was tactile sensory branding (Chapter 4: Section 4.5.6), which was selected as research found that haptics allow brands to enhance positive emotional responses and moods, thereby

influencing purchasing behaviour (PTF78) (Cowen-Elstner 2018:26; Foroudi & Foroudi 2021:244; Foroudi & Palazzo 2019:138; Hulten 2020:138; Iosifyan & Korolkova 2019:81). Touch allows consumers to evaluate the quality of a product (PTF79) (Cowen-Elstner 2018:25; Hoang & Tuckova 2020:1286; Hulten 2020:136; 2017:8; Pogorzelski 2018:88; Shanthi et al 2019:206; Stach 2018:320; Suarez & Gumiel 2014:269) and consumers build confidence in a product and brand through the sense of touch (PTF80) (Foroudi & Foroudi 2021:244; Hulten 2020:137). Additionally, touch creates the feeling of ownership and valuation for consumers (PTF81) (Cowen-Elstner 2018:25; Hulten 2017:8; Peck 2020; Perry 2017; Suarez & Gumiel 2014:269).

The dependent variable of this study was identified as brand loyalty (Chapter 4: Section 4.6.1), which was selected as research indicated that it has a role in facilitating competitive advantage and financial benefits (PTF92) (Aaker 1991:39; Beig & Nika 2019:5; Tartaglione et al 2019:1). A successful brand loyalty building strategy results in repurchase intention (RI) (PTF93), the generation of positive word of mouth (WOM) (PTF94) and consumers being willing to pay more (WPM) (PTF95) (Alexandra & Cerchia 2018:423; Foroudi et al 2018:10; Giovanis & Anthanasopoulou 2016:2; Haung et al 2018:2132; Saif et al 2018:67; Tartaglione et al 2019:1). Additionally, brand loyalty leads to surges in sales (PTF96) (Narteh 2018:385). Brand loyalty is decreasing due to an increase in the number of online or e-commerce shoppers (PTF97) (Robertson 2020). For easy reference, the conceptual model is again depicted in Figure 7.1.

FIGURE 7.1

THE CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF THIS STUDY

Independent Variables

Dependent Variable

Traditional Sensory Strategies	H_1 Not Rejected (P = 0.01)	
Visual Sensory Strategy	H_{1a} Rejected (P = 0.48)	
Auditory Sensory Strategy	H_{1b} Rejected (P = 0.21)	
Olfactory Sensory Strategy	H_{1c} Not Rejected (P = 0.10)	
Tactile Sensory Strategy	H_{1d} Not Rejected (p < 0.01)	Brand Loyalty
Digital Sensory Strategies	H_2 Not Rejected (P = 0.01)	
Visual Sensory Strategy	H_{2a} Not Rejected (P = 0.07)	
Auditory Sensory Strategy	H_{2b} Rejected (P = 0.99)	
Olfactory Sensory Strategy	H_{2c} Not Rejected (P = 0.08)	
Tactile Sensory Strategy	H_{2d} Not Rejected (P < 0.01)	

In Chapter 6 (Section 6.2.2), it was further determined through the use of Cronbach Alpha values that the measuring instrument was reliable and valid (EF1). The hypotheses formed from the conceptual model were also tested in Chapter 6 (Section 6.6.5) and it was found that all were supported (EF134, EF137, EF138, EF251, EF139, EF140 & EF142), with the exception of H_{1a}, relating to traditional visual sensory strategies (EF135); H_{1b}, relating to traditional auditory sensory strategies (EF136) and H_{2b}, relating to digital auditory sensory strategies (EF141), which were rejected (Chapter 6: Section 6.7: Table 6.46).

CFA was computed to test the measurement models relating to traditional sensory branding (EF83 – EF89), and all the model-fit measure values, after the necessary MI were applied, were within their respective common acceptance levels (Chapter 6: Section 6.6.2.1: Table 6.15) (EF90). Therefore, it was deduced that the four-factor model (traditional sensory branding) yielded a good fit (EF91). Furthermore, CFA was computed to test the measurement

models relating to digital sensory branding (EF92 – EF97), and all the model-fit measure values, after the necessary MI were applied, were within their respective common acceptance levels (Chapter 6: Section 6.6.2.2: Table 6.16) (EF98). Therefore, it was deduced that the four-factor model (digital sensory branding) yielded a good fit (EF99).

Furthermore, a SEM model was constructed for the relationship between traditional sensory branding and brand loyalty (Chapter 6: Section 6.6.3.1) (EF100 – EF105) as well as for the relationship between digital sensory branding and brand loyalty (Chapter 6: Section 6.6.3.2) (EF106 – EF111). For easy reference, the full SEM Model conducted in Chapter 6, Section 6.6.3.3, again depicted in Figure 7.2.

Lastly, Primary Models were constructed between traditional visual, auditory, olfactory and tactile stimuli and brand loyalty (Chapter 6: Section 6.6.4.1) (EF123 – EF124) as well as between digital visual, auditory, olfactory and tactile stimuli and brand loyalty (Chapter 6: Section 6.6.4.2) (EF125 – EF127). For easy reference, the full Primary Model conducted in Chapter 6, Section 6.6.4.3, again depicted in Figure 7.3.

FIGURE 7.2

THE FULL SEM MODEL CONDUCTED FOR BOTH TRADITIONAL AND
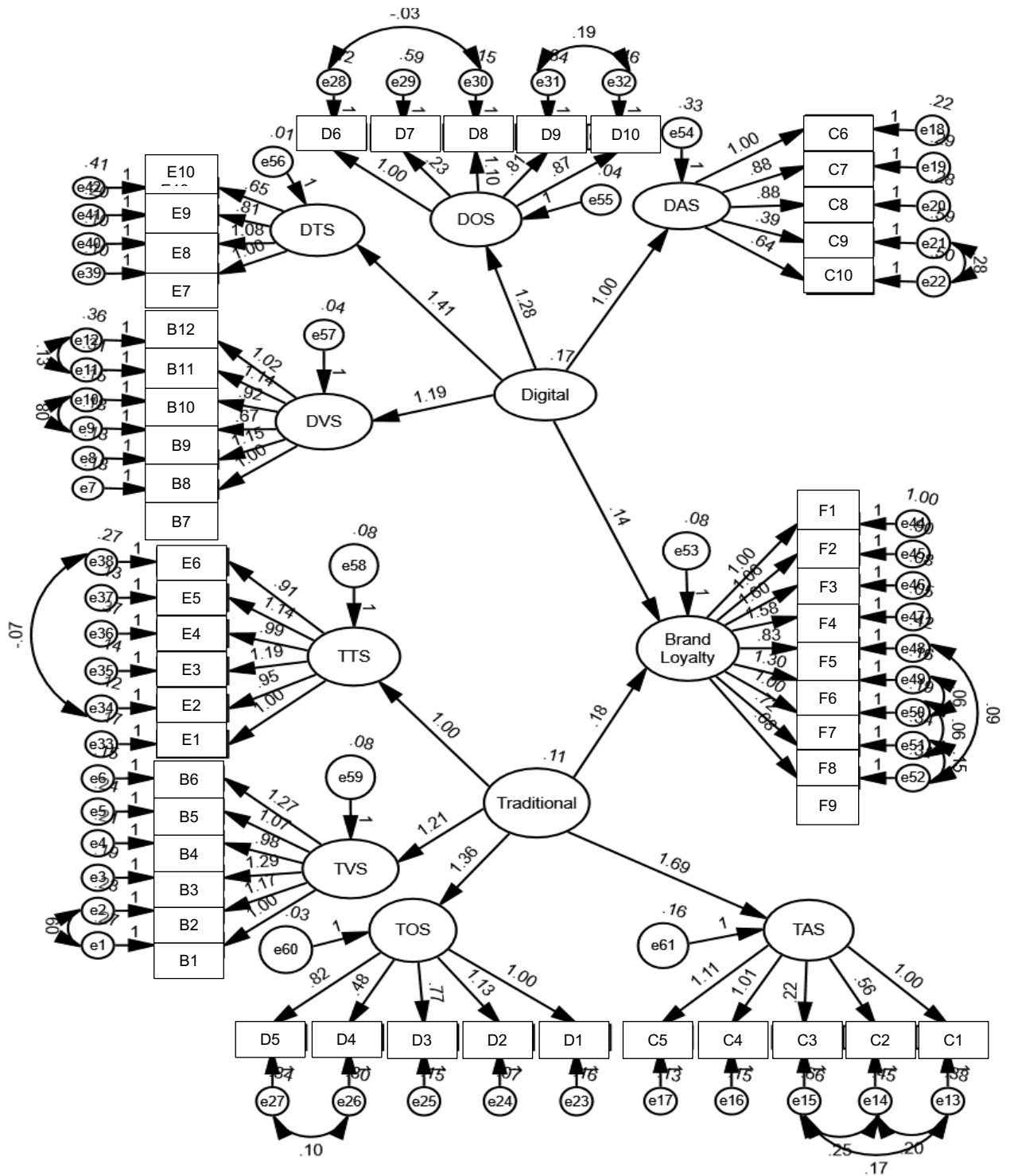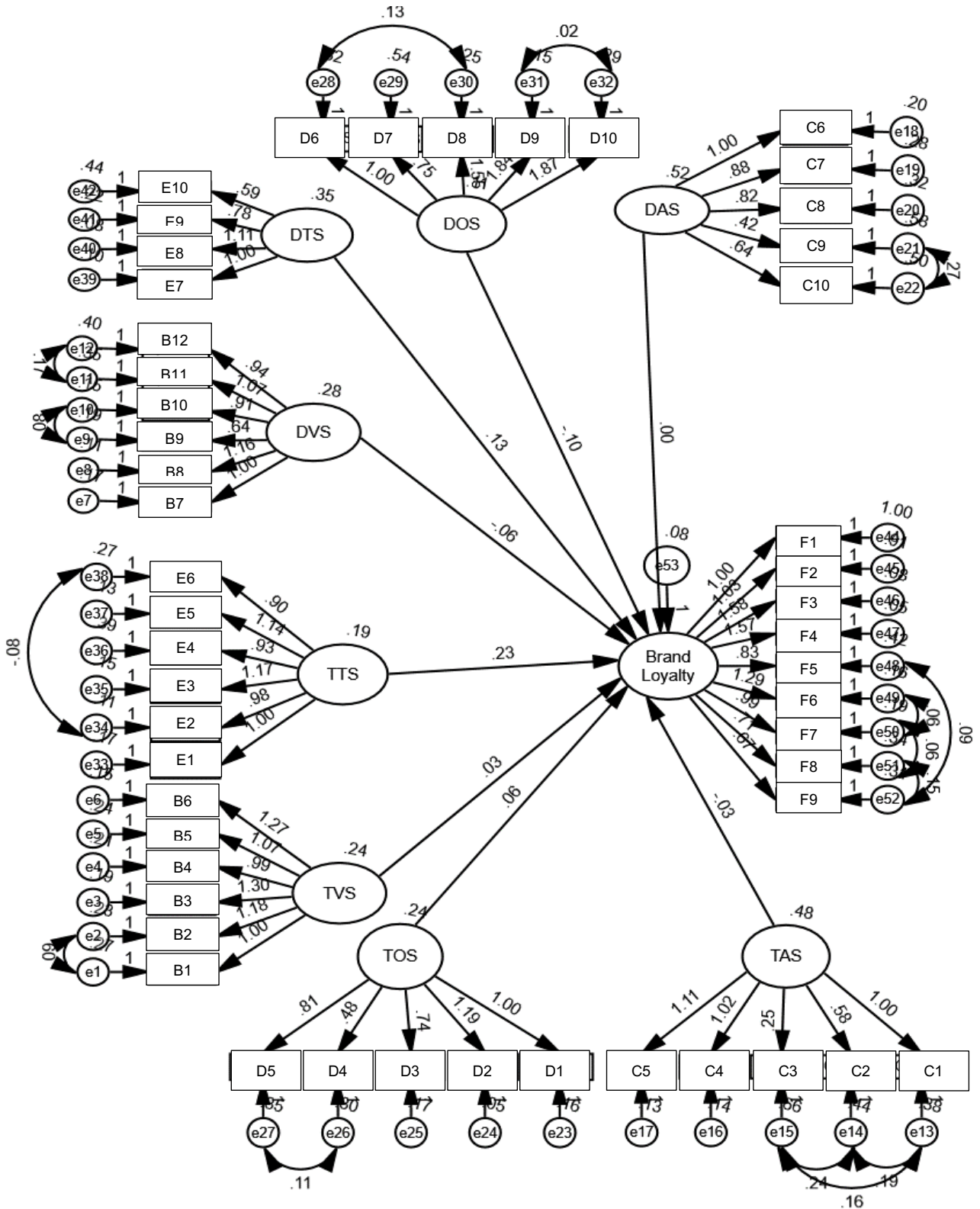DIGITAL SENSORY BRANDING AND BRAND LOYALTY

FIGURE 7.3

THE FULL PRIMARY MODEL CONDUCTED FOR BOTH TRADITIONAL
AND DIGITAL SENSORY BRANDING AND BRAND LOYALTY

The conceptual model can therefore be deemed significant and can be viewed
as reliable for use as a research tool.

7.5.3   Methodological objective 3: Research design and methodology

The third methodological objective of the study was:

> MO$_3$: To determine the appropriate research design and methodology to empirically test the relationships as proposed in the conceptual model

The literature findings (RMF) have reference to Chapter 5.

As detailed in Section 7.2, Chapter 5 focused on the research methodology utilised to conduct this study. Briefly, Chapter 5 discussed and identified the specific research paradigm and design, data collection and sampling technique, measuring instrument, methods utilised to assess the validity and the reliability of the measuring instrument and means for statistical analysis employed in this study. The following research methodology was decided upon:

- a positivistic paradigm (RMF10) and a quantitative research approach (RMF11) was utilised (Chapter 5: Section 5.2);
- a descriptive research design was utilised (RMF17) (Chapter 5: Section 5.3);
- non-probability sampling was selected as the sampling procedure (RMF36), and the specific sub-category of non-probability sampling that this study made use of is convenience sampling (RMF37) (Chapter 5: Section 5.4.2);
- the target population was consumers who have purchased skincare products both in-store as well as online (RMF39) and a minimum sample size of 300 respondents was required (RMF43) (Chapter 5: Section 5.4.1);
- online surveys were selected as the data collection method for this study (RMF51) (Chapter 5: Section 5.5.1) and a web-based, self-administered questionnaire was selected as the specific data collection instrument (RMF67) (Chapter 5: Section 5.5.2);
- this study made use of Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to ensure construct validity of the questionnaire (RMF94) (Chapter 5: Section 5.5.6);

- face validity was addressed through consulting statistical, language and content experts (RMF92), and content validity was addressed through the use of previously tested items in the questionnaire (RMF90) (Chapter 5: Section 5.5.6);

- the demographic details section of the questionnaire (Section A) consisted of previously tested items from Brook (2019), Botha (2014:138), Eurostudent.eu (2008:3:13), Grelecka (2016:96:97), Hung (2016:163), Liegeois and Rivera (2011:88), OECD (2018:3), Potgieter et al (2019:1), Swardt (2008:106), Tapson (2009:146), Thornberry (2015:114) and Wang and Wu (2017:69) (Chapter 5: Section 5.5.3.1);

- Section B of the questionnaire related to the independent variable, visual stimuli both in-store and online, and comprised previously tested items from Anvar (2016:108), Botha (2014:137), Fritz (2018:177), Grzybowska-Brezezinska et al (2013:40), Hewawalpita and Perera (2017:4), Hung (2016:168), Jiang and Benbasat (2007:466), Kokoi (2011:86), Li and Meshkova (2013:454), Liegeois and Rivera (2011:86), Maneti (2014:116), Matterport (2020), Nel (2003:182), Pillay (2003:68), Smith (2020), Theofanides and Kerasidou (2012:44), Wang and Wu (2017:70) and Zhang (2021) (Chapter 5: Section 5.5.3.);

- Section C of the questionnaire related to the independent variable, auditory stimuli both in-store and online, and comprised previously tested items from Botha (2014:137), Cowen-Elstner (2018:230), Engelen (2016:18), Fiore and Kelly (2007:606), Foroudi and Palazzo (2019:136), Geci et al (2017:713), Griffith (2020), Hulten (2020:93; 2017:6), Kim (2017a:21), Liegeois and Rivera (2011:86), Maneti (2014:115), Nel (2003:181), Pogar et al (2015:559), Shenje (2018:226), Subkowski (2019:47), Tapson (2009:148), Threadgill et al (2020:2), Turner (2012:56), Upadhyaya (2017:357), Vida et al (2007:476), Wang and Wu (2017:69) and Wala et al (2019:112) (Chapter 5: Section 5.5.3.);

- Section D of the questionnaire related to the independent variable, olfactory stimuli both in-store and online, and comprised previously tested items from Alac (2017:143), Anvar (2016:110), Cowen-Elstner (2018:31), Hauser (2017), Hulten (2020:127), Hung (2016:169), Liegeois and Rivera

(2011:86), Maneti (2014:115), Ranasinghe et al (2018), Reader (2016:16), Silva and Duarte (2017:101), Spangenberg et al (1996:70), Wang and Wu (2017:69), Wrzesniewski et al (1999:714) and WSJ (2013) (Chapter 5: Section 5.5.3.);

- Section E of the questionnaire related to the independent variable, tactile stimuli both in-store and online, and comprised previously tested items from Anvar (2016:109), Botha (2014:137), Cunningham (2012:177), Fritz (2018:178), Geci et al (2017:713), Grzybowska-Brezezinska et al (2013:40), Hulten (2020:141), Hung (2016:168), King (2012), Kokoi (2011:86), Liegeois and Rivera (2011:86), Liu et al (2020:1820), Maneti (2014:115), Manshad and Brannon (2021:91), Matterport (2020), Nel (2003:180), Pillay (2003:70), Ringler et al (2019:190), Silva and Duarte (2017:101), Theofanides and Kerasidou (2012:44) and Wang and Wu (2017:70), as well as Zhang (2021) (Chapter 5: Section 5.5.3.);

- Section F of the questionnaire related to the dependent variable, brand loyalty, and comprised previously tested items from Awuor (2010:iii), Dehghan and Shahin (2011:12), Ergin et al (2005:11) and Wang and Wu (2017:71) (Chapter 5: Section 5.5.3.);

- to test the reliability of the data obtained for this study, Cronbach alpha coefficients were calculated (RMF98 & RMF99) (Chapter 5: Section 5.5.5);

- descriptive statistics were used to explain the data, which included frequency distributions, means and associated standard deviations to summarise the sample data (RMF105) (Chapter 5: Section 5.5.9); and

- inferential statistics, calculated through the use of IBM SPSS Statistics version 28 (RMF117), included SEM Models, Primary Models, Pearson's Correlation coefficient, Chi-Square Test of Association, ANOVAs and Welch-Robust Tests, Tukey's Test, Games-Howell and Cohens d (RMF109 – RMF115) (Chapter 5: Section 5.5.9).

7.5.4   Methodological objective 4: Empirical investigation

The fourth methodological objective of the study was:

> MO$_4$: To undertake an empirical investigation by means of an online questionnaire to test the relationship between the identified independent variables and the dependent variable

The literature findings (RMF) have reference to Chapter 5.

As stated in the preceding section, a web-based self-administered questionnaire (RMF67) (Chapter 5: Section 5.5.2) was used to collect primary data. To ensure that the study complied with ethical standards, a cover letter accompanied the questionnaire (Annexure B – Cover letter), which provided a brief introduction to the purpose of the study, what kind of information the respondent would be required to provide, clear instructions on how to complete the questionnaire, a table of key definitions to aid the respondent when answering the various questions and a reassurance that the respondent would remain completely anonymous and could withdraw from the study at any time without penalty (RMF69).

The questionnaire of this study was structured and constituted six sections, namely demographics, visual stimuli, auditory stimuli, olfactory stimuli, tactile stimuli and brand loyalty (RMF68). The demographic information required from respondents included the gender of the respondent (RMF70), the age of the respondent (RMF71), the average monthly budget for skincare of the respondent (RMF72) and the frequency of shopping for skincare products both in-store and online (RMF73), all of which were closed-ended questions that asked the respondent to select one option from the predefined list provided (RMF74).

The remaining sections of the questionnaire (B – F) (Chapter 5: Section 5.5.3.2) made use of Likert-scale questions pertaining to each of the variables of the study (RMF75). The 5-point Likert scale questions utilised to collect information pertaining to the variables of this study asked respondents to note to what extent they either agreed or disagreed that each factor had an influence on their experience of shopping for skincare products both in-store and online (RMF85). A neutral response (3) would indicate that the respondent was indifferent with regards to how a certain factor influenced their experience of shopping for skincare products both in-store and online (RMF86). The questionnaire was structured as follows (Chapter 5: Section 5.5.3.2) (Annexure A – questionnaire); Section B - visual stimuli both in-store and

online; Section C - auditory stimuli both in-store and online; Section D - olfactory stimuli both in-store and online; Section E - tactile stimuli both in-store and online, and Section F – brand loyalty.

7.5.5 Methodological objective 5: Data analysis

The fifth methodological objective of the study was:

> MO$_5$: To analyse data through various statistical methods

The empirical results (EF) have reference to Chapter 6.

Chapter 6 of this study presented the results from the empirical investigation. The first section (Section 6.2.1) provided a discussion on completion rate, which was 86.3% for this study. Hereafter, in Section 6.2.2, the internal reliability of the data collection instrument of this study was detailed, from which it was determined that the measuring instrument was reliable (EF1). The sections that followed introduced the descriptive statistics calculated from the data collected pertaining to the demographic details of the respondents (Chapter 6: Section 6.4) (EF2 – EF6), after which the descriptive statistics relating to each variable and sub-variable thereof were presented and discussed (Chapter 6: Section 6.5).

The descriptive statistical results relating to traditional sensory branding strategies (Chapter 6: Section 6.5.1) included traditional visual stimuli (Section 6.5.1.1: EF7 – EF14); traditional auditory stimuli (Section 6.5.1.2: EF15 – EF22); traditional olfactory stimuli (Section 6.5.1.3: EF23 – EF29), and traditional tactile stimuli (Section 6.5.1.4: EF30 – EF33). With reference to digital sensory branding strategies (Chapter 6: Section 6.5.2), the reporting included digital visual stimuli (Section 6.5.2.1: EF34 – EF39); digital auditory stimuli (Section 6.5.2.2: EF40 – EF44); digital olfactory stimuli (Section 6.5.2.3: EF45 – EF51), and digital tactile stimuli (Section 6.5.2.4: EF52 – EF59). The final section constituting descriptive statistical results related to brand loyalty and was reported on in Chapter 6: Section 6.5.3 (EF60 – EF72).

Subsequently, the inferential statistics used in this study to make inferences from the primary data were introduced in Chapter 6: Section 6.6. The first inferential statistic calculated was Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) (Chapter 6: Section 6.6.2). The CFA for traditional sensory branding was presented in Section 6.6.2.1 (EF83 – EF91), while the CFA for digital sensory branding was presented in Section 6.6.2.2 (EF92 – EF99). Secondly, SEM models were constructed to identify whether or not relationships existed between traditional sensory branding and brand loyalty (Chapter 6: Section 6.6.3.1) (EF100 – EF105) as well as between digital sensory branding and brand loyalty (Chapter 6: Section 6.6.3.2) (EF106 – EF111). Following this, a full model was constructed to test whether the strength of the relationships that existed between traditional and digital sensory branding and brand loyalty would change (Chapter 6: Section 6.6.3.3) (EF112 – EF121).

Following this, Primary Models were constructed to determine whether or not relationships existed between the sub-variables of the study and brand loyalty (Chapter 6: Section 6.6.4). The Primary Model for the traditional sensory stimuli was presented in Section 6.6.4.1 (EF123 – EF124), while the Primary Model for the digital sensory stimuli was presented in Section 6.6.4.2 (EF125 – EF127), and a full Primary Model was presented in Section 6.6.4.3 (EF128 – EF133). Hereafter, Pearson's correlation coefficients were calculated to identify relationships between the variables of the study, and therefore aid in testing the hypotheses of the study (Chapter 6: Section 6.6.7) (EF144 – EF158). After this, Chi-Square Test of Association was calculated to determine whether there was a correlation between the respondents' average monthly budget for skincare and their age (Chapter 6: Section 6.6.8) (EF159 – EF163).

The section that followed introduced the ANOVA's, Welch-Robust, Cohen's d, Tukey and Games-Howell tests conducted on the primary data collected (Chapter 6: Section 6.6.9), where ANOVA's and Cohen's d conducted on the gender groups of respondents and the variables of the study were presented in Section 6.6.9.1 (EF164 – EF181). After this, ANOVA's and Tukey tests were conducted on the different age groups (EF182 – EF257) (Section 6.6.9.2); the average budget for skincare products (EF258 – EF323) (Section 6.6.9.3); the

frequency with which respondents purchase skincare products in-store (EF324 – EF359) (Section 6.6.9.4), and the frequency with which respondents purchase skincare products online (EF360 – EF395) (Section 6.6.9.5) and the variables of the study.

7.5.6 Methodological objective 6: Recommendations to businesses operating within the skincare industry

The sixth methodological objective of the study was:

> MO_6: To provide recommendations, based on the results obtained in the empirical research of this study, to skincare brands who have both online and offline presences

In previous sections of Chapter 7, recommendations to institutions operating within the skincare industry were provided. With reference to traditional sensory branding (Section 7.4.3), four recommendations were made: RE_1 (Section 7.4.4.1c), RE_2 (Section 7.4.4.2c), RE_3 (Section 7.4.4.3c) and RE_4 (Section 7.4.4.4c). Additionally, with reference to digital sensory branding (Section 7.4.6), four recommendations were made: RE_5 (Section 7.4.6.1c), RE_6 (Section 7.4.6.2c), RE_7 (Section 7.4.6.3c) and RE_8 (Section 7.4.6.4c).

7.6 PRIMARY OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The primary objective of the study was to conduct an investigation into what sensory experiences customers want to have when purchasing skincare products in-store versus online. The primary objective of the study was accomplished through the realisation of all the secondary objectives of the study as discussed in previous paragraphs. Figure 7.4 provides a summary of the relationships between the primary and secondary objectives, the questions in the questionnaire, the main empirical results and literature findings, related hypotheses and recommendations. Figure 7.5 provides a summary of the relationships between the primary and methodological objectives, the questions in the questionnaire, the main empirical results and literature findings, related hypotheses and recommendations.

FIGURE 7.4

A SUMMARY OF THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY OBJECTIVES

Primary Objective	Secondary Objective	Items in the questionnaire	Empirical results	Literature findings	Related hypotheses	Recommendations

| | Secondary objective 1 | | Determine how multi-sensory branding lends support to the creation of positive and memorable brand experiences for consumers, thereby increasing their brand loyalty | | | |

LF7 – LF92

| | Secondary objective 2 | | Explore the possible traditional and digital sensory branding strategies that brands can utilise | | | |

LF152 – LF290

| | Secondary objective 3 | | Investigate the relationship between the various traditional sensory branding strategies and brand loyalty | | | |

Traditional sensory branding

| The primary objective of this study was to conduct an investigation into what sensory experiences customers want to have when purchasing skincare products in-store versus online | Visual stimuli | Section B: Items 1 - 6 | EF7 – EF14; EF133, EF135 | LF152 – LF173; LF174 – LF181 | H_{1a} | RE_1 |
| | Auditory stimuli | Section C: Items 1 - 5 | EF15 – EF22; EF133, EF136; EF157 | LF193 – LF211; LF212 – LF215 | H_{1b} | RE_2 |

Olfactory stimuli	Section D: Items 1 - 5	EF23 – EF29; EF130, EF137	LF220 – LF237; LF238 – LF241	H_{1c}	RE_3
Tactile stimuli	Section E: Items 1 - 6	EF30 – EF33; EF128, EF138; EF156	LF246 – LF261; LF262 – LF266	H_{1d}	RE_4

Secondary objective 4	Investigate the relationship between the various digital sensory branding strategies and brand loyalty

Digital sensory branding

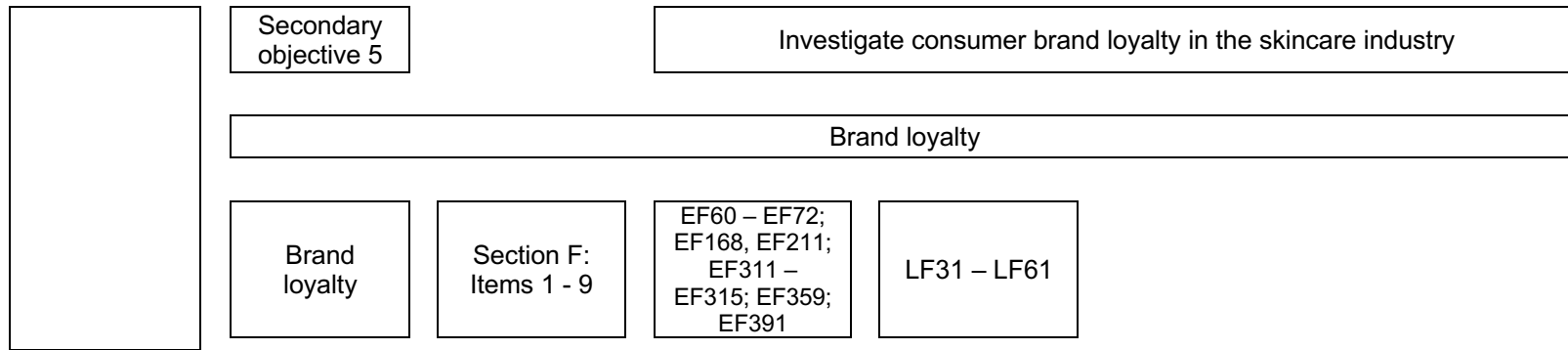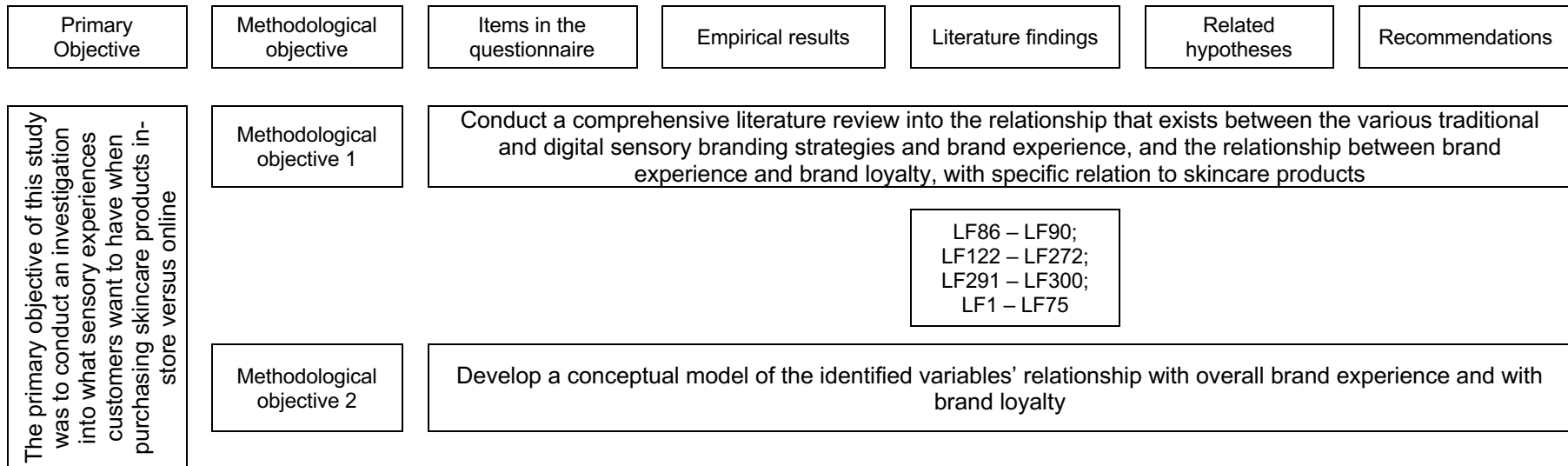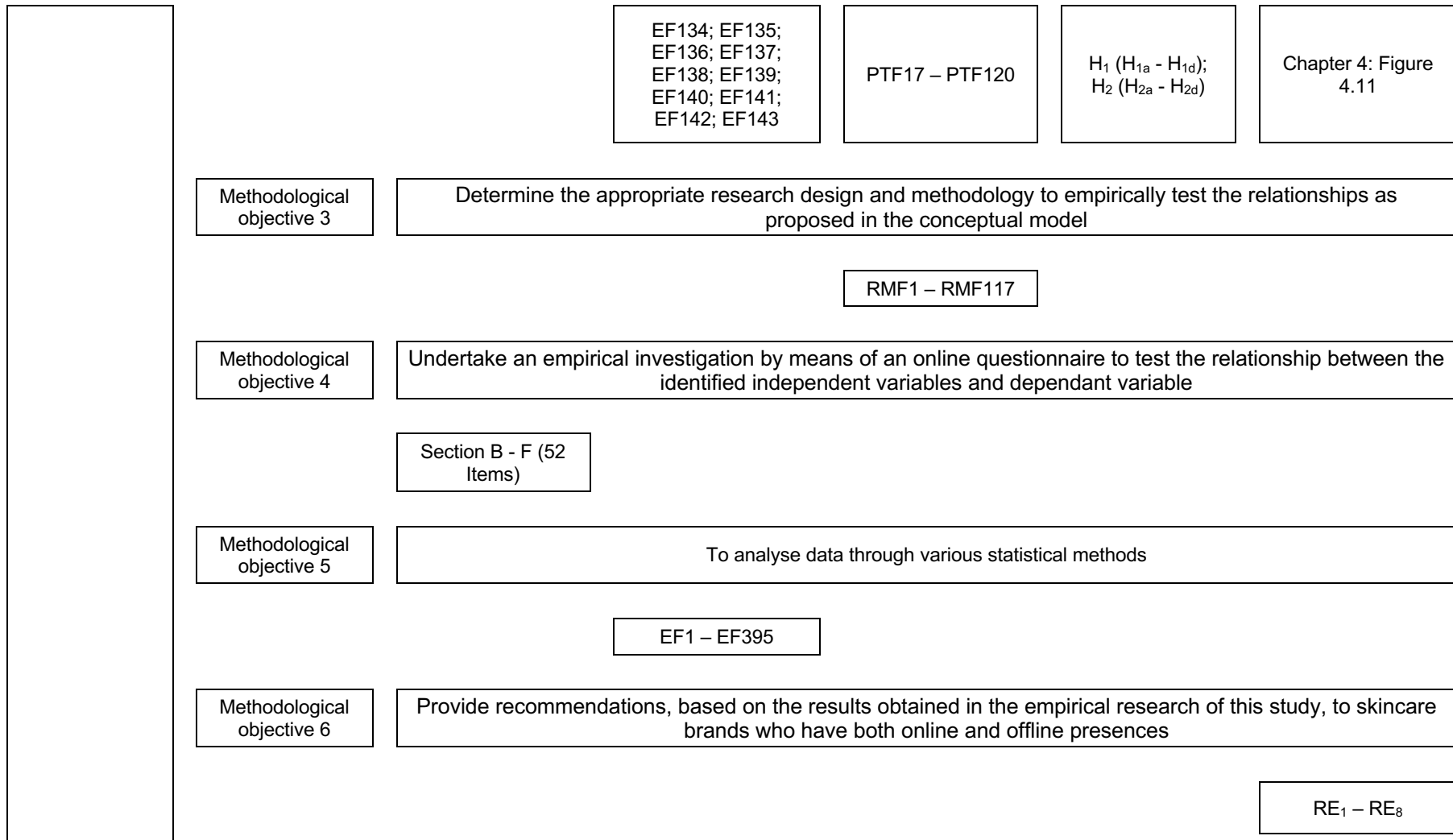|					
Visual stimuli	Section B: Items 7 - 12	EF34 – EF39; EF131, EF140	LF152 – LF173; LF182 – LF192	H_{2a}	RE_5
Auditory stimuli	Section C: Items 6 - 10	EF40 – EF44; EF133, EF141; EF157	LF193 – LF211; LF216 – LF219	H_{2b}	RE_6
Olfactory stimuli	Section D: Items 6 - 10	EF45 – EF51; EF132, EF142	LF220 – LF237; LF242 – LF245	H_{2c}	RE_7
Tactile stimuli	Section E: Items 7 - 11	EF52 – EF59; EF128, EF134; EF156	LF246 – LF261; LF267 – LF272	H_{2d}	RE_8

| Secondary objective 5 | | Investigate consumer brand loyalty in the skincare industry |

| | Brand loyalty |

| Brand loyalty | Section F: Items 1 - 9 | EF60 – EF72; EF168, EF211; EF311 – EF315; EF359; EF391 | LF31 – LF61 |

FIGURE 7.5

A SUMMARY OF THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE PRIMARY AND METHODOLOGICAL OBJECTIVES

Primary Objective	Methodological objective	Items in the questionnaire	Empirical results	Literature findings	Related hypotheses	Recommendations
The primary objective of this study was to conduct an investigation into what sensory experiences customers want to have when purchasing skincare products in-store versus online	Methodological objective 1	Conduct a comprehensive literature review into the relationship that exists between the various traditional and digital sensory branding strategies and brand experience, and the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty, with specific relation to skincare products				
				LF86 – LF90; LF122 – LF272; LF291 – LF300; LF1 – LF75		
	Methodological objective 2	Develop a conceptual model of the identified variables' relationship with overall brand experience and with brand loyalty				

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| | EF134; EF135; EF136; EF137; EF138; EF139; EF140; EF141; EF142; EF143 | PTF17 – PTF120 | H_1 (H_{1a} - H_{1d}); H_2 (H_{2a} - H_{2d}) | Chapter 4: Figure 4.11 |

| Methodological objective 3 | Determine the appropriate research design and methodology to empirically test the relationships as proposed in the conceptual model |

RMF1 – RMF117

| Methodological objective 4 | Undertake an empirical investigation by means of an online questionnaire to test the relationship between the identified independent variables and dependant variable |

Section B - F (52 Items)

| Methodological objective 5 | To analyse data through various statistical methods |

EF1 – EF395

| Methodological objective 6 | Provide recommendations, based on the results obtained in the empirical research of this study, to skincare brands who have both online and offline presences |

RE_1 – RE_8

The following section addresses the limitations of this study.

7.7   LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

For the purpose of this study, the most profound structural constraints included: a lack of availability of reliable resources to support the study, as the concept of digital sensory branding is still relatively new; that due to the study being focused on the skincare industry, taste stimuli were excluded as they were found to not have any relevance; and due to the nature of the study as well as the effects of the global COVID-19 pandemic, the data was collected solely via online questionnaires.

As discussed in Chapter 1 (Section 1.2), there is only a very limited amount of research relating to the topic of sensory branding in the skincare industry (Almomani 2020; Grandin et al 2020; Huang & Lu 2020; Levrini & dos Santos 2021; Sakhawat 2019). This, coupled with the fact that there is also a lack of academic writing on the topic of digital sensory branding (Abdullah et al 2018; Petit et al 2019), led to the first structural constraint faced by the researcher, namely finding academic research to support the study.

The second constraint faced by the researcher was that the study only considered the skincare industry, meaning that other industries were excluded. Additionally, as found in Chapter 3: Section 3.12, taste stimuli have no relevance to the skincare industry and were therefore excluded from this study.

The final constraint related to the fact that, due to this study being conducted during the time of the COVID-19 pandemic, the questionnaires were solely distributed via online channels. Therefore, respondents may have experienced questionnaire fatigue. The results of this study may also be swayed by the fact that at this time, consumers were limited with regards to shopping via retail outlets, and were therefore more inclined to be shopping online. However, due to the nature of this study, a web-based self-administered questionnaire was appropriate.

7.8 CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

With regards to academic contributions made by this study, it can be concluded that the significance of the study is that it will add to the academic literature on sensory branding. The study makes various contributions to the field of experience marketing. It was firstly established that there is ample research done on the topic of sensory branding (Akarsu et al 2019; Alaxander & Nobbs 2016; Castillo-villar & Villasante-Arellano 2020; Chathuranga & Lakshika 2019; El-Sherbiny 2019; Hulten 2017; Kim & Sullivan 2019; Rodrigues 2018; Rubio & Vidal 2019; Tanasic & Tanasic 2019; Thatte 2019; Tia-Elina 2019; Wala et al 2019; Viktoriia 2019). However, research pertaining to sensory marketing online is scarcer (Abdullah et al 2018; Petit et al 2019). *Therefore, this study addressed the lack of information with reference to sensory marketing in the digital space, which was called for by Petit et al (2019:12:14).*

Furthermore, there is only a limited amount of research done on the use of sensory branding with reference to skincare (Almomani 2020; Grandin et al 2020; Huang & Lu 2020; Levrini & dos Santos 2021; Sakhawat 2019), and there is no research, as far as could be determined, that specifically investigates the use of sensory branding of skincare products via online platforms. *Therefore, the study addressed the shortage of previous research on sensory branding of skincare products both in-store and online.*

Additionally, while it has been proven that multi-sensory experience should be utilised to enhance a brand, thereby creating a brand image and awareness (Makela 2020:15-19), *this research fills the gap in knowledge about the inconsistent relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty* (Hussein 2018:2).

The study additionally added to the topic of sensory branding in the skincare industry by conceptualising a conceptual model from the literature study to demonstrate the relationship between traditional and digital sensory branding on the experience of shopping for skincare products both in-store and online.

Moreover, this study adds to the field of experience marketing through the use of a relatively large sample size combined with advanced statistical analysis techniques.

Based on the above mentioned academic contribution, research findings and conclusions drawn, industry contributions could be made in terms of stimulating thinking and influencing decision making amongst skincare brands who distribute their products via traditional brick-and-mortar stores as well as via online platforms. Moreover, specific reccomendations could be made (see Section 7.10). From the discussion on the contributions made by this study, it can be concluded that relevant and practical recommendations can be made to institutions who operate within the skincare industry.

7.9   AREAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Literature reviews relating to the topic of traditional and digital sensory branding, with specific reference to the skincare industry, are provided in Chapters 2 and 3, which were utilised to substantiate the constructs of the conceptual model. It is recommended that future research be conducted in the following areas.

- It would be of interest to conduct a similar study on the desired sensory branding strategies, both in-store and online, with specific reference to another industry, such as the textile industry.
- It is further advisable that research be done on digital sensory branding strategies with reference to taste stimuli, as this was not included in this study.
- It may be necessary to conduct separate studies which focus on each of the human senses mentioned in this study (visual, auditory, olfactory and tactile stimuli) to gain a deeper knowledge of their relationship with specific consumer behaviour or responses in various product categories.
- A comparative study could be conducted on the desired digital sensory branding strategies, between millennials and GenXers, to investigate if the different age groups of consumers seek different stimuli.

- Individual studies should be conducted which relate specifically to the desired sensory branding strategies, both in-store and online, for females versus males.

- It may be of interest to further investigate consumer preferences in terms of sensory branding based on their budget.

- As this study was conducted at a time of economic instability, due to the effects of the global COVID-19 pandemic, it may be interesting to conduct a similar study in the future to compare the results.

- It may be of interest to conduct a study comparing the desired sensory branding tactics for two specific products, one being sold in a high-end store (such as a cosmetic or brand specific store) and one in a low-end store (such as a grocery store). This could also be done as two separate studies.

- An additional study could be conducted on key words that would resonate with different consumers relating to skincare products. This could be based on demographic details such as age or gender.

7.10   RECOMMENDATIONS

A number of recommendations are made to businesses operating within the skincare industry, with reference to both in-store and online trading.

7.10.1 Practical recommendations

With regards to in-store trading, consumers are mostly shopping for skincare brands via retail outlets, which means that the brand itself does not have control over all sensory stimuli to which the consumer is exposed. Therefore, consumers may be subject to sensory overload and skincare brands should therefore keep their sensory branding in-store simple. This also implies that the skincare brand needs to differentiate their product positioning, packaging or display features in such a way that they are appealing to their target audience, in terms of gender, age and budget, but do not overwhelm the consumer. As touch is imperative for consumers when shopping in-store for

skincare products, skincare brands must find ways to facilitate interaction between the consumer and the product. A recommendation to skincare brands that could help achieve this, is through the use of an in-store aesthetician or beautician. This individual would approach potential consumers, based on the targeted demographics, and apply the product to their hand and show them how it works or could even offer mini-treatments, such as facials. This will allow the consumer to physically feel how their skin reacts to the product as well as learn highlighted features about the brand from a professional. Through doing this, skincare brands can increase consumer interaction as well as instil confidence in the consumer, as the information would be coming from an accredited person, which would in turn boost brand loyalty.

With regards to online trading, brands need to find ways to still deliver the key sought after sensory stimuli, namely visual, olfactory and tactile stimuli, in a viable way and that is appealing to their target audience. While more common means of doing this, such as through the use of descriptive language and high-quality images, should constitute the online sensory branding strategy of a skincare brand, additional strategies should be included. A recommendation for skincare brands would be to use moving images or GIFs, where the consumer can physically see the product being pumped or poured onto an individual's skin, which will allow the consumer to more easily imagine the feel of the product. Moreover, skincare brands can make use of brand ambassadors to create "unboxing" videos, where the ambassador films a short clip of themselves receiving their order of a brand's product. From here the ambassador would explain the feel of the product packaging, the feel of the actual product, as well as the smell thereof, and provide some information on how to apply the product. Further than conveying the sensory information, this will instil confidence in consumers with reference to the brand, as the information would be coming from an accredited source.

Furthermore, as consumers have been found to be price sensitive, skincare brands need to find ways to make their products affordable, without over extending themselves. One means to do this would be to offer very affordable sample packs online of their products. These packs could be created based

on skin type, age or gender, and would include a number of sample size products that would last 1 - 2 weeks and would include instructions on how to use the products. This would enable consumers to physically test the products prior to spending larger amounts, which would boost initial sales and hopefully lead to an increase in consumer loyalty.

Additionally, as consumers have less disposable income per month due to the current state of the economy, skincare brands could offer layby payment options through the use of PayFlex. PayFlex allows consumers to pay for their order over a number of months, rather than paying a lump sum, which they may not have all at once. This system does not cost the consumer any extra and does not put the brand in debt as they receive their money upfront. Consumers are also reassured when shopping online by the option to return a product should they not be satisfied, which in the case of skincare, is not possible. A solution to this would be to offer a money-back guarantee within a specified time, should the consumer not be happy with the product or should it arrive with a fault.

7.10.2 Concuding remarks

This study provides evidence that both traditional and digital sensory branding strategies have an influence, or relationship with, brand loyalty. However, it was further notable that, with specific reference to the skincare industry, the sense of sight, smell and touch are key factors for sensory branding, whereas auditory stimuli were found to only be useful when used in unison with the other senses. Moreover, with reference to in-store shopping, it was deduced that consumers shop for skincare products mostly via retail outlets, which could lead to sensory overload. Furthermore, the findings of this study suggest that younger consumers are price sensitive. From the above highlighted points recommendations were made to skincare brands who operate both in-store as well as online.

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• SECTION A - DEMOGRAPHICS

What gender do you identify as?

○ Male

○ Female

○ Prefer not to say

○ Other

• In which age group do you fall?

○ 18-24 years

○ 25-34 years

○ 35-44 years

○ 45-54 years

○ 55-59 years

• What, on average, is your monthly budget for skincare products?

○ R50 - R500 p/m

○ R501 - R1000 p/m

○ R1001 - R1500 p/m

○ R1501 - R2000 p/m

○ More than R2000 p/m

• On average, how often do you purchase skincare products IN-STORE?

○ Once a week

○ A few times a week

○ Once a month

○ A few times a month

○ Once every few months

○ Once or twice a year

○ Less than once a year

• On average, how often do you purchase skincare products ONLINE?

○ Once a week

○ A few times a week

○ Once a month

○ A few times a month

○ Once every few months

○ Once or twice a year

○ Less than once a year

SECTION B - VISUAL STIMULI

The influence that visual stimuli has on the experience of shopping for skincare products.

Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding visual stimuli and your experience of shopping for skincare products in-store. A neutral response will indicate that you are indifferent to the statement.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The layout of the store influences my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	O	O	O	O	O
The positioning of the products on the shelf influences my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	O	O	O	O	O
The colours used in the store influence my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	O	O	O	O	O
The aesthetics of the product packaging influence my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	O	O	O	O	O
The lighting in the store influences my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	O	O	O	O	O
The design of the store influences my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	O	O	O	O	O

Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding visual stimuli and your experience of shopping for skincare products online. A neutral response will indicate that you are indifferent to the statement.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The aesthetics of the product packaging influence my experience of shopping for skincare products online	O	O	O	O	O
High quality digital images influence my experience of shopping for skincare products online	O	O	O	O	O
The layout and user friendliness of the website influence my experience of shopping for skincare products online	O	O	O	O	O
How aesthetically pleasing the website is influences my experience of shopping for skincare products online	O	O	O	O	O
The use of interactive technology (such as 360 - degree imaging) influences my experience of shopping for skincare products online	O	O	O	O	O
The use of videos influences my experience of shopping for skincare products online	O	O	O	O	O

The influence that auditory stimuli has on the experience of shopping for skincare products.

Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding auditory stimuli and your experience of shopping for skincare products in-store. A neutral response will indicate that you are indifferent to the statement.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The music played in the store influences my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	O	O	O	O	O
The natural noises associated with stores (such as other consumers or staff chatting) influence my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	O	O	O	O	O
The sound or pronunciation of the brand's name influences my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	O	O	O	O	O
The volume of the music that is played in the store influences my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	O	O	O	O	O
The tempo of the music played in the store influences my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	O	O	O	O	O

• Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding auditory stimuli and your experience of shopping for skincare products online. A neutral response will indicate that you are indifferent to the statement.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The use of background music or sounds on the website influence my experience of shopping for skincare products online	O	O	O	O	O
Reactive sounds (such as when confirming a purchase and a celebratory sound is played) influence my experience of shopping for skincare products online	O	O	O	O	O
The use of video adverts or clips influence my experience of shopping for skincare products online	O	O	O	O	O
The use of brand jingles influence my experience of shopping for skincare products online	O	O	O	O	O
The use of digital sounds to portray the actual sound of using a product (Such as the sound of a bottle cap opening on a Coca-Cola bottle) influence my experience of shopping for skincare products online	O	O	O	O	O

The influence that olfactory stimuli has on the experience of shopping for skincare products.

Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding olfactory stimuli and your experience of shopping for skincare products **in-store**. A neutral response will indicate that you are indifferent to the statement.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Diffused atmospheric smells influence my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	○	○	○	○	○
The intensity of the diffused smells influences my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	○	○	○	○	○
The smell of the product itself influences my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	○	○	○	○	○
Signature smells of stores influence my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	○	○	○	○	○
The fragrance of staff members in the store influences my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	○	○	○	○	○

• Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding olfactory stimuli and your experience of shopping for skincare products **online**. A neutral response will indicate that you are indifferent to the statement.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The use of descriptive language on a website influences my experience of shopping for skincare products online	○	○	○	○	○
The use of scratch-and-sniff cards given out in stores influences my experience of shopping for skincare products online	○	○	○	○	○
The use of imagery association influences my experience of shopping for skincare products online	○	○	○	○	○
The use of virtual reality technology to replicate olfactory stimuli influences my experience of shopping for skincare products online	○	○	○	○	○
The use of third party technology, such as Scentee (a plug-in device that allows the distribution of scent) influences my experience of shopping for skincare products online	○	○	○	○	○

• SECTION E - TACTILE STIMULI
The influence that tactile stimuli has on the experience of shopping for skincare products.

Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding tactile stimuli and your experience of shopping for skincare products in-store. A neutral response will indicate that you are indifferent to the statement.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The possibility to touch the physical product influences my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	○	○	○	○	○
The possibility to sample the physical product influences my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	○	○	○	○	○
The feel or texture of the products packaging influences my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	○	○	○	○	○
The temperature of the store influences my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	○	○	○	○	○
The texture of the skincare product itself influences my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	○	○	○	○	○
The duration that you touch or feel the product influences my experience of shopping for skincare products in-store	○	○	○	○	○

• Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding tactile stimuli and your experience of shopping for skincare products online. A neutral response will indicate that you are indifferent to the statement.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The use of high-quality images influences my experience of shopping for skincare products online	○	○	○	○	○
The use of descriptive words to describe the feel of the product influences my experience of shopping for skincare products online	○	○	○	○	○
The availability of a return policy influences my experience of shopping for skincare products online	○	○	○	○	○
Haptic responses when clicking on certain icons or making purchases (such as phone or mouse vibrations) influence my experience of shopping for skincare products online	○	○	○	○	○
The use of interactive software (such as virtual walk throughs) influences my experience of shopping for skincare products online	○	○	○	○	○

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• SECTION F – BRAND LOYALTY

The relationship between sensory stimuli and brand experience as well as the relationship
between brand experience and brand loyalty.

Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements relating
to brand loyalty. A neutral response will indicate that you have no opinion regarding that specific
statement.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Should my preferred brand increase their prices, I would still purchase their products	○	○	○	○	○
If my preferred brand's products are unavailable, I will not try an alternative	○	○	○	○	○
I say positive things about my preferred brand to other people	○	○	○	○	○
I will recommend my preferred brand to someone who seeks my my advice	○	○	○	○	○
I have a positive emotional relation (feel attached) to my preferred brand	○	○	○	○	○
I am loyal to my preferred brand due to the quality of their products	○	○	○	○	○
I am loyal to my preferred brand due to the experiences I have had with them	○	○	○	○	○
My loyalty to my preferred brand is strengthened by the value-added services they provide, above the product itself	○	○	○	○	○
My preferred brand provides a different experience than any of the alternative brand's available	○	○	○	○	○

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NELS●N M▲NDELA
UNIVERSITY

Department of Marketing Management
Second Avenue Campus
Faculty of Business and Economic Sciences
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Dear respondent,

I am a student of Nelson Mandela University, George Campus, conducting a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) (Marketing) thesis in the Faculty of Business and Economic Sciences. This research study investigates the desired sensory branding strategies in-store versus online, with specific reference to the skincare industry. In order to gain insight into this topic, you are kindly requested to answer the questions in the questionnaire. The questionnaire will help us to understand how various sensory marketing strategies influence brand experience, and in turn overall brand loyalty, for both in-store and online shopping. The questionnaire will not take more than 15 minutes of your time. Your participation is voluntary and you can withdraw at any time without penalty. All data will remain strictly confidential and be used solely for the purpose of the study. By completing this survey, you indicate implied consent to participating in this research. If you have concerns, please feel free to contact myself or my supervisors. Our details are given below. Thank you for your participation.

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Change the World

Before completing the questionnaire, please ensure you understand the following terminology:

CONCEPT	DEFINITION	REFERENCE
Brand Experience	An experience, which is intentionally created to gain attention and interact with customers "subjective, internal consumer responses, sensations, feelings, cognitions and behavioural responses evoked by brand-related stimuli that are part of a brand's design and identity, packaging, communications and environments"	• Brakus et al (2009:53) • Pine & Gilmore (1999:2)
Sensory Branding	The use of the five human senses in branding to differentiate a brand from its competitors	• Hulten (2017:3) • Upadhyay (2017:352)
Sensory Marketing	The communication of the sensory experience created through sensory branding to customers, thereby allowing the brand to cater for consumers emotional, intellectual and experience-orientated needs	• Ifeanvichukwu & Peter (2018:1560) • Hulten (2017:2) • Makela (2020:22)
Digital Sensory Branding Strategies	Sensory branding strategies that exist for online platforms or in a digital context	• Griffith (2020) • Sarathy (2020)
Brand Loyalty	The degree of attachment that a customer feels towards a brand based on positioning the brand as an asset in itself	• Beig & Nika (2019:5) • Ong et al (2018:758)
Multi-Sensory Experience	Occurs when two or more of the five human senses are stimulated to create brand experiences.	• Makela (2020:14) • Velasco (2020:1)

Scentee Device (Referred to in Question 11.5 of the questionnaire in Annexure A).

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QUESTIONNAIRE ITEM SOURCE LIST

WRITTEN CONSENT	As previously stated, all data will remain strictly confidential and be used solely for the purpose of this study. Should you consent to participating in this anonymous research study, please select the "I consent" option below. If not, please select the "I do not consent" option below.
SCREENING QUESTION	This study is aimed at investigating desired sensory branding strategies in-store versus online, with specific reference to the skincare industry. Have you purchased skincare products in-store as well as via online platforms? (IF YES, THE QUESTIONNAIRE WILL CONTINUE. IF NO, THEN THE RESPONDENT WILL BE REDIRECTED TO THE END "THANK YOU" PAGE)

ITEM CODE	ITEM FROM THE QUESTIONNAIRE	SOURCE
SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS		
A1	What gender do you identify as?	Eurostudent.eu (2008:13); Grelecka (2016:96); Potgieter et al (2019b:1); Thornberry (2015:114)
A2	In which age group do you fall?	OECD (2018:3); Grelecka (2016:96); Potgieter et al (2019:3); Thornberry (2015:114)
A3	What, on average, is your monthly budget for skincare products?	Liegeois & Rivera (2011:88)
A4	On average how often do you purchase skincare products in-store?	Brook (2019); Liegeois & Rivera (2011:88); Wang & Wu (2017:69)
A5	On average, how often do you purchase skincare products online?	Botha (2014:138); Brook (2019); Hung (2016:163); Liegeois & Rivera (2011:88); Swardt (2008:106); Tapson (2009:146)
SECTION B: VISUAL STIMULI		
The influence that visual stimuli has on the experience of shopping for skincare products		
Please indicate to what extent each of the following visual stimuli influence your experience of shopping for skincare products **in-store**. A neutral response will indicate that the specific stimuli does not influence your experience.		
B1	The layout of the store.	Liegeois & Rivera (2011:86); Wang & Wu (2017:70)
B2	The layout of the products on the shelf.	Liegeois & Rivera (2011:86); Theofanides & Kerasidou (2012:44)
B3	The colours used in the store.	Anvar (2016:108); Grzybowska-Brezezinska et al (2013:40); Liegeois & Rivera (2011:86); Maneti (2014:116); Wang & Wu (2017:70)
B4	The aesthetics of the product packaging.	Grzybowska-Brezezinska et al (2013:40); Kokoi (2011:86); Theofanides & Kerasidou (2012:44)
B5	The lighting within the store.	Anvar (2016:108); Maneti (2014:116); Wang & Wu (2017:70)
B6	The design of the store.	Anvar (2016:108); Grzybowska-Brezezinska et al (2013:40); Liegeois & Rivera (2011:86);

		Maneti (2014:116); Wang & Wu (2017:70)
Please indicate to what extent each of the following visual stimuli influence your experience of shopping for skincare products **online**. A neutral response will indicate that the specific stimuli does not influence your experience.
B6	The aesthetics of the product packaging.	Grzybowska-Brezezinska et al (2013:40)
B7	High quality digital images.	Botha (2014:137); Hung (2016:168); Zhang (2021)
B8	The layout and user friendliness of website.	Botha (2014:135); Fritz (2018:177); Hung (2016:166); Pillay (2003:68)
B9	An aesthetically pleasing website.	Botha (2014:137); Hung (2016:166); Nel (2003:182)
B10	The use of interactive technology (such as 360-degree imaging).	Hewawalpita & Perera (2017:4); Li & Meshkova (2013:454); Matterport (2020); Smith (2020); Zhang (2021)
B11	The use of videos.	Botha (2014:137); Jiang & Benbasat (2007:466); Li & Meshkova (2013:456)
**SECTION C: AUDITORY STIMULI**
The influence that auditory stimuli has on the experience of shopping for skincare products
Please indicate to what extent each of the following auditory stimuli influence your experience of shopping for skincare products **in-store**. A neutral response will indicate that the specific stimuli does not influence your experience.
C1	The music played in the store.	Maneti (2014:115); Liegeois & Rivera (2011:86); Wang & Wu (2017:69); Vida (2007:476)
C2	The natural noises associated with stores (such as other consumers or staff chatting).	Geci, Nagyova & Rybanska (2017:713)
C3	The sound or pronunciation of the brands name.	Kim (2017a:21); Pogar, Plant, Rosulek & Kouril (2015:559); Subkowski (2019:47)
C4	The volume of the music is played in the store.	Engelen (2016:18); Shenje (2018:226); Turner (2012:56)
C5	The tempo of the music played in the store.	Engelen (2016:18); Shenje (2018:226); Turner (2012:56)
Please indicate to what extent each of the following auditory stimuli influence your experience of shopping for skincare products **online**. A neutral response will indicate that the specific stimuli does not influence your experience.
C6	The use of background music or sounds on the website.	Botha (2014:137); Fiore & Kelly (2007:607)
C7	Reactive sounds (such as when confirming a purchase and a celebratory sound is played).	Threadgill, Ryan, Jordan & Hajcak (2020:2)
C8	The use of video adverts or clips.	Botha (2014:137); Fiore & Kelly (2007:606); Nel (2003:181); Tapson (2009:148)
C9	The use of brand jingles.	Cowen-Elstner (2018:30); Foroudi & Palazzo (2019:136); Griffith (2020); Hulten (2020:93; 2017:6); Wala we al (2019:112)
C10	The use of digital sounds to portray the actual sound of using a product (such as the sound of a bottle cap opening on a Coca-Cola Bottle).	OWN CONSTRUCTION

SECTION D: OLFACTORY STIMULI		
THE INFLUENCE THAT OLFACTORY STIMULI HAS ON THE EXPERIENCE OF SHOPPING FOR SKINCARE PRODUCTS		
Please indicate to what extent each of the following olfactory stimuli influence your experience of shopping for skincare products **in-store**. A neutral response will indicate that the specific stimuli does not influence your experience.		
D1	Diffused smell within the store.	Maneti (2014:115); Liegeois & Rivera (2011:86); Wang & Wu (2017:69)
D2	The intensity of the scent in the store.	Anvar (2016:110); Spangenberg, Crowley & Henderson (1996:70)
D3	The smell of the product itself.	Wrzesniewski, McCauley & Rozin (1999:714)
D4	Signature fragrances used by the store.	Reader (2016:16)
D5	The scent of the staff of the store.	Wrzesniewski, McCauley & Rozin (1999:714)
Please indicate to what extent each of the following olfactory stimuli influence your experience of shopping for skincare products **online**. A neutral response will indicate that the specific stimuli does not influence your experience.		
D6	The use of descriptive words.	Hung (2016:169); Silva & Duarte (2017:101)
D7	The use of scratch-and-sniff cards given out in stores.	Hulten (2020:128)
D8	The use of imagery association.	Alac (2017:143); Cowen-Elstner (2018:31); Hauser (2017); Hulten (2020:127)
D9	The use of Virtual Reality Technology to replicate olfactory stimuli.	Ranasinghe et al (2018)
D10	The use of third-party technology which plugs in to your device and allows the distribution of scent so that you could physically smell a virtual product when making a purchase (See Annexure B).	WSJ (2013)
SECTION E: TACTILE STIMULI		
THE INFLUENCE THAT TACTILE STIMULI HAS ON THE EXPERIENCE OF SHOPPING FOR SKINCARE PRODUCTS		
Please indicate to what extent each of the following tactile stimuli influence your experience of shopping for skincare products **in-store**. A neutral response will indicate that the specific stimuli does not influence your experience.		
E1	The possibility to touch the physical product.	Anvar (2016:109); Maneti (2014:115); Liegeois & Rivera (2011:86)
E2	The possibility to sample the physical product.	Geci, Nagyova & Rybanska (2017:713); Liegeois & Rivera (2011:86)
E3	The feel or texture of the products packaging.	Grzybowska-Brezezinska et al (2013:40); Kokoi (2011:86); Wang & Wu (2017:70)
E4	The temperature of the store.	Geci, Nagyova & Rybanska (2017:713)
E5	The texture of the skincare product itself.	Kokoi (2011:86); Theofanides & Kerasidou (2012:44)
E6	The duration that you touch or feel the product.	Hulten (2020:141); Ringler et al (2019:190)
Please indicate to what extent each of the following tactile stimuli influence your experience of shopping for skincare products **online**. A neutral response will indicate that the specific stimuli does not influence your experience.		

E7	The use of high-quality images.	Botha (2014:137); Hung (2016:168); Zhang (2021)
E8	The use of descriptive words to describe the feel of the product.	Hung (2016:169); Silva & Duarte (2017:101)
E9	The availability of a return policy to online stores.	Cunningham (2012:177); Fritz (2018:178); Pillay (2003:70)
E10	Haptic responses when clicking on certain icons or making purchases (such as phone or mouse vibrations).	King (2012); Manshad & Brannon (2021:91)
E11	The use of interactive software (such as virtual walk throughs or ty-on's).	Liu, Liu, Xu, Cheng, Masuko & Tanaka (2020:1820); Matterport (2020); Mel (2003:180)
SECTION F: BRAND EXPERIENCE & BRAND LOYALTY		
Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements relating to brand loyalty.		
F1	Should the brand increase their prices, I would still purchase their products.	Dehghan & Shahin (2011:12); Ergin, Ozdemir & Parilti (2005:11)
F2	If a brand's products are unavailable, I will not try an alternative.	Dehghan & Shahin (2011:12); Ergin et al (2005:11)
F3	I say positive things about my preferred brand to other people.	Dehghan & Shahin (2011:12)
F4	I will recommend my preferred brand to someone who seeks my advice.	Dehghan & Shahin (2011:12); Ergin et al (2005:11)
F5	I have a positive emotional relation (feel attached) to my preferred brand.	Dehghan & Shahin (2011:12)
F6	I am loyal to my preferred brand due to the quality of their products.	Ergin et al (2005:11)
F7	I am loyal to my preferred brand due to the experiences I have had with them.	Wang & Wu (2017:71)
F8	My loyalty to my preferred brand is strengthened by the value-added services they provide on top of the product itself.	Awuor (2010:iii)
F9	My brand provides a different experience than any of the alternative brand's available.	Dehghan & Shahin (2011:12)

To whom it may concern,

I, Gabriella Berman (s215032950) provide consent to Dr Danie Ferreira to run my thesis, titled: Desired sensory branding strategies in-store versus online: The skincare industry, through Turnitin.

Gabriella Berman

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