

**UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL**

**The extent and nature of green advertising in magazines in South Africa: A content analysis**

**By**

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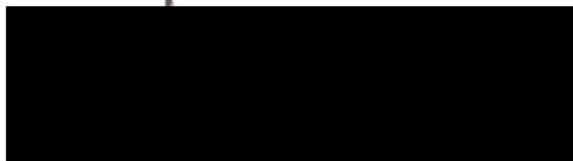
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## DECLARATION

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## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my late parents, Mr Felokhwakhe Ndlovu and Mrs Dumazile MaMhlongo Ndlovu.

## **ABSTRACT**

This study provides a South African perspective that is increasingly important in a globalised economy. Research shows that South African consumers are becoming environmentally conscious. As consumers are increasingly becoming aware of the negative impact of conventional products, organisations are encouraged to devise new strategies that reflect these consumers' interests. As a result, the use of green advertising by organisations targeting the green consumer segment is growing, with organisations interested in enhancing their green message. However, the extent or nature of such advertising has not been established within the South African context. This research seeks to assess and understand the extent of green advertisements in magazine advertising in South Africa and how the green message is communicated in these advertisements.

This study followed the qualitative method, using a descriptive design and deductive analysis of magazine advertisements that were selected using a simple random sampling. This content analysis research on magazine advertising in South Africa provides insight into the nature of green advertisements. The findings revealed a limited number of green advertisements. The results provide evidence of the different green advertising appeals, message elements, message explicitness, green problems addressed and green solutions proposed in the green advertisements.

Past research does not indicate how the green message is communicated in magazine advertising in South Africa. With insufficient information often reported as the cause of a lack of green behaviour, this study provides evidence of the extent to which this is true in South African advertising. Thus, recommendations are made to green product marketers on how to incorporate the green message into various elements of message structure to enhance green communication. The research also contributes to marketers using a green message, to understand the types of message elements currently being used in magazine advertising in South Africa and possible alternatives for making the green message unique. The study recommends future research to expand its investigation of green communications into websites, social media and television

advertisements. Further, recommendations for green marketers, academics, policymakers and future research are provided.

**Keywords:** magazine advertising, green advertising, advertising appeals, message explicitness, message elements, South Africa

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## ACRONYMS

<b>CSI</b>	Corporate Social Initiatives
<b>CSR</b>	Corporate Social Responsibility
<b>FSC</b>	Forest Stewardship Council
<b>IMC</b>	Integrated Marketing Communications
<b>IT</b>	Information Technology
<b>LEED</b>	Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design

# CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

The past decades have seen a rise in the popularity of green issues with business and industry, governments, decision-makers, financial institutions, media, and the general public paying more attention to environmental challenges (Eneizan, Matar, Al-Zawahreh, Alkhawaldeh, & Eneizan 2019; Hoque, Mowla, Uddin, Mamun, & Uddin 2019; Nguyen, Nguyen, Nguyen, Lobo, & Vu 2019; Papadas, Avlonitis, Carrigan, & Piha 2019). This attention from various stakeholders results in the continuation of the debate about the environment and everyday activities damaging the environment.

According to Saha and Darnton (2005, p. 117), many of the damaging effects to the environment are contributed by overconsumption, pollution, marketing efforts encouraging consumerism culture, manufacturing and processing, post product use waste and pollution, and environmental disasters. The increase in the negative impact human activity has on the environment strongly indicates the need for people to play their part towards sustainability (Ng & Chan 2020, p. 1). Ng and Chan (2020, p. 1) suggest that consumers could use their consumption patterns and pro-environmental behaviours to help address environmental challenges and improve their quality of life. There is an increase in the number of marketers that are producing, introducing and embracing consumers concerns to about environmental quality (Dubihlela & Ngxukumeshe 2016, p. 163). Past research suggests a growing number of marketers that are green and increasing the availability of green products and services, yet consumers green behaviour is still limited (Adrita & Mohiuddin 2020, p. 2; Mkhize & Ellis 2018, p. 113; Kim, Oh, Yoon, & Shin 2016, p. 340). To help promote and drive an increase in green consumer behaviour, marketers may utilise several green marketing strategies that make consumers environmental conscious and motivate consumers to use their consumption patterns that have less or no detriment on the environment. The green marketing literature indicates that marketers use several strategies that include sustainable packaging (Scott & Vigar-Ellis 2014, p. 642), eco-labelling (Nguyen & Le, 2020, p. 2813), organic produce (Mhlophe,

2016, p. 2), and green advertising (Mkhize & Ellis 2020, p. 1). For example, eco-labels could be used by environmentally friendly marketers to educate and communicate the product's environmental impact (Scott & Vigar-Ellis 2014, p. 647). The benefits of using an eco-label strategy include raising consumer awareness of the product's environmental contribution or detriment on the environment and motivating consumers to choose such products or services relative to conventional products and services. Thus, these strategies are used by marketers to bring attention to green behaviour.

Leonidou, Leonidou, Palihawadana, and Hultman (2011, p. 6) argue that organisations are using advertising to communicate their pro-environment image to initiate environmentally friendly behaviours in both consumers and organisations. Often advertising is used to stimulate or change the direction of demand, and it is also a powerful social tool used to shape lifestyles and inform values in society (Synodinos, Bevan-Dye, & De Klerk 2013, p. 18). These authors posit advertising as the major contributor in driving public awareness in issues affecting the society and thus, shaping behaviour in a society. Past research on green behaviour in South Africa indicates that consumers exhibit a mixed level of knowledge and awareness (Anvar & Venter 2014; Synodinos et al. 2013; Mhlophe 2016). Knowledge is an important factor influencing green behaviour and that green advertising, specifically, can positively affect attitudes and behaviour (Shen et al. 2020, p. 2). According to Mkhize and Ellis (2018, p. 122), inadequate green product promotion is considered the major obstacle that is limiting consumers' green behaviour. Advertising can play a role in changing consumer behaviour (Mkhize & Ellis 2018, p. 123). These authors continue that improved promotion may increase consumers' awareness of green products, making these products recognisable and a better choice over conventional products.

According to Synodinos (2013, p. 2), the rise in businesses targeting environmentally conscious consumers is resulting in increased communications targeting this consumer segment. The study by Leonidou, Leonidou, Hadjimarcou, and Lytovchenko (2014) shows marketers are using magazine advertising amongst the available sources used to communicate with the environmentally-conscious consumers. However, the above study was conducted in Cyprus,

United Kingdom, United States of America, Ukraine, and a similar study does not seem to have been conducted in South Africa. As a result, this study was aimed at determining the extent and nature of green advertisements in magazines in South Africa. A content analysis was used to determine the greenness of magazine advertising in South Africa, thus establishing the **extent** of green advertising in magazines in South Africa. In addition to this, while there is vast research on the effects of various factors such as different appeals or elements of green advertisement structure affecting consumer behaviour, there is no 'stocktake' of what is actually being used, both in terms of advertisement structural elements nor green content, in advertising in South Africa. Thus, the study aims to understand the **nature** of green advertising in magazine advertising in South Africa. In order to guide green advertising in South Africa, it is first necessary to see what is being used and then be able to advise existing and potential green marketers on what should be changed or added based on the extant research on the effectiveness of these factors.

## **1.2 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE STUDY**

Seyrek and Gul (2017, p. 306) argue that the high rate of globalisation combined with increasing world population contributes to the substantial rise in the variety of products being produced. This results in companies increasing their production capabilities and thus meeting increased consumer demand resulting in an accelerated depletion of natural resources and further worsening of environmental problems. Similarly, Barbarossa and De Pelsmacker (2016, p. 230) argue that world population growth and excessive resource use worsen environmental degradation. Nguyen et al. (2019, p. 2) further argue that increasing population combined with growing income in the developing countries results in higher levels of food consumption. This higher demand for food exacerbates environmental challenges such as water scarcity, pollution and increased gas emissions (Nguyen et al. 2019, p. 1). Thus, environmental degradation is increasing.

There is a growing literature body bringing attention to the significance of environmental consciousness and pro-environmental behavioural changes despite consumers' moderate

changes in behaviour (Rahman & Reynolds 2019; Shimoda et al. 2020; Ting, Hsieh, Chang, & Chen 2019). With environmental problems receiving more attention across media, some consumers are increasingly becoming environmentally conscious, willing to use their power to positively contribute to efforts geared towards offsetting the environmental issues (Dhurup, & Surajlal 2015, p. 76). The emergence of the green consumer segment indicates that there are consumers that are willing to pay higher prices for environmentally friendly products forgoing widely available non-green products (Kong, Harun, Sulong, & Lily 2014, p. 925). Despite indications showing that some consumers are becoming more and more environmentally conscious, there still exists a gap between consumers' environmental consciousness and environmental behaviour (Seyrek & Gul 2017, p. 317). In these authors' study, it was found that consumers' environmentalism significantly affects their green behaviour. As consumers become more environmentally conscious, so is their likeliness of embracing green behaviour likely to increase (Seyrek & Gul 2017, p. 317). These authors further found that consumers' green knowledge positively influences green behaviour, and hence, they considered education a key factor in amplifying environmental issues and thereby raising consumer awareness. In addition, Kong et al. (2014, p. 927) ascertained that green consumers' knowledge is enhanced through the use of eco-labels, eco-brands, and green advertising. As a result, consumers become knowledgeable about green products and can distinguish green products from conventional products.

In efforts to offset the negative impact on the environment, organisations are searching for strategies that address the environmental challenges (Ali & Ahmad 2016, p. 85). Barbarossa and De Pelsmacker (2016, p. 2) give examples of everyday products such as detergents, light bulbs, and tissue papers adapted by businesses to reduce consumers' environmental footprint. Other strategies include recycling, alternative packaging, redesigning of products, and alternative products as strategies used in addressing the environmental challenges. According to Suki (2013, p. 50), green marketing is a response mechanism used by organisations when producing, promoting, packaging, and ensuring that goods and services are delivered to customers in an environmentally sensitive manner. This author stresses that green awareness is the key influencer to human behaviour that drives change and results in consumers reducing

consumption, changing wasteful consumption patterns and results in the rise in environmentally conscious consumers.

How organisations communicate with their target audience is largely informed by the Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) principles (Mangold & Faulds 2009, p. 357). These authors further state that the IMC strategy attempts to coordinate and control all the elements of the promotional mix (sales promotion, personal selling, publicity, public relations, direct marketing, and advertising) ensuring that organisations are communicating a customer-focused message in one voice such that the organisation can meet its objectives. Jain and Kaur (2004, p. 189) argue that the proliferation of environmentally conscious consumers has resulted in the growth of organisations adopting green marketing, also known as corporate environmentalism. They further claim, the rise of green consumerism is a result of heightened awareness of green challenges in the media, increased flow of information aimed at informing consumers to make informed purchases, and the widespread use of green themes in advertising. This is further supported by Borin, Cerf and Krishnan (2011, p. 76), who argue that organisations could benefit from informing consumers about how they are addressing consumers' environmental consciousness. Thus, competitive businesses view green developments as a market opportunity rather than an obligation in pursuit of sustainable growth (Hasan & Ali 2015, p. 464).

A variety of media platforms are used by organisations to disseminate their green message. Past research on green marketing indicates that television, newspapers and magazines are the most used communication vehicles by businesses (Dai, Goh, & Cheng 2014, p. 1; Kim & Han 2016, p. 428; Segev, Fernandes, & Hong 2016, p. 85). The current study was conducted on magazines since magazine advertising in South Africa enjoys substantial sums of companies' advertising budgets (Statista 2018, p. 1), and the circulation and readership figures indicate that magazine advertising is amongst the most popular advertising vehicles (Manson 2018, p. 1). To determine the amount and type of information with a green message that is communicated through magazines, and thus the extent to which green communication is targeting South African consumers through this medium, this research set out to conduct a content analysis on

magazine advertisements with the aim of providing insight on the greenness of advertisements found in the magazine space in South Africa.

The planet earth is in crises with green problems including environmental degradation, ozone depletion, global warming, natural resource depletion and other green problems increasingly reported across the globe (Chen & Lee 2015, p. 195). Organisations are innovating and developing new strategies including greening their processes, developing green products and supporting environmental causes that help address or mitigate green problems (Narula & Upadhyay 2011, p. 282). Changes in the environment and environmentally-conscious organisations has attributed to the growing new segment of consumers that are no longer satisfied with purchasing conventional products (Kong et al. 2014, p. 925). As part of understanding the nature of green advertising in magazines in South Africa, this study also set out to determine which green problems are being addressed in green advertising in magazines.

Seyrek and Gul (2017, p. 317) argue that growing consumer environmental consciousness does not always result in the purchasing of green products. Consumers often cite the lack of awareness of green products and activities as the constraining factor in behaviour (Seyrek & Gul 2017, p. 317). Seyrek and Gul (2017, p. 317) state that consumers' green knowledge is considered a key factor in raising awareness of environmental destruction. Thus, organisations are using green advertising amongst a host of green strategies to focus attention on green products or how these organisations are addressing green challenges (Kong et al. 2014, p. 927). Thus a further component of understanding the nature of the green advertising, the study also identified the types of green solutions organisation propose in their green messages.

This content analysis study was therefore conducted on magazine advertisements in South Africa. These advertisements were in magazines sold in South Africa. All references to magazines in the dissertation refer to magazines available in South Africa, whether international or domestic in origin. For example, the Economist is an international magazine while Drum is a magazine that originates in South Africa. The study sought to determine the

quantity and type of information that is embedded in a green message by organisations, providing insight on the extent and nature of green advertising in magazines in South Africa.

### **1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Some research indicates that consumers are becoming more concerned about the environment; however, behaviour does not reflect this concern (Kong et al. 2014, p. 925; Mkhize & Ellis 2018, p. 116; Witek 2019, p. 31). Green advertising is one tool that organisations can use to make consumers aware of green products and activities (Leonidou et al. 2014, p. 671). Also, awareness has been found to influence consumers' green behaviour (Rahbar & Abdul Wahid, 2011, p. 73). The need to build consumer awareness has resulted in the proliferation of green advertising in television, newspaper and magazines (Dai, Fam, Mao, & Huang 2011, p. 2; Kim & Han 2016, p. 2) in countries like South Korea (Kim, Oh, Yoon, & Shin 2016, p. 342), United Kingdom (Bradbury et al. 2014, p. 2321), United States (Matthes & Wonneberger 2014, p. 120), India (Dande 2012, p. 1) and Turkey (Seyrek & Gul 2017, p. 306). Consumers often cite the lack of awareness of green products and activities as the constraining factor in behaviour (Seyrek & Gul 2017, p. 317). Mkhize and Ellis (2018, p. 124) found South African consumers were not aware of green products and did not always know when products and organisations were green. However, little is known about either the extent or nature of green advertising in South Africa. Thus, this study aimed at addressing this gap in knowledge by determining how a green message was communicated in magazine advertising in South Africa.

### **1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION AND OBJECTIVES**

This section detail the research question and objectives

#### **1.4.1 Research Questions**

The study's overall research question is as follows: what is the extent and nature of green advertising in magazines in South Africa?

The following sub-research questions were formulated to help address the overall research question:

- What proportion of magazine advertisements are green?
- What products, services or organisations are using green advertising?
- What appeals are being used in these magazine advertisements?
- How is the message structured in these magazine advertisements?
- What are the green problems being addressed in these advertisements?
- What are the proposed solutions in these advertisements?

### **1.4.2 Research Objectives**

In attempting to address the identified research questions, the objectives of the study were to:

- Determine the extent of green advertisements in magazines in South Africa
- Determine the products, services or organisations using green advertising
- Determine the green appeals used in these magazine advertisements
- Determine the structure of the green messages
- Determine the green problems addressed in these advertisements
- Determine the green solutions proposed in these advertisements

### **1.5 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The study's delimitation is that the research is limited to magazines in South Africa. It is possible that extending the scope and scale of the research could result in different findings and conclusions made about the extent and nature of green advertising in magazines in South Africa. As a result, the findings and conclusions of this study are not an overall representation of the extent and nature of green advertising in South Africa.

### **1.6 SUMMARY OF THE LITERATURE REVIEW**

Research in South Africa related to green consumer behaviour has been predominantly on understanding the factors that influence green purchase behaviour (Bisschoff & Liebenberg

2016); consumer perceptions and factors that influence the purchase of organic products (Mhlophe 2016); barriers to organic produce consumption (Mkhize & Ellis 2020); marketing of eco-friendly retail products to promote sustainable consumption patterns (Dubihlela & Ngxukumeshe 2016), use of eco-labels to promote sustainable behaviours (Barendse, Roux, Currie, Wilson, & Fabricius 2016), and barriers to sustainability behaviours (Mkhize & Ellis 2018).

Research indicates an important role promotion plays in achieving green behaviour (Mkhize & Ellis 2018; Mkhize & Ellis 2020). According to Dubihlela and Ngxukumeshe (2016, p. 163), the competition for environmentally conscious consumers is increasing with more green products and services available to consumers. This competition and consumers environmental consciousness necessitate and explain the need for communicating the green messages to promote green knowledge. It further explains the importance of green advertising's effect on influencing consumers' environmental consciousness. However, there is no research that could be found that investigated the extent and nature of green advertising in South Africa. To begin unpacking the nature of green advertising, it is important to understand the elements that constitute the nature of green advertising. The green advertising literature indicates that advertising appeals, message structure and message content are elements of advertisements that can be used to understand the nature of green advertising.

### **The nature of green advertising**

The nature of green advertising is assessed in terms of advertising appeals, message structure elements consisting of message framing, the inclusion of environmental claims, message explicitness, and the inclusion of an eco-label. These elements make up the message characteristics in green advertising. Also, the message content, including green problems and solutions, contributes to assessing the nature of green advertising. These are the elements of advertisements that relate to the nature of advertising. Therefore, these aspects of advertisements were used to assess the nature of green advertisements.

### **Advertising appeal in green advertisements**

The literature on advertising appeals in green advertising indicates that green advertisers use emotional and rational appeals to communicate their green messages (Yang, Lu, Zhu, & Su 2015, p. 2663). Emotional appeals include fear appeals (Shin, Ki, & Griffin 2017), hope appeals (Lee, Chang, & Chen 2017) and guilt appeals (Baek & Yoon 2016), whereas rational appeals are made out of rational/benefits appeals (Jovanović, Vlastelica, & Kostić 2017), imagery appeals (Chen 2016), collectivist appeals (Xue 2015), individualistic appeals (Muralidharan, Rejón-Guardia, & Xue 2016), and motherhood appeals (AbiGhannam & Atkinson 2016). When these appeals are used in green advertising, marketers can position and tailor product or service specifications to meet consumers' needs (Chahal & Kaur 2015, p. 87). Baek and Yoon (2016, p. 440) argue that advertising appeals in these advertisements allow advertisers to communicate green messages that positively influence consumers environmentally friendly behaviours.

### **Message structure elements constituting the green message**

Green advertising literature indicates that message structure elements are used in green advertising to communicate environmental friendly messages. These elements include message framing (Cucchiara et al. 2015), the inclusion of environmental claims (Kumar 2017), message explicitness (Usrey 2017), and the inclusion of an eco-label (Wang, Huscroft, Hazen, & Zhang 2018) which make up the message characteristics in green advertising. Xue and Muralidharan (2015, p. 85) argue that the message structure elements are used in green advertising because different consumers necessitate the use of tailored green messages. Thus, message structure elements are an important feature in understanding the nature of green advertising.

### **Green problems in green advertising**

Consumers' environmental consciousness could be influenced by communication about green problems (Jeppesen et al. 2015, p. 201). The literature on green problems facing the globe, and thus the possible content of green advertising include water scarcity (Shah, Liebrand, & Vos 2018), water quality (Edokpayi et al. 2018), air pollution (Sueyoshi & Yuan 2015), land pollution

(Rodina 2019), water/sea pollution (Vince & Hardesty 2017), animal protection/welfare (Cembalo, Caracciolo, Lombardi, Del Giudice, & Grunert 2016), deforestation (Nittala 2014), and global warming (Fezzi, Harwood, Lovett, & Bateman 2017). Addressing the green problems in environmental friendly advertising may result in consumer awareness and positively influence how these consumers receive such advertisements (Chen & Lee 2015). Thus in addition to determining the appeals used and structural elements of green advertisements, the study investigated the green problems addressed in the green message content to further understand the nature of the green advertising in magazines in South Africa.

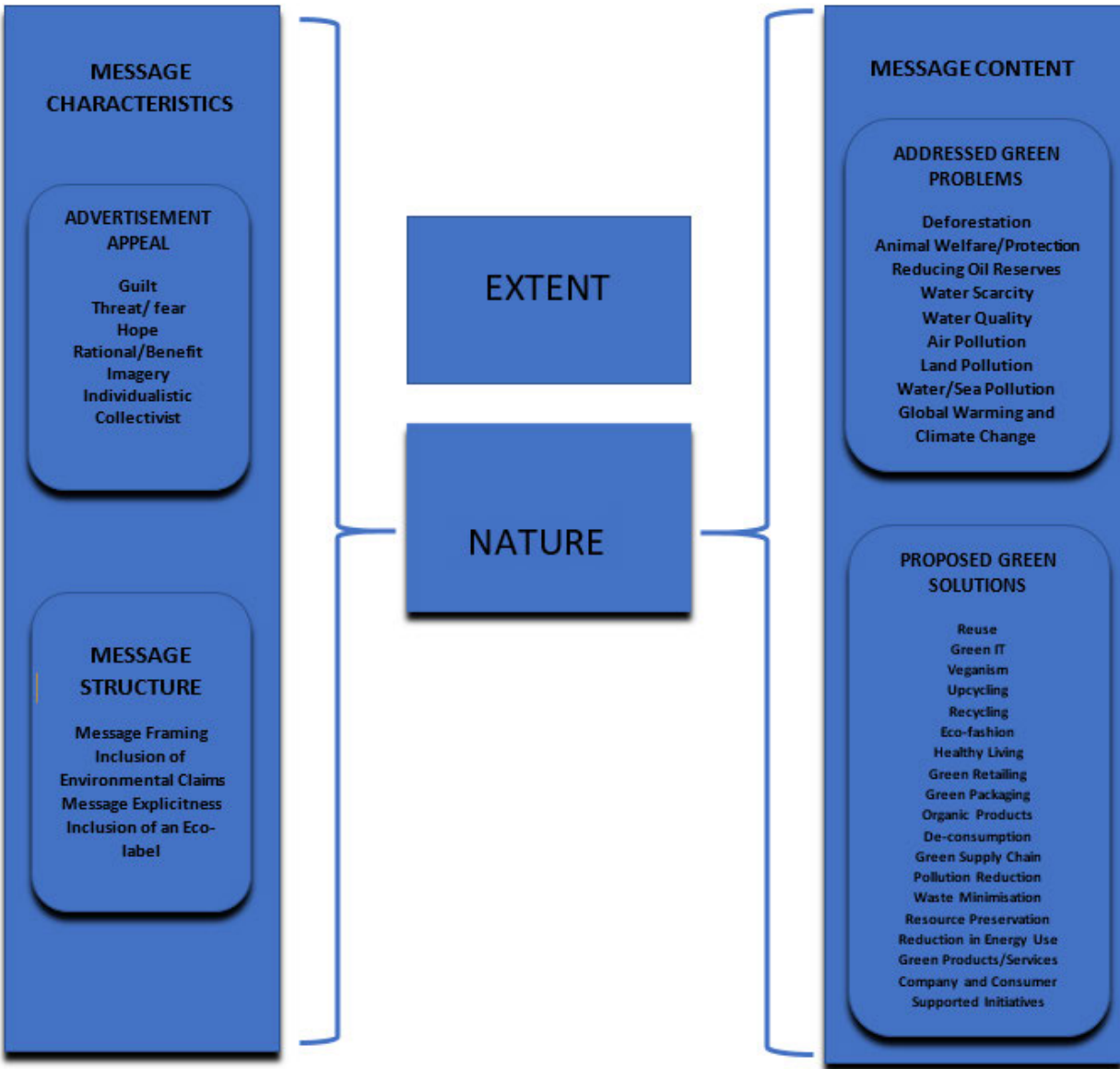
### **Green solutions in green advertising**

Consumers are the major contributors to green problems (Tan, Johnstone, & Yang 2016, p. 288). Tan et al. (2016, p. 288) argue that environmental friendly marketers are proposing green solutions for addressing green problems. Thus, consumers can become aware of green solutions available, presenting an opportunity to use their consumption to mitigate green problems. The literature on environmentally friendly solutions include veganism (Fan, Almanza, Mattila, Ge, & Her 2019), healthy living (Suki 2013), deconsumption (Sheth, Sethia, & Srinivas 2011), upcycling (Yi, Lee, Lee, & Kim 2018), eco-fashion (Todeschini, Cortimiglia, Callegaro-de-Menezes, & Ghezzi (2017), green retailing (Lee, Choi, Youn, & Lee 2012), green packaging (Scott & Vigar-Ellis 2014), organic food produce (Mhlophe 2016), green products/services (Dyllick & Rost 2017), green supply chain (Maniatis 2016), waste minimisation (Hasan & Ali 2015), reduction in energy use (Monyei & Adewumi 2018), pollution reduction (Akyol & Kiliç 2014), resource preservation (Nguyen et al. 2020), reuse (Han & Hyun 2018), the company and consumer-supported initiatives (Lang & Armstrong 2018), green information technology (Molla, Abareshi, & Cooper 2014), and recycling (Lee, Haley, & Yan 2019). The use of green solutions in advertisements raises consumers' awareness of solutions they may use to address and mitigate the consumption associated environmental problems (Tan et al. 2016). Thus the green solutions found in green advertisements further elaborates on the nature of the green advertising found in magazines in South Africa.

Therefore to summarise, the aspects used to assess the nature of green advertising in magazines in South Africa included the message characteristics (advertising appeals and message structure) and message content elements (green problems and solutions).

## **1.7 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY**

In order to address the research problem that South African consumers claim not to have knowledge about green products and organisations, this research set out to determine the extent to which advertising in magazines in South Africa is green and to understand the nature of the green advertising. Thus a conceptual framework, as depicted in Figure 1.1 was developed for the present study from the advertising literature on message characteristics and message content elements and the sustainability and green marketing literature. Therefore the nature of green advertising was conceptualised to be made of message characteristics, namely appeals and message structural elements, as well as the message content of green advertising looking into green problems and solutions. The development of the components of the conceptual framework is detailed in Chapter 2.



**Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework for Determining the Extent and Nature of Green Advertising in magazines in South Africa**

**1.8 SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

To be able to evaluate the advertisements using this conceptual framework, it was necessary to do qualitative research using a descriptive design and deductive analysis of the magazine advertisements. This research aimed to provide a comprehensive description of the extent and nature of green advertising in magazine advertisements in South Africa. The qualitative research method was suited to this research since this method can provide a holistic approach

of both visual and textual elements of the advertisements that assisted in providing insight on the extent and nature of green advertising in magazines (Nassaji 2015, p. 129). This research followed a descriptive design because using this research design assisted in evaluating advertisements as they appear in magazines. Matua and Van De Wal (2015, p. 23) argue that through descriptive design it is possible to explore, analyse and describe a phenomenon without compromising its richness, breadth and depth that is key in gaining 'a near-real picture' of the phenomenon under study. In addition, the data collection in descriptive design research assists in addressing the who, what and where the question of events or experiences (Colorafi & Evans 2016, p. 18). Thus, the descriptive design is best for assessing the status quo, in other words, the extent and nature of advertisements.

With this research's analysis informed by previous knowledge and the use of green marketing and green advertising literature to determine the deductive themes of the analysis, these conditions made the deductive content analysis the method that would meet this study's needs (Mohajan 2018, p. 16). Also, content analysis is suited for research that investigates patterns, frequencies, structure and types of advertising (Zhang & Wildemuth 2016, p. 307). This research aimed to determine patterns regarding the extent of green advertising and the nature of advertisements' content and characteristics making up the green message. Therefore, the research aim was in alignment with the research approach.

The deductive content analysis research approach was used on 66 magazines that were selected using simple random sampling with a 95 per cent confidence level and confidence interval of 10. The analysis was conducted on digital and print magazines. Thus, the magazine sample consisted of both magazine versions. All advertisements in the 66 magazines were assessed for greenness using specified criteria elaborated on in the Methodology chapter. Thus the extent of green advertising was assessed. The green advertisements were then content analysed to understand the nature of these green advertisements. The deductive content analysis protocol that was informed by the review of literature provided insight into the nature of green advertisements in terms of the message characteristics (appeals and structural

elements) as well as message content (green problems addressed and green solutions proposed).

## **1.9 CONTRIBUTION**

The insight gained from the study will assist marketing practitioners in understanding green advertising in magazines in South Africa, helping businesses better differentiate and advertise their products or services. Also, the obtained insight will help consumers and marketing academics appraise the greenness of advertisements that contribute to green behaviour. A lack of information on green products have often been found to be the reason for the lack of green behaviour (Biswas & Roy 2015, p. 468; Cherian & Jacob 2012, p. 123; Mkhize & Ellis 2018, p. 124). This research can establish the extent to which this is true. Policymakers can use the insight gained from the study to implement policies that either control or encourage green advertising in magazines.

Often, available literature on green advertising provides first world countries' perspectives (e.g. Hassan & Valenzuela 2016; Kareklas, Carlson, & Muehling 2012; Matthes & Wonneberger 2014; Xue 2013); as a result, creating a gap in literature from the developing countries. The study contributes by providing a South African and developing country, perspective critical in the globalised economy. Research indicates that South African consumers are increasingly becoming environmentally conscious, necessitating the need for an assessment of the greenness of magazine advertisements used to communicate companies' efforts. While there is quite a lot of research on the effects of various factors, e.g. different appeals/elements of green advertisement structure affecting consumer behaviour, there is no 'stocktake' of what is actually being used, both in terms of advertisement structural elements nor green content, in advertising in South Africa. In order to guide green advertising in South Africa, it is first necessary to see what is being used, and then be able to advise existing and potential green marketers on what should be changed or added based on the extant research on the effectiveness of these factors. Thus this 'stocktake' is a valuable prerequisite to organisations planning their green advertising strategies to stand out in the market.

Green advertising is an important parameter that contributes to developing green knowledge. Thus, marketers may make South African consumers more knowledgeable through their green messages that are disseminated in green advertising. However, currently no research exists presenting the status quo or 'stocktake' of green advertising in South Africa, and thus, it is not known whether a lack of green advertising is a possible cause of the lack of green behaviour. As mentioned, there are numerous studies reporting the effectiveness of different appeals and message structural elements, but no South African study that reports on the extent to which these elements are being used thus indicating possible opportunities for green advertisers. Furthermore, while knowledge of green problems and solutions are necessary content elements of consumers' green knowledge, there is no South African research indicating the extent to which either the green problems or the green solutions are being included in green advertising in South Africa. Thus this research aims to fill these knowledge gaps in relation to green advertising in magazines in South Africa. As such, this research provides a measuring stick that could be used to appraise green advertisements that seek to influence green behaviour both in terms of quantity and content of the advertisements. This study shows how message design elements could be used to enhance green consumer knowledge in South Africa. These elements provide the needed interventions that advertisers may use to reduce lacking green consumer behaviour.

## **1.10 OVERVIEW OF THE REMAINING DISSERTATION STRUCTURE**

### **Chapter Two: Green Advertising**

This chapter provides a review of the underlying green marketing and advertising literature. The first section presents an overview of green research focus in South Africa followed the overview of literature detailing the importance of green communication in South Africa. After that, green advertising appeals and message structure elements are reviewed. Addressed green problems and proposed solutions in green advertising are discussed. Lastly, this chapter concludes with a conceptual framework underpinning the current study.

## **Chapter Three: Research Methodology**

This chapter provides transparency on how the current study was conducted. The chapter presents a discussion on the methods and approaches adopted for this study. This discussion includes the statement of the research problem, the research objectives, research design and approach, and the research strategy adopted in the current study. The chapter presents justifications for the methods used for this research. Further, it provides details on the target population, sample selection, data collection methods, research measurement, data analysis, data quality control and ethical requirements.

## **Chapter Four: Presentation and Discussion of Study Results**

This chapter presents and discusses the study results. In this chapter, extant literature was used alternatively with current study findings to determine common areas or points of difference but most importantly, to make sense of this study's results. As a result, this chapter helps address the study's research questions and further provides insight into the overall research problem and objectives.

## **Chapter Five: Conclusions, Recommendations and Limitations**

In this chapter, the study conclusions are presented, followed by recommendations and limitations are acknowledged. The chapter provides conclusions on the research findings. The conclusions section is followed by recommendations that may be applied for green advertisers, policymakers and future research. Lastly, this chapter presented and discussed the shortcomings of this research.

### **1.11 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter provided an overview of the study. The introduction was provided detailing the background and motivation for this study. The next section presented the statement of the

research problem indicating why the study had to be conducted. The review of the literature helped this study identify the gap in knowledge which informed this study's research problem and main objective. The study purpose guides sub-research questions and objectives. The delimitation of this study was presented, leading to a brief overview of the literature detailing what and why the used literature was used. The next section presented a brief overview of the research methodology providing details on how this study was conducted. The summary of the research methodology is followed by the contribution section that detailed the benefit of this research. The last part explained the overall dissertation structure.

The next chapter provides a review of the literature on green research in South Africa, the importance of green communication in South Africa, advertising appeals, message structure, green problems and proposing green solutions in advertising in order to determine the extent and nature of green advertising in magazines in South Africa.

## **CHAPTER TWO: GREEN ADVERTISING**

### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

Green advertising is becoming a key green marketing instrument used to achieve sustainability. The increasing developments in green problems have heightened the need for sustainability in areas, including how products are produced and consumer behaviour (Dubihlela & Ngxukumeshe 2016, p. 163). Several attempts have been made to understand green consumer behaviour. These studies include use of eco-labels as a promotional instrument (Barendse, Roux, Currie, Wilson, & Fabricius 2016), consumers attitudes towards green advertising (Anvar & Venter 2014), barriers of green consumer behaviour (Mkhize & Ellis 2018), the influence of green advertising (Hidalgo-Baz, Martos-Partal, & González-Benito 2017), the green gap (Kim, Oh, Yoon, & Shin 2016), and organic food purchases in developing countries (Nguyen, Nguyen, Nguyen, Lobo, & Vu, 2019). However, green advertising literature indicates that green knowledge is important in green behaviour change (Scott & Vigar-Ellis 2014, p. 647) and yet South African consumers claim lack of green knowledge as a barrier to their green behaviour (Mkhize & Ellis 2018, p. 124; Momberg et al. 2012, p. 414). While some research has been carried out on green advertising in developing countries, no study exists which investigated the proliferation and nature of green messages in magazines in South Africa. The aim of this research has therefore been to try and establish the status quo of green advertising in magazines in South Africa. It provides insights on the use of green advertising and how sustainable messages are communicated in magazines using components of advertising literature related to the characteristics and structural elements for advertisements. This theoretical foundation for the research is reviewed in this chapter.

Chapter two provides a review of the literature concerning green advertising and green marketing. The chapter begins laying out the overview of green research in South Africa to understand what is known. This is then followed by a review of relevant literature on the importance of green communication in South Africa. Thereafter, the chapter develops the elements of the deductive analysis protocol by exploring advertising literature in terms of

advertising appeals that may be used to communicate the green message and the components of message structure in green advertisements. The chapter then explores the possible content of green advertisements by exploring the green problems that are addressed and proposed green solutions in green advertising. Then the chapter presents this study's conceptual framework. This conceptual framework is used to determine the extent and nature of green advertising in magazines in South Africa.

## **2.2 GREEN RESEARCH FOCUS IN SOUTH AFRICA**

Research on green marketing in South Africa has focused on a variety of topics such as factors impacting the adoption of organic farming by smallholders in South Africa (Thamaga-Chitja & Hendriks 2008); the potential of using guest houses as a tool to mitigate the negative effects on the environment through the reduction in quantities of water, energy, and other resources used (Hoogendoorn, Grant, & Fitchett 2015); the use of tourism to mitigate the negative effects on the environment (Rogerson & Sims 2012); the adoption of green marketing in corporate strategy (Hamann, Smith, Tashman, & Marshall 2017; Rogerson & Sims 2012); the impact of increasing green consumer demand on cosmetics supply chain (Harvey, 2014); possible factors that influence green purchase behaviour (Bisschoff & Liebenberg 2016); factors that shape concern with local environmental issues (Hunter, Strife, & Twine 2010) and environmental sustainability and the greening of a mega-event in South Africa (Death 2011).

In relation more specifically to green knowledge or awareness, Scott and Vigar-Ellis (2014) investigated green consumption patterns, knowledge and attitudes towards the green packaging in South Africa. The research indicates that consumers have limited knowledge and understanding of what environmentally-friendly packaging is, making it difficult for consumers to differentiate between environmentally friendly and normal packaging (Scott & Vigar-Ellis 2014, p. 646). Scott and Vigar-Ellis (2014, p. 647) argue that organisations would benefit by investing in communications campaigns which would educate the public on the benefits of buying products with environmentally friendly packages. Similarly, Anderson, Romani, Phillips, Wentzel, and Tlabela (2007) explored perceptions, behaviours and awareness of programs

related to water and water pollution. Anderson et al.'s (2007, p. 157) study results indicated that South Africans do not appear to have a higher level of awareness about environmental concerns. However, Berndt and Petzer (2011) explored the attitudes and their components, of South Africans towards environmental and recycling issues. Berndt and Petzer's (2011, p. 7909) study found that respondents experience high awareness and a relatively positive attitude towards environmental issues. Also, Mkhize and Ellis (2020, p. 5) argued that there are consumers in South Africa that are lacking in environmental consciousness. These studies indicate that South African consumers may be aware of some environmental issues. Still, they lack the necessary knowledge of other aspects of green consumption and yet this knowledge is likely to be important in forming positive attitudes towards and environmentally friendly behaviour.

Anvar and Venter (2014) explored attitudes and purchase behaviour of green products among generation Y consumers in South Africa. Anvar and Venter's (2014, p. 192) results indicated that social influence, environmental awareness and price, positively influence individuals' attitudes towards green products. Tshuma, Makhathini, Siketile, Mushunje, and Taruvinga (2010) explored antecedents of consumer purchase intentions for organic food and found a significant strong relationship between consumer awareness and consumer purchase intentions (Tshuma et al. 2010, p. 464). Similarly, Mhlophe (2016) investigated consumer perceptions and factors that influence the purchase of organic products. Mhlophe (2016, p. 12) indicates that there is a positive relationship between consumer awareness and purchase intention. Thus, awareness and knowledge are important factors influencing green behaviour. Momberg, Jacobs, and Sonnenberg (2012) investigated the role of environmental knowledge in young female consumers' evaluation and selection of apparel in South Africa. The study results suggest that inadequate promotions by relevant stakeholders within the fashion-textile supply chain as well as limited availability of eco-friendly apparel within the South African retail sector are causes of the lack of task-oriented awareness and knowledge (Momberg et al. 2012, p. 414). Thus, expecting consumers that lack necessary knowledge or awareness to behave in an environmentally friendly is an unrealistic expectation.

One way to provide consumers with knowledge about green behaviours is through green advertising. Regarding research related to green advertising, specifically, a study by Synodinos (2013) investigated South African black Generation Y students' environmental concerns, attitudes towards green advertisements and environmental behaviour. Synodinos's (2013, p. 87) study found that black Generation Y respondents have a positive attitude towards green advertisements with green advertisements considered an instrumental tool used to educate consumers about the importance and benefits of buying green products. Synodinos, Bevan-Dye, and De Klerk (2013) researched the influence of conative attitudes towards green advertising on black Generation Y students' environmental behaviour. Synodinos et al.'s (2013, p. 21) findings reveal that black Generation Y students' conative attitudes towards green advertising have a significant positive influence on their environmental behaviour.

Jacobs, Frey, Macready, Beneke, and Deuchar (2010) explored factors influencing attitude towards green cosmetics. The study found that there are consumers that are familiar with green cosmetics however, perception of quality is indicated to be equal as those of non-green cosmetics (Jacobs et al. 2010, p. 485). As a result, this contributed to the inability of most respondents to distinguish green and non-green cosmetics brands. Thus, possessing the correct knowledge about green issues and behaviours is important.

This section has established that research has been conducted in South Africa in relation to green behaviour. It indicates mixed levels of knowledge and awareness. It also indicates that knowledge is an important factor influencing green behaviour and that green advertising, specifically, can positively affect attitudes and behaviour. What it does not cover is the extent and nature of green advertising, one form of green communication to establish green knowledge. Without knowing what green advertising exists, it is difficult to develop strategies to improve South African consumers' knowledge to improve behaviour. The current research sets out to fill this gap. The next section discusses why green communication to develop knowledge is important in South Africa.

## **2.3 IMPORTANCE OF GREEN COMMUNICATION IN SOUTH AFRICA**

According to van Zyl (2013, p. 903), climate change, ecosystem degradation and loss of biodiversity are fuelled by the nature of the global industrial system. The author further argues that the shaky economic climate combined with current environmental challenge and limited resources signals an end of the business as the usual approach for marketers across the world. Chitra (2007, p. 173) argues that deteriorating, rare and precious natural resources necessitate the need for marketers to use advertising and other marketing mix strategies in pursuit of green resource preservation. The 2002 world figures indicating South Africa to be using 1.1 per cent of total primary energy is an understatement since South Africa's consumption in Africa was at 35.6 per cent in that same period (Sonnenberg, Erasmus, & Donoghue, 2011, p. 154). These authors further argue that South Africa emitted 306.3 million tons of carbon dioxide from coal consumption needed to generate electricity amounting to 3.4 per cent of the world's emissions but 90.6 per cent of Africa's energy-related consumption emissions. Also, South Africa is ranked 12<sup>th</sup> in the world's largest emitters list indicating the country's carbon-intensive economy (van Zyl 2013, p. 904). The author argues that changes in government policy and strategies, corporate behaviour and public consumption are required to redirect the source of economic growth away from greenhouse gas emissions. Van Zyl (2013) posits that sustainable development is achievable through conducive environmental policies founded on sustainable behaviours of government, businesses and individuals. Therefore, it is important that marketers in South Africa communicate their green messages and initiatives. This research aims to determine the extent and nature of green advertising in magazine medium in South Africa to understand better the extent to which, and how marketers communicate their green message in this medium.

The intense competition and need for environmental sustainability are continuously driving marketers to use their products for addressing the negative impact on the environment (Dubihlela & Ngxukumeshe 2016, p. 163). In addition, these authors argue that consumers shopping patterns are changing, reflecting an increase in environmentally conscious consumption. As a result, marketers are communicating their positive contributions towards

the environment fostering environmental awareness important in driving environmentally friendly behaviour (Synodinos et al. 2013, p. 17). These authors argue that green advertising is the marketers' voice used to communicate the company green image.

The available literature suggests that green communication has made its way to South Africa. For example, studies have investigated attitudes towards green advertisements (Anvar & Venter 2014; Synodinos et al. 2013) and eco-labels as a promotional tool (Barendse, Roux, Currie, Wilson, & Fabricius 2016; Ponte 2006). In terms of the extent of green communication in South Africa, Barendse et al. (2016) investigated the communication of pro-environmental behaviours in promoting and fostering conservation and sustainability in South Africa. Barendse et al. (2016, p. 5) found organisations using eco-labels that have been certified by recognised standard certification organisations can communicate and promote their organisation, products or services as green. This is because certification standards offer green marketers a unique opportunity to communicate and promote their organisations by using eco-labels that are accredited by external or independent accreditation organisations. Barendse et al.'s (2016, p. 5) study found that international third-party eco-labels were being used in South Africa. These eco-labels include 20 forestry management areas certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) covering more than 1.48 million hectares, the Blue Flag tourism eco-label for 36 beaches, four marinas, and three whale-watching boats implemented by Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa (Barendse et al. 2016, p. 5). The results show several national eco-labels addressing specific issues such as badger-friendly honey, predator-friendly meat, sustainable golf courses (e.g. the one in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program) or tourism (i.e. Green Leaf). Barendse et al.'s (2016, p. 5) findings further found that the African Eco-labelling Mechanism has developed draft standards for agriculture, fishery and forestry sectors at a continental level. Scott and Vigar-Ellis (2014, p. 647) indicated that eco-labels could be used by marketers to encourage green behaviour because these labels educate and increase consumers' awareness of environmental impacts of a product at the same time addressing environmental protection as consumers are encouraged to buy green products with a lower environmental impact. However, this depends on the company's ability in building a reputable,

environmentally friendly reputation requiring the company to have their products assessed and certified (Scott & Vigar-Ellis 2014, p. 647).

Mkhize and Ellis (2018) explored factors preventing consumers from cooperation in sustainability. The study findings suggest that the major barrier preventing consumers from behaving in a green manner is largely associated with businesses' failure to adequately promote green products (Mkhize & Ellis 2018, p. 122). Businesses that can provide better information promoting the adoption of green products stand a greater chance of being trusted by consumers in the market (Mkhize & Ellis 2018, p. 123). Mkhize and Ellis (2018, p. 124) further found that eco-labels can effectively notify consumers that products are green. However, for eco-labels to effectively direct consumers towards green products, these labels need to be credible, meaningful and recognisable to consumers (Mkhize & Ellis 2018, p. 124). With promotion being a key and necessary ingredient for the adoption of green products, businesses need to promote their green products such that consumers recognise that green products are capable alternatives to conventional products (Mkhize & Ellis 2018, p. 123).

This section developed and provided evidence of the need for communication about environmentally friendly behaviours. The section further showed that marketers should communicate their product or organisation's greenness or how they contribute to finding ways of mitigating the environmental challenges to consumers.

## **2.4 DEFINING GREEN ADVERTISING**

Green marketing literature regards green advertising a component of green marketing (Kardos, Gabor, & Cristache 2019, p. 2; Nadaf & Nadaf 2014, p. 93; Osman, Othman, Salahudin, & Abdullah 2016, p. 429). The green advertising literature includes various definitions (Groening, Sarkis, & Zhu 2018, p. 1850; Nadaf & Nadaf 2014, p. 93; Rahim, Zukni, Ahmad, & Lyndon 2012, p. 47). For this reason, it is important for this study to indicate the definition of green advertising used. According to Kemper and Ballantine (2019, p. 285), green marketing is a strategy that is informed by the greening of the overall processes of the marketing mix (product, place, promotion and price) with environmental, social and economic factors forever

present in this thinking and development. Rahim et al. (2012, p. 47) define green advertising as "advertisements that promote products, services, ideas or organizations' ability to help or reduce environmental harm". Rahim et al. (2012, p. 47) add that a green advertisement is an advertisement promoting a healthy lifestyle or living. The promotion of a healthy lifestyle or living in a green advertisement is communicated in the form of messages encouraging people to lead eco-friendly and environmentally responsible lives encompassing a reduction in the ecological footprint (Rahim et al. 2012, p. 47). This study adopts the above definition of green advertising. Thus, this study used the above definition to set the criteria to qualify an advertisement as green. Advertisements were considered green if:

1. The advertisement promoted a healthy lifestyle or living, for example, advertisements promoting healthy lifestyle including outdoor living, fitness or physical activity to improve health and fitness (Rahim et al. 2012, p. 47),
2. The advertisement made reference to nature or used scenery or imagery depicting nature, for example, an advertisement using scenes of nature including natural habitats or flora or fauna in natural settings (Shen et al. 2020, p. 4; Leonidou et al. 2011, p. 9),
3. The advertisement used phrases including fitness, health, life and nature (Banerjee, Gulas & Iyer 1995, p. 22),
4. The advertisement claimed that the product or company is sustainable or addressing sustainability (Rahim et al. 2012, p. 47). It should be noted that statements about a product being sustainable or addressing sustainability in some way, was enough to qualify an advertisement as green without determining the truthfulness of the advertisement. Thus, for this study, greenness was viewed at face value. Assessing the occurrence of greenwashing which is defined as an act of communicating exaggerated, misleading and unsubstantiated environmental claims by companies was beyond the scope of this study (Fernandes, Segev & Leopold 2020, p. 1),
5. The advertisement used the inclusion of eco-labels, environmental claims, depicting images of green problems or proposing green solutions, environmental spokespersons or environmental contributions (Leonidou et al. 2011, p. 9).

Thus for this study, a green advertisement is defined as green if it met one or more of the above criteria.

Various studies in green advertising literature in South Africa stress the importance of promotion in achieving green behaviour (Mkhize & Ellis 2018, p. 123; Scott & Vigar-Ellis 2014, p. 647). However, no study has researched the extent and nature of green advertising in South Africa. To begin unpacking the nature of green advertising, the following section discusses the components of advertisements, including message characteristics and green message content.

## **2.5 THE NATURE OF GREEN ADVERTISING**

Understanding the advertising literature is key in this study because it informs this research on what it is looking for when assessing the nature of advertising in these advertisements. The advertising literature provides a guide on the elements this research is assessing in terms of the nature of green advertising. Research in relation to advertising effectiveness looked at elements that include message characteristics and content elements. These are elements of advertising that present advertising structure consisting of message characteristics and content elements that relate to green advertising. The advertising literature indicates that message characteristics elements are assessed in terms of advertising appeals and message structure that include message framing, the inclusion of environmental claims, message explicitness and the inclusion of an eco-label (Kim & Han 2016 p. 3; Liu & Liu 2020, p. 9; Niederdeppe, Bu, Borah, Kindig & Robert 2008, p. 489; Song & Luximon 2019 p. 5).

The information processing theory suggests that consumers may process information either systematically or heuristically (Line, Hanks & Zhang 2016, p. 145). Line et al. (2016, p. 145) argue that conclusions in systematic processing involve comprehensive use of detailed information to make a decision. Whereas, heuristic processing is argued to be based on clues, stereotypes and proxy characteristics used to evaluate an event, situation or object (Line et al. 2016, p. 1450). Thus, consumers' motivation determines how an individual processes information. The individual's processing of information is affected by how the advertisement message is positioned (Niederdeppe et al. 2008, p. 488). Song and Luximon (2019, p. 10) adds that message

design is key in strengthening the communication of a green message and influencing consumer behaviour. Song and Luximon (2019, p. 10) argue that the message design and content affect an individual's processing of an advertisement. Song and Luximon (2019, p. 10) study results show that when green advertisements communicate environmental messages using uppercase evoked a higher level of environmental concern, as compared to when this message is communicated in lowercase message design. According to Dhurup (2017, p. 78), green advertising is used as a strategy for strengthening communication of the sustainable message. Kusumasondjaja (2018, p. 1138) argues that appeals are the glue that connects brands' communication, consumers' desires and advertisement content. Thus, advertising appeals are used to strengthen the communication of a green message in advertising. Also, message explicitness is a critical characteristic in advertising (Usrey, Paihawadana, Saridakis & Theotokis 2020, p. 126). According to Usrey et al. (2020, p. 126), message explicitness is an advertising strategy that allows firms to make products' environmental characteristics the advertisement focus. Thus, message explicitness may be used to influence how consumers respond to advertising, their attitude toward the brand and purchase intention (Yan et al. 2012, p. 153). According to prospect theory, presenting potential gain or loss may influence the decision-making process (Xue 2015, p. 154). Hence, message framing is another important characteristic of advertising strategy that marketers may use to effectively communicate a green message by presenting possible future outcomes in an advertisement as positive or negative (Gerend & Sias 2009, p. 999). Dhurup (2017, p. 78) argues that a message framing strategy used by environmental conscious advertisers to effectively communicate a green message that would educate and empower consumers is key in communicating and positioning a message such that consumers are educated.

The literature in green advertising suggests that environmentally conscious advertisers use the environmental claims for strengthening their communication of a green message (Chan 2000; Chan, Lueng & Wong 2006; Gurbuz, Akin & Karabag 2012). Tucker, Riforn, Lee and Reece (2012 p. 16) argue that advertisers use environmental claims because they positively affect advertisement credibility and attitudes. Thus, environmental claims could be used in green advertising to strengthen the communication of a green message. Also, an eco-label is another

critical characteristic of green advertising providing support to the communication of a green message by combining visual and verbal communication (Tang, Fryxell & Chow 2004, p. 98). Tang et al. (2004, p. 97) argue that presenting the product's environmental message using both visual and verbal communication design results in a strong positive influence on consumer purchases. Thus, eco-labels are an effective communication tool used by marketers to inform and strengthen green message credibility to environmentally conscious consumers that indicate the product's environmental friendliness (Suki 2013, p. 2; Tang et al. 2004, p. 87).

Thus from the above discussion, the elements used to assess the green advertisements' message characteristics were the appeals used, message explicitness, message framing, environmental claims and the inclusion of eco-labels. The definitions and research on the roles of these elements in green advertising are discussed in greater depth in the sections that follow.

The present research could not find a theory on message content elements in green advertising design. However, green marketing and advertising literature are used to indicate the importance of addressing green problems and proposing solutions to the environmental problems that result in less or minimal detriment on the environment (Alniacik & Yilmaz 2012, p. 196; Chitra 2007, p. 173; Peterson 2006, p. 206; Liu & Liu 2020, p. 15). Based on the benefits-congruency model, the ability of green advertising in showing multiple benefits causes consumers to act on the communicated green message (Hopkins 2019, 549). According to Zubair Tariq (2014, p. 277), addressing and presenting green solutions in green advertising through credible environmental messages results in positive attitudes towards the advertisement and influence purchase intention. Consumers consider green advertising as the source for credible environmental information (Phau & Ong 2007, p. 774). Thus, addressing green problems or proposing green solutions in green advertising are important message content elements for green advertising that would effectively communicate a green message. The message content of the green advertisements in this study is thus assessed in terms of green problems and solutions proposed in green advertising literature.

The justification for the inclusion of each construct is discussed more fully in the sections below. The following sections on the various structural characteristics of advertisements provide justification for their importance in effective advertising but also identify the various levels or types for each element and the research on their effects. This helps in making recommendations to marketers advertising in magazines in South Africa of where and how potentially beneficial elements that are currently not found to be evident in this research may be used in future to more effectively communicate the green message.

### **2.5.1 Advertising appeals and green advertising**

Advertising appeals are persuasive pressures applied by marketers in general such that it stimulates an individual to purchase a product or service according to his or her specifications (Chahal & Kaur 2015, p. 87). Marketers use the influential power of advertising appeals to pursue and encourage change in consumer behaviour showcased by consumers engaging in sustainable consumption (Yang et al. 2015, p. 2663). These authors further argue that green products are advertised using a variety of appeals. Green advertising studies indicate that marketers rely on the use of a variety of appeals, including fear (Hartmann, Apaolaza, D'souza, Barrutia, & Echebarria 2015), guilt (Jiménez & Yang 2008), collectivist appeals (Xue 2015), individualistic appeals (Muralidharan et al. 2016), imagery appeals (Hartmann, Apaolaza, & Alija 2013), eco-labels (Testa, Iraldo, Vaccari, & Ferrari 2015), rational/benefit appeals (Jovanović, Vlastelica, & Kostić 2017) and motherhood appeals (Atkinson 2014). Marketers have engaged in efforts to find appropriate types of advert messages that have the power to positively influence environmentally friendly behaviours (Baek & Yoon 2016, p. 440). Lee, Chang, and Chen (2017, p. 379) investigated the effectiveness of fear and hope appeals in green communications. The authors argued that when communicating the environmental issue as a global problem, the fear appeal is more effective; however, hope appeals are the most effective when communicating the environmental issue as local. Banerjee et al. (1995) conducted a content analysis of television and print advertisements in the USA to understand the use of appeals in green advertising. Banerjee et al.'s (1995, p. 26) study results found emotional appeals are mostly used in the television and print media (27.4% and 16.7%, respectively, with

fear and guilt the commonly used advertising appeals in the USA's advertisements. There is a multitude of appeals used both in conventional advertising and green advertising (Chahal & Kaur 2015, p. 87). The following section provides an overview of green advertising appeals:

## **Guilt appeals**

Baek and Yoon (2016, p. 440) argue that guilt and shame emotions are used by marketers to stimulate self-conscious emotions resulting in consumer self-evaluations and are used to motivate consumers to do the right thing, such as engaging in environmentally friendly consumption and avoiding actions compelling consumers into wrongdoing. As a result, guilt has become a consistent feature in advertising for both green advertisers and non-green advertisers due to its ability to influence consumer attention, attitude towards a product or service, and to induce pro-environmental consumer behaviours (Chang 2011, p. 588; 2012, p. 743; Hibbert, Smith, Davies, & Ireland 2007, p. 724).

According to Chang (2012, p. 764), guilt-induced messages in green advertisements can trigger consumers' emotions and positively influence attitudes and behaviour. However, the study also found moderate guilt appeals to arouse more felt guilt than either high- or low-intensity appeals whereas, high guilt appeals result in consumers' arousal of feelings of anger, annoyance and irritation. Baek and Yoon (2016, p. 449) found that situational factors play a significant role when the advertisement objective is to promote behavioural activation. Green advertisements presenting benefits subscribing to having improved environment quality are effective in increasing the likelihood of guilt (Baek & Yoon 2016, p. 449). Chang (2012) found guilt appeals to be effective when there is a parallel between issue proximity and message respondent. For example, an advertisement warning of the dangers of smoking would be more effective if a smoker or smokers wanting to quit saw it. This study argued that when guilt appeals are used to communicate a low-proximity issue with individuals' expressing weak environmental consciousness, this results in a negative impact on the effectiveness of this appeal in green advertisements. For example, a guilt appeal used in an advertisement that warns people of water scarcity in Cape Town, South Africa is most likely to be ineffective when seen by

individuals not residing in the Western Cape Province as well as individuals that consider water scarcity a myth. Also, the study found that promoting a high-proximity issue to highly conscious individuals using guilt appeals fails. According to Chang (2012, p. 746), this is because high environmental conscious consumers tend to carefully scrutinise the advertising message, which may reduce the intended effect. Existing knowledge of the issue may also result in these consumers not to believe that the green claims are plausible (Chang 2012, p. 746). Chang (2012, p. 761) therefore cautions advertisers using guilt appeals as proximity, and environmental consciousness is of the essence and should be considered as they influence the advertisement effectiveness. Similar findings are reported by Oyedele and Dejong (2013, p. 444) found that the use of guilt appeals make consumers dislike green advertisements. Thus, Oyedele and Dejong's (2013, p. 445) caution green marketers that the levels of guilt in the green advertisement need to be informed by the targeted consumers' environmental consciousness. The next subsection explores threat/fear appeals in green advertising.

### **Threat or fear appeals**

Fear appeals, as an advertising communication strategy, aim to trigger and elicit feelings of discomfort or fear in an individual (Shin, Ki, & Griffin 2017, p. 475). For this reason, feelings of discomfort are elicited, which results in self-introspection of how the individual's behaviours affect individuals' overall well-being of others or the environment. These feelings of discomfort elicit change in attitude or behaviour (Shin et al. 2017, p. 476). Shin et al. (2017, p. 473) researched the effectiveness of fear appeal messages used to arouse a threat in green advertising. The study found that fear appeals negatively influence both the attitude toward the ad and the advertised product. However, environmentally conscious consumers are most likely to positively receive the message leading to a positive attitude toward the advertised product and increasing purchase intention. An experimental study by Hartmann et al. (2014, p. 752) in Australia investigated the effect of environmental threat appeal use in green advertising found that threat appeals have a strong increase on respondent's pro-environmental intentions.

The study by Peters, Ruiter, and Kok (2014) conducted in the Netherlands found a significant link between threat and efficacy. According to Peters, Ruiter, and Kok (2013, p. 9) threat refers to the danger of harm, characterised by the degree of severity as well as the degree to which an individual is susceptible to the given threat, whereas, efficacy refers to individual's ability to negate the harm impacting on the effectiveness of employed threat. Peters et al. (2014, p. 77) found threat appeals to be highly effective when threat and efficacy are adequately high. Therefore, it concluded that fear appeals should be exclusively used when results of pilot studies show that an intervention successfully enhances the ability of consumers to negate harm (Peters et al. 2014, p. 77). For example, doctors aiming at reducing alcohol consumption of young people can use brain scan pictures (Peters et al. 2014, p. 74). These pictures can show a child who had never consumed alcohol and have another scan showing a child who had consumed alcohol. The doctor can then relate to youngsters effect of alcohol on their brains. As a result, these youngsters could start raising questions and thinking about what they have seen and hence consider never to drink or not to drink until they are adults.

Another study by White (2013, p. 30) in the United States indicated that fear appeals ability to arouse feelings of anxiety is then able to drive change in attitudes, essentially moderating behavioural intentions. Chen (2016) investigated the impact of fear appeals on pro-environmental behaviour of Chinese consumers. The study results indicate that there is an insignificant difference between low and moderate-fear appeals' effect in determining pro-environmentally friendly behaviour (Chen 2016, p. 82). However, the study further found that low-fear appeals exert more influence on an individual's intention to engage in environmentally friendly behaviour than high-fear appeals (Chen 2016, p. 82). This is because the evoked fearful emotion is higher in low-fear appeal as opposed to a high-fear appeal context.

A study by Mukherjee and Dubé (2012) in Canada used humour in fear appeals to offset that audiences' defensive responses that can result in the reduction of the intended persuasive effect of the ad. The study found the use of humour to reduce defensive responses and thus increase the effectiveness of fear appeals (Mukherjee & Dubé 2012, p. 151). Also, the results of the study suggest that adding a humour element improves the effectiveness of fear appeals

in an advertisement. When consumers are exposed to fear appeal communication, they automatically defend against such appeals reducing the persuasion effect (Mukherjee & Dubé 2012, p. 148). Whereas, when consumers are exposed to an advertisement with a spice of humour, the fear tension arousal increases because the playfulness of humour provides consumers with a safe context cancelling out the need for the defensive responses towards fear advertising (Mukherjee & Dubé 2012, p. 148). As consumers reduce their defence responses, they develop heightened focus towards the threatening message resulting in them acknowledging their vulnerability to the threat. The use of humour in fear advertising has the potential of raising concerns based on appropriateness of humour in advertising containing a health threat such as skin cancer (Mukherjee & Dubé 2012, p. 151). For example, Mukherjee and Dubé (2012, p. 151) show that humour has been used in health threat advertisements, for example, humorous cartoons showing condom use as a protection against AIDS pandemic. This, therefore, shows that fear appeal may be used as it can influence attitudes that moderate consumer's behavioural intentions resulting in consumer's susceptibility to environmentally friendly behaviours. The next subsection investigates hope appeals in green advertising.

## **Hope Appeals**

For the hope appeal to be influential, future outcome/s need to be in alignment with the individual's future goals such that the individual is motivated to commit in attaining future outcomes (Chadwick 2015, p. 600). In addition, hope is determined by the significance of future outcome or personal relevance because human behaviour is motivated by the approach that is to gain rewards and avoidance that relates to avoiding punishments (Chadwick 2015, p. 600). Messages that centre on actions that are aimed at addressing dangers caused by climate change offer the promise of desired outcomes and thus are expected to evoke hope (Feldman & Hart 2018, p. 587). Hope appeals offers green marketers an opportunity to using green advertisements as a creative strategy that make consumers more open to future solutions or action programs (Spears, Blankson, & Guzmán 2012, p. 80).

The study by Chadwick (2015) researched the effect of hope appeals used to prevent climate change. The study results show that subjective feelings of hope determine the interest an individual has in climate protection (Chadwick 2015, p. 608). The study found that message focus may influence the persuasive power of hope appeals depending on whether the message focus is on performing or avoiding behaviour and by achieving the desired outcome or avoiding a negative outcome (Chadwick 2015, p. 609). The study further indicates that hope appeal is most likely to encourage individuals to perform behaviours (Chadwick 2015, p. 609). Thus, the hope appeal may be used in green advertising to encourage people to perform behaviours that promote environmental friendliness because of possible rewards to be gained.

The study by Feldman and Hart (2018) tested the influence of news visuals and texts that are used to communicate the risk associated with climate change on people's feelings of hope and support for policies that mitigate climate change risks in the United States. The study results indicate that text and imagery were emphasising actions that may be taken to mitigate climate change inspire hope (Feldman & Hart 2018, p. 600). When hope is inspired, people tend to increase climate policy support (Feldman & Hart 2018, p. 600). The use of hope appeal in green advertising is most likely to induce positive feelings that will result in consumers responding positively to actions that address environmental challenges such as climate change (Chadwick 2015, p. 608). The next subsection investigates rational/benefit appeals in green advertising.

### **Rational or benefit appeals**

The focus of the utilitarian advertising appeal is largely based on strategies that involve informing consumers of key benefits that are perceived by marketers to be highly functional or essential to a given audience (Johar & Sirgy 1991, p. 23). This strategy is solely highlighting the benefits or functional features of the product or brand relative to competing products (Johar & Sirgy 1991, p. 23; Schmuck, Matthes, Naderer, & Beaufort 2018, p. 415). The use of rational appeals in green advertisements helps provide information to consumers that are later used to make judgements about the communicated messages (Jovanović et al. 2017, p. 37). Green and Pelozo (2014, p. 128) argue that consumers' pro-environmental behaviour is usually a result of

promised benefits. These authors explain that consumer and societal benefits are the two product benefits that are communicated in advertisements of environmentally friendly products and hence, the communication strategies emphasise one or both of the two benefits that can be a result of sustainable consumption. The study by Green and Peloza (2014, p. 132) indicates that in situations where consumers experience increased public accountability, they are more responsive to other-benefit appeals. In contrast, self-benefit appeals are more effective in private settings (Green & Peloza 2014, p. 132). For example, consumers seeing a green advertisement encouraging a switch from single-use plastic to reusable to help address plastic pollution that flows into seas is a public setting and consumers are more likely to respond to other-benefit appeals. However, when a green advertisement is viewed in a private setting, encouraging consumers to buy re-usable products using self-benefit appeals such as cost savings would be more effective.

Royne, Martinez, Oakley, and Fox (2012, p. 96) found that environmental challenges have contributed to changing how environmental appeals are perceived as marketers have continuously worked on the image of eco-friendly products and the study urges marketers not to hesitate to use pro-environmental advertising appeals due to perception change about green products reinforcing product efficacy. The study found environmental benefit appeals are more effective relative to personal-benefit appeals. Another study by Yang et al. (2015) explored the use of abstract and concrete appeals to stimulate consumers' pro-environmental behaviour. The study found abstract appeals result in significantly fewer purchase intentions given that the attributes of green products are associated with the benefit of self as opposed to the benefit of others (Yang et al. 2015, p. 2667). This is because green products are generally aimed at promoting overall societal, environmental benefits (Yang et al. 2015, p. 2664). As a result, abstract appeals may influence purchase intentions more when associated with green product attributes, promoting overall societal as the main environmental beneficiaries. However, Yang et al. (2015, p. 2669) argue that effectiveness of abstract and concrete appeals is influenced by three variables consisting of benefit association of green products, public self-awareness and salience of collective level of self. This explains how consumers' response differs or is determined by setting, with consumers with high public self-awareness more likely to positively

respond to promised benefits when green purchase could benefit other individuals or overall society. Contrarily, consumers with low public self-awareness are less likely to change their response as a result of how others would perceive these consumers and hence respond positively when the green advertisement is emphasising consumer as the main beneficiary. Chahal and Kaur (2015, p. 89) also found that some consumers focused on one's self-benefit while others buy green because they believe their purchases will result in overall benefit to society.

Consumers price sensitivity and the general perception that green products cost more than conventional products results in poor sales for environmentally friendly products (Chahal & Kaur 2015, p. 93). As a result, marketers are using psychological price endings in advertising appeals to lure consumers. Combining psychological price endings in appeals results in consumers being more receptive to green products (Chahal & Kaur 2015, p. 93). Chahal and Kaur's (2015) study examine consumer's perceptions of green advertising examining the effectiveness of environmental versus personal benefits appeals and .00 versus .99 price endings. According to Chahal and Kaur (2015, p. 89), products that are advertised with environmental appeals and price endings with .00 are perceived to be of superior quality relative to those advertised with personal benefit appeals and .99 price endings. Chahal and Kaur (2015, p. 93) argue that consumers are price sensitive and generally perceive green products to be more expensive relative to conventional products. As a result, combining advertising appeals and psychological price endings help change consumers perceptions and attitude toward the green advertisement (Chahal & Kaur 2015, p. 93). The results of the study showed that environmental benefit appeals are more persuasive to environmentally conscious consumers; however, with high involvement products, product benefits are more effective (Chahal & Kaur 2015, p. 95). The study also found that perception of the appeals is affected by consumers' psychological formation of closeness or fairness of the acclaimed benefits or losses of the advertised product. When the appeal promises benefit that will be realised soon, then consumers are believed to respond more positively to the appeal (Chahal & Kaur 2015, p. 95). The next subsection explores imagery appeals in green advertisements.

## **Imagery appeals**

Hansen (2002, p. 499) argues that explicit environmental appeals are now comparatively rare, which has seen an increase in the use of nature imagery. However, Hansen (2002, p. 500) notes that 'nature' is a complex word or term. The connotation of nature drawn from several scholars tends to be nature appeals that are based on the intrinsic goodness of nature, notions of nature as the embodiment of health, purity and freshness and to the restorative powers of nature (Hansen 2002, p. 507). Imagery appeals are therefore used in green advertising because marketers can draw associations with the connotation of nature resonating with and drawing on consumers' national and cultural understanding of nature (Hansen 2002, p. 505).

Hartmann et al. (2013, p. 200) found that the use of nature imagery presented in advertisement enhances cognitive advertising message elaboration and memory. These authors found that consumer exposure to nature in green advertisements may trigger emotional experiences similar to those experienced by consumers when they are in the natural environment (Hartmann et al. 2013, p. 201). Also, the study indicates that imagery appeals are favourable in influencing product attitude that is highly moderated by the environmental attitudes of the respondents. This is because exposure to nature enhances recovery from mental fatigue, restoring mental resources involved in directed attention and improving performance on attention and memory-related tasks (Hartmann et al. 2013, p. 199). Hartmann et al. (2013, p. 201) study results found imagery appeals can significantly influence product attitude because exposure to nature reduces negatively toned feelings and decreases physiological arousal from high to moderate levels, replacing them with a state of sustained, wakefully relaxed attention that improves cognitive elaboration. Hartmann et al. (2013, p. 190) further found virtual nature experiences to yield significant influences disregarding the consumer's degree of environmental attitudes. This is because pictures and video recordings of nature featured in advertising can enhance mental elaboration of advertising messages increasing memory retention of these messages (Hartmann et al. 2013, p. 200). As a result, virtual pictures of nature are more pleasant and relaxing, as opposed to real nature (Hartmann et al. 2013, p. 201). Hartmann and Apaolaza-Ibáñez's (2008, p. 834) affirmed the influence of virtual nature

experiences in stimulating perception and attitude change towards the brand. Similarly, Hartmann and Apaolaza-Ibáñez's (2009) study in Spain found that when consumers are effectively conditioned to virtual nature experiences, this may positively influence consumers' attitude towards the environmentally friendly product.

Similarly, the study by Xue (2013, p. 81) conducted in China found the use of green visuals to result in consumers' receptiveness to green advertisements and develop positive perceptions about the brand's environmental effort. The study results also suggest that the influence of green visuals be stronger for low-involvement products relative to high-involvement products concerning green brand associations (Xue 2013, p. 81). A study by Chen (2016) evaluated the broad multimodal means through which the concept of nature is constructed in automobile advertisements in China. The study found that the majority of the advertisements featuring natural images tend to be general rather than specific (Chen 2016, p. 15). Chen (2016, p. 19) found there is a growing trend by automobile marketers in China of promoting pro-western cultures, changing how products are promoted with a shift towards using natural images. This is because nature can be easily associated with a variety of attributes, such as youth, friendship, and love. However, on the negative side, the study also found that the constant separation between human society and nature found in the analysed advertisements indicates the dominance of anthropocentric values that continue to frame nature as a symbolic resource for human consumption (Chen 2016, p. 19). Chen (2016, p. 19) explains that marketers are perpetuating the individualism, green and material consumption, undermining the importance of addressing social issues such as environmental challenges. These marketers are promoting their products in a manner that disregards the importance of nature by indicating that consumers can do as they please to nature.

The study by Spack, Board, Crighton, Kostka, and Ivory (2012) found that argument strength and imagery used in environmental claims on product packing affect participant's perceptions of the claims' credibility, perceptions of the products' greenness, attitude toward the product, purchasing intent and general attitudes toward green product advertisements. The study found that imagery appeals are significantly influential and a predictor of purchasing intent and more

influential than argument strength (Spack et al. 2012, p. 453). The use of imagery appeal in green advertising suggests that imagery appeal assists marketers to influence environmentally conscious consumers such that consumers are more welcoming of green messages resulting in changes in consumer attitudes and behaviours. The next subsection investigates individualistic and collectivist appeals in green advertising.

### **Individualistic and Collectivist Appeals**

Xue (2015, p. 162) suggests that green advertisements are more likely to be more effective if they are aligned with the cultural values of the targeted audience/s. This because different cultures respond to different specific values. When marketers are communicating their advertising in individualistic cultures, individual uniqueness and self-determination are significantly valued (Xue 2015, p. 155). Whereas, in collectivist societies, there is a strong emphasis on family and collective actions deemphasising personal goals and accomplishment (Gevorgyan & Manucharova 2015, p. 197; Samarasinghe 2012, p. 88). The country's socio-economic performance consisting of literacy and life expectancy, and economic development determines the way of life in a country regarding individualistic or collectivist cultures (Rajbhandari, Rajbhandari, Loock and Du Plessis 2017, p. 135). However, there are countries wherein both influences are common (van Zyl, Dankaert & Guse 2018, p. 699). For example, in South Africa, most of the black ethnic group are more collective, whereas white ethnic group are commonly individualistic (van Zyl et al. 2018, p. 699).

Xue (2015, p. 160) revealed that green advertisements using collectivist appeals resulted in increased positive attitude toward the advertisement relative to advertisements that used individualistic appeals. This is because Chinese society celebrates and promotes collectivist values and hence, favour green advertisements using collectivist appeals. The study by Xue (2015) highlighted the distinction between the individualistic and collectivist societies by using China and the United States to exemplify the differences in these cultures. For example, Chinese green advertisements emphasise family and collective actions, whereas Americans tend to highlight individual goals and accomplishments. Green advertisements in Chinese

society commonly use terms including 'we' and 'others' emphasising group harmony whereas in American society commonly us 'I' and 'you' that is strongly linked with self-actualisation (Muralidharan, La Ferle, & Sung 2017, p. 399).

Similarly, the study by Muralidharan et al. (2017, p. 396) researched the impact of culturally congruent appeals in green advertising in the multicultural environments of India and the USA. The research showed that collectivist appeals are more effective with Indian consumers, while American consumers respond more to individualistic appeals. However, advertisement effectiveness was found to be moderated by the degree of newness and consumers' concern for the environment (Muralidharan et al. 2017, p. 398). Kim (2011) studied the influence of collectivism, personal values, and environmental attitudes and the moderating effect of perceived consumer effectiveness. The study results indicate that collectivism is positive and significantly related to self-transcendence that further influences consumers' green consciousness (Kim 2011, p. 80). In addition, collectivism has a significant influence on individual values (Kim 2011, p. 84). This is because green advertisements using collectivist appeals result in a positive influence on self-enhancement values (Kim 2011, p. 82). With Korean collectivist culture strongly influencing the formation of consumers' values, infusing collectivist appeals in green advertisements has a significant impact on what individuals may perceive important (Kim 2011, p. 82). For example, caring for the environment is considered a norm in Korean individual values because of the country's collectivist cultures, which would then guide Koreans to purchase products that are less detrimental to the environment. This is because collectivist appeals in green advertisements would invoke individual values that promote the welfare of others and nature, consumers become more concerned about environmental problems because their effect is not limited to individuals (Kim 2011, p. 83). Thus, consumers' environmental attitude is guided by consumers' environmentally related values that are elicited by the collectivist appeals in green advertisements (Kim 2011, p. 83). Xue (2015) explored the effect of message framing and individualistic and collectivist appeal in green advertising on Chinese consumer's attitudes toward trust of green messages and purchase intention. The study findings indicate that using collectivist appeals in advertising result in more positive advertising and brand attitude and purchase intention (Xue 2015, p.

160). The study findings further show that, compared to individual appeals, collectivist appeals have a positive and significant influence on attitude toward the advertisement, brand, green trust and purchase intention relative (Xue 2015, p. 162). Muralidharan et al. (2016, p. 57) argue that with countries increasingly becoming globalised, there are shifts in cultural differences with highly globalised countries indicating fragments of differences between individualistic and collectivist societies. Muralidharan et al. (2016, p. 57) suggest that global marketers of green products need to be knowledgeable of cultural shifts and develop advertisements that resonate with current mindsets. The next subsection explores motherhood appeals in green advertising.

### **Motherhood Appeals**

According to Atkinson (2014, p. 558), women are perceived by society to be occupying a unique position concerning the environment. Atkinson (2014, p. 558), argues that since the early days of the environmental movement, women have significantly contributed to championing for environmental conservation as well as ecological justice. Mothers are viewed as a motive and inspiration for environmental activism, resulting in the 'mother' being used as a way of framing environmentalism (Atkinson 2014, p. 558). Ray (2011, p. 81) adds that the environment is often referred to as 'Mother Earth' and motherhood has been used as the metaphor for the environment. Often mothers are decision-makers regarding household consumption decisions, resulting in mothers being the target of many marketers offering new green products including environmentally-friendly appliances, energy-efficient lightbulb, toys, and cleaning products (AbiGhannam & Atkinson 2016, p. 452; Smith 2010, p. 66). These mothers are also urged to solve the environmental crisis (Ray 2011, p. 83). This results in mothers being encouraged to ensure that their consumption behaviour demonstrates concern for their child and the environment (Smith 2010, p. 67). Even women who have yet to have children are encouraged to consider themselves as 'pre-pregnant' and to favour organic food when possible (Atkinson 2014, p. 558). The society often views consumption as a gendered practice, and it is also prevalent in appeals used in marketing and advertising messages (AbiGhannam & Atkinson 2016, p. 452).

The study by Coutant, de La Ville, Gram, and Boireau (2011) explored the social construction of motherhood in Danonina advertisements in France, Spain, Poland, Russia, and Germany. The study result indicates that advertisements targeting mothers are designed with the notion that mothers are expected to care, and this caring includes dealing with hidden and invisible risks that are widely found in Western countries (Coutant et al. 2011, p. 26). For example, advertisements of Danonina in Germany directly or indirectly focus on anxieties over industrial food, insufficient nutrition and learning whereas advertisements in France, Spain, Poland and Russia focus directly on risk and scientific expertise showing the physiological, psychological and cognitive problems that could arise if a child is not properly fed (Coutant et al. 2011, p. 25).

A study by Cairns, Johnston, and MacKendrick (2013) investigated the gendering of ethical food in Canada. The study indicates that motherhood is constructed as protecting purity (Cairns et al. 2013, p. 103). Organic food consumption is considered a maternal responsibility key in preserving children's purity and potentially protecting children from dangerous and contaminating chemicals (Cairns et al. 2013, p. 103). This shows that to enhance the influence of green advertising appeal, marketers may use motherhood appeal, especially to mothers.

These appeals are part of the conceptual framework when assessing the structure or the nature advertising in magazines in South Africa. The advertising appeals are a critical element of effective advertising. Ku, Kuo, Wu and Wu (2012) used the regulatory focus theory in understanding the drivers of consumers purchasing behaviour. The regulatory focus theory shows that consumers are either guided by promotion or prevention towards behaviour or goal (Kuo et al. 2012, p. 42). Thus, green advertisers may use the advertising messages to stimulate a promotion or prevention response by communicating messages that strengthen benefits linked to the behaviour or strengthening the communication of messages aimed at evoking prevention-related behaviour (Kuo et al. 2012, p. 42). Kusumasondjaja (2018, p. 1138) adds that advertising appeals are a key element in creative strategy communicating the brand information and consumers' desires as well as the element that connect consumers to the advertising message. This creative strategy is used by marketers for attracting consumers and

influencing their behaviour (Li & Song 2011, p. 2, Wang, Bao, Wang & Wu 2017, p. 32). The advertising message strategy distinguishes message appeals to emotional and rational appeals (Li & Song 2011, p. 2; Kusumasondjaja 2018, p. 1138). Emotional appeals include guilt, threat/fear, hope, whereas rational/benefit, imagery, individualistic and collectivist, and motherhood appeals make up the rational appeals. Thus, the environmental appeals section discussed the several appeals that have been used to communicate a green message in the literature. As a result, this discussion assisted this research in providing a base for understanding the extent of appeals in green advertisements in magazine advertising in South Africa. The insight gained from the green advertising literature pointed out which elements to assess when determining the nature of green advertising. Thus, these appeals are part of the conceptual framework used in this research to assess the message characteristics of advertisements in magazine advertising. The next section explores the message structure in green advertising further attributing to the overall research objective of understanding the nature of green advertising found in magazines in South Africa.

## **2.6 MESSAGE STRUCTURE AND GREEN ADVERTISING**

Marketers (green and non-green) use advertising information to influence consumers' attention and memory of advertising content (Tu, Kao, & Tu 2013, p. 1085). This information is used as a tool for encouraging potential customers to use a company's products being promoted. The increase in advertising targeting the consumer population heightens the need for marketers to craft advertisements that resonate with the target audience (Tu et al. 2013, p. 1085). These authors add that the way the advert content is drafted differs and may depend on a multitude of factors such as marketers' intentions, product type, product involvement, and extent of consumers' environmental concern. The advertising design is a key part of the communication strategy that marketers use to communicate a green message. As a result, various message structure elements have been researched in relation to environmentally friendly behaviour or green marketing (Ganz & Grimes 2020; Kim, Lee & Hur 2012; Yan et al. 2012; Zhu 2013). The following present justification for message structure elements uses in green marketing and behaviour research. According to Xue (2015, p. 154), message framing is

an effective advertising message strategy that allows advertisers to use positive frames or negative frame important in influencing decision making. Xue (2015, p. 159) research results found that message framing cause significant effects on attitude toward the brand, green trust and purchase intention. This advertising message strategy strengthens the communication of a green message by making this message standout and focuses on the advertisement (Olsen et al. 2014, p. 122). The inclusion of environmental claims is another critical message characteristic in advertising design because of these claims ability in influencing positive effect in advertising credibility and attitudes (Tucker et al. 2012, p. 16). According to Kim et al. (2012, p. 4), marketers use environmental claims as cues that signal product's or advertisement's environmental friendliness.

Ganz and Grimes (2020, p. 5) argue that the provision of credible and specific information with reference to the environmental claim or how firms are addressing the environmental problem could strengthen the advertising credibility. Thus, eco-label is important in advertising design because they strengthen green message by presenting detailed information that consumers use to evaluate and form attitudes toward the presented environmental claim in the green advertisement (Zhu 2013, p. 74). Yan et al. (2012, p. 153) argue that message explicitness use in green advertising may be explained by the ability of this advertising strategy in influencing consumer response to advertising, attitude toward the brand and purchase intention. These structural elements are now discussed.

### **2.6.1 Message framing (positive and negative)**

Olsen et al. (2014, p. 122) argue that environmentally friendly marketers introducing new products are facing a challenge in effectively communicating with consumers. Message framing is used by firms because this advertising strategy has a significant impact on attitudes and attention towards the message, visit intention and environmentally friendly behaviour (Kim & Kim 2014, p. 69). As a result, message framing assists these marketers to highlight certain features making them more striking in the communication (Dhurup 2017, p. 78). Gifford and Comeau (2011, p. 1301) define message framing as a form of communication that is relayed in

words, images and phrases to transmit information about an issue or event. Gerend and Sias (2009, p. 999) add that message framing is a persuasive communication strategy aimed at motivating behaviour by presenting possible decision outcomes as either positive or negative. Negative or loss-framed messages focus on the costs of not engaging in the behaviour (Gerend & Sias 2009, p. 999; Kim & Kim 2014, p. 65). For example, "by not recycling, reusing, reducing and conserving energy, you fail to preserve the health of your planet and in so doing, endanger not only your future, but also the future of your friends, family, and community," (Kim & Kim 2014, p. 73). Positive or gain-framed messages, on the other hand, emphasise benefits of engaging in the behaviour (Kim & Kim 2014, p. 65). For example, "by recycling, reusing, reducing and conserving energy, you are working to preserve the health of your planet and in so doing, are protecting not only your future, but also the future of your friends, family, and community," (Kim & Kim 2014, p. 73). Thus, green message framing enhances message effectiveness (Kim & Kim 2014, p. 65) and research in green message framing is on the increase.

Xue (2015) studied the effect of positive and negative message framing in green advertising on Chinese consumers looking into consumers' attitudes toward the advertisement, attitude toward the brand, trust of green messages (green trust) and purchase intention. The study found that negative frames generate more favourable ad and brand attitude and higher levels of green trust as well as purchase intention (Xue 2015, p. 160). This is because negatively framed advertising messages can generate more attention that results in a higher level of message engagement (Xue 2015, p. 161). Xue (2015, p. 161) adds that the worsening environmental conditions in China make negatively framed messages an influential tool to use when the marketer wants to grab more attention from Chinese people. Thus, the environmental challenges facing people in China makes them more open to proposed solutions in the negatively framed messages.

Similarly, an experimental study by Segev et al. (2015) evaluated the effects of gain versus loss message framing points of reference and product involvement on the effectiveness of green advertising for consumer products. Study results show that gain-framed messages are significantly more effective in eliciting positive responses toward an advertisement or

advertised brand, as well as increasing purchase intention than loss-framed messages (Segev et al. 2015, p. 44). The gain-framed messages that may be used include encouraging the preservation of natural resources or sustainable behaviours through increasing recycling participation, litter control and encouraging energy efficiency (Segev et al. 2015, p. 44). Loss-framed messages emphasise the consequences of not pursuing an action such as claiming that in 2020 there will be no drinkable water if this limited resource is not preserved.

The study by Olsen et al. (2014) indicated that the quantity and valence of frames influence framing effectiveness. The quantity of frames refers to multiple claims that green marketers use to communicate their green message and reinforce green characteristics through these claims such as claiming that a product is recyclable, contains no petrochemicals and contains no artificial colour in their green advertisements (Olsen et al. 2014, p. 122). These claims are then used by consumers to assign a negative or positive psychological value to the advertised products or activities (Olsen et al. 2014, p. 122). The results indicate that the quantity of message framing has a significant negative moderating impact on the relationship between green new product introduction and change in brand attitude (Olsen et al. 2014, p. 129). This indicates that when the quantity of message framing increases, it results in a decrease in the influence of green new product introduction in changing attitudes toward the brand. Alternatively, when the quantity of message framing decreases, it increases the influence of green new product introduction in changing attitudes toward the brand. According to Olsen et al. (2014, p. 133), this may be a result of the environmentally-conscious consumers becoming aware of the company or brand's environmental friendliness. This negative relationship would be caused by the inability of the green new product introduction in presenting additional information that is important if the company were to change brand attitude. According to Olsen et al. (2014, p. 133), unethical behaviour strongly influences consumer attitude toward the company as opposed to prosocial behaviour. When the company has managed to build an environmentally sustainable brand, then the focus should shift to ensuring that the company do not default and engage in an environmentally unfriendly behaviour (Olsen et al. 2014, p. 133). However, the introduction of green new products is an important instrument for generating an environmentally sustainable brand, but marketers need to inform consumers on

how these green new products are green (Olsen et al. 2014, p. 122). Thus, marketers that can effectively communicate what makes their green new products green can succeed in building an environmentally sustainable brand. Valence is considered the extent of emotion which consumers' associate with the product or brand (Olsen et al. 2014, p. 122). Thus, these are negative or positive emotions that consumers may have or associate with a brand or product. The study results further show that valence has a positive but insignificant effect on green new product introductions to change brand attitudes (Olsen et al. 2014, p. 129).

Kim and Kim's (2014) study conducted in the USA, examining the influence of message framing and source credibility looked into potential hotel consumers' attitude, behavioural intentions, attention and environmentally friendly activities toward messages communicating protection of the environment. Kim and Kim (2014, p. 65) argue that message framing in the advertisement directs consumers' responses either positively or negatively. The positively framed messages are often used to influence behaviour such as recycling and conservation initiatives whereas negatively framed are used to discourage behaviour such as bringing attention to air and water pollution green problems. The findings indicate that message framing had a significant effect on attitude towards the message, attention towards the message, visit intention, as well as environmentally friendly actions (Kim & Kim 2014, p. 69).

Cucchiara, Kwon, and Ha (2015) investigated consumers' response to message framing in the organic seafood labelling. This study found that positively framed messages resulted in more influence on green behaviour in comparison to negatively framed messages (Cucchiara et al. 2015, p. 1557). Also, messages from a credible source and that are positively framed result in strong positive attitudes toward the messages. Chang, Zhang, and Xie's (2015) study examined the moderating role of temporal distance in the effects of gain or loss-framed messages on consumers' attitudes and purchase intentions towards an advertised brand. The findings indicate that a message framed as a positive gain for the future significantly results in more positive consumers' attitudes as well as increasing intention (Chang et al. 2015, p. 165). However, the study found that a message framed as a negative loss for the present is also effective in enhancing consumers' attitudes and purchase intentions (Chang et al. 2015, p. 168).

Cheng, Woon, and Lynes's (2011) study evaluated the use of message framing in the promotion of environmentally sustainable behaviours. The results indicate that adolescents are susceptible to social pressures and thus, social threats in the loss-framed message can effectively influence environmentally friendly behaviours in the adolescent segment (Cheng et al. 2011, p. 56). Thus, marketers may use negative and positive message framing strategies to enhance the influence of green messages in green advertisements.

This subsection explained the importance of message framing in green advertisements, highlighting the differences between negative and positive message framing. The green advertising literature did not only indicate a gap in knowledge regarding message framing use in green advertising in magazines in South Africa. However, the advertising literature contributed to this research by showing (what) the key role of message framing is in communicating a green message. As a result, the advertising literature relating to green advertising provided insight into how this study could evaluate the green advertisements in magazine and shed light on the nature of this form of advertising. Thus, this study aims to determine the message framing use in green magazine advertisements in South Africa. The next subsection explores the inclusion of environmental claims as a green advertisement's message structure element.

### **2.6.2 Inclusion of Environmental claims**

Tucker et al. (2012, p. 16) argue that using environmental claims results in a positive effect on advertising credibility and attitudes. Thus, these claims are key message characteristic element in advertising strategy that may be used by firms to trigger positive effect to advertisement credibility and attitudes (Tucker et al. 2012, p. 16). Kim et al. (2012, p. 7) propose that environmental claims are divided into four categories: product-oriented, process-oriented, image-oriented claims and claims based on environmental facts. The first category refers to environmental claims that focus on environmental characteristics of the advertised brand or product (Leonidou et al. 2011, p. 16). Claims can include the product being low in energy consumption, having low emissions, being biodegradable, reusable, 100% organic cotton and

ozone friendly, for example. In green advertisements that make use of a product orientation appeal, the message focus is on selling a green product by emphasising the product's environmentally friendly characteristics (Ruanguttamanun 2014, p. 2992). Leonidou et al. (2011, p. 7) add that product orientation claims directly or indirectly address the relationship between a product and the natural environment. For example, "Toyota Prius delivers impressive environmental performance and driving pleasure" (Leonidou et al. 2011, p. 20).

The second category is defined as environmental claims related to the company's internal green capabilities or production techniques used by the company to convert raw materials into a final product that is ready for consumption (Leonidou et al. 2011, p. 17). These claims may be found in the form of low-toxic emissions, non-polluting production processes and low-energy use. The product and process-oriented claims are of the essence as the company is directly indicating the major changes it has undergone in addressing environmental challenges (Kim et al. 2012, p. 7). Also, they are regarded as 'substantive' claims as they can present more concrete information about the organisation's environmentally contributions (Chan 2000, p. 352).

The third category refers to environmental claims that focus attention on building and strengthening a favourable green company image with external stakeholders such as customers and regulators through the firm's environmental activities (Leonidou et al. 2011, p. 17). Examples of image-oriented claims can be in the form of maintaining natural resources, reducing the greenhouse effect, preserving the ecosystem and the like. Organisational image orientation claims in green advertisements focus on the association of the organisation with a green cause or activity for which there is broad-base public support (Ruanguttamanun 2014, p. 2992). Leonidou et al. (2011, p. 8) argue that the organisational image orientation claim is used to demonstrate an image of corporate environmental responsibility. For example, companies using organisational image may use claims such as preserving the ecosystem, maintaining natural resources, and reducing the greenhouse effect Leonidou et al. (2011, p. 17).

The final category is the environmental facts claims consisting of statements about the environment such as communicating the dangers of global warming, drastic changes in climate

change and the deforestation challenge affecting everyday life (Leonidou et al. 2011, p. 17). According to Kim et al. (2012, p. 7), environmental facts have nothing to do with physical attributes of the product but the existence of company products is a direct result of the needs rising because of environmental facts. Unlike product and process-oriented claims, the image-orientation and environmental facts claims are considered 'associative' claims as they are less tangible (Chan 2000, p. 352). The organisation makes these claims as they help establish an environmentally friendly stance by associating the company name with positive environmental information.

Ruanguttamanun (2014) examined green advertising appeals using product versus organisational image orientations in print advertising. The study found that with product-orientation claims the use of negative appeals such as sadness and shame were unrecognized by the respondents, however, the same respondents were able to identify negative appeals when used for organizational image-orientation (Ruanguttamanun 2014, p. 2991). According to Ruanguttamanun (2014, p. 2991), the use of negative appeals in green advertisements may result in feelings of discomfort. These feelings of discomfort are caused by consumers imagining that sad, depressed, scary or shocking incidents used in advertisements would happen to them if they do not use the advertised product (Ruanguttamanun 2014, p. 2991). However, when the same appeals are used for organisational image orientation communications, consumers are receptive to such advertisements (Ruanguttamanun 2014, p. 2991). In addition, organisational image-orientation advertisements did not only deliver the messages, but consumers strongly intended to buy the advertised item. This shows that green advertisements that make use of organisation image orientation claims are most likely to influence consumers.

However, on the contrary, a study by Chan, Leung, and Wong (2006) researched how different types of environmental claims may affect the communication effectiveness of green advertising and revealed that substantive environmental claims could generate significantly higher communication effectiveness (Chan et al. 2006, p. 240). Substantive environmental claims were found to be more effective in generating more positive consumer responses as opposed to associative environmental claims as the nature of substantive environmental claims allow them

to provide more concrete information (Chan et al. 2006, p. 236). Similarly, the study by Phau and Ong (2007) examined how different environmental message strategies influence the effectiveness of promotional claims for clothing brands. The study shows that shoppers responded more favourably to product-oriented messages relative to cause-related messages (Phau & Ong 2007, p. 783). This favourable response was for a T-shirt made from naturally grown cotton, and consumers' positive feelings may cause this because of contributing to the welfare of the environment by buying an organic T-shirt (Phau & Ong 2007, p. 783). The study further indicates that environmental claims about the product's environmental friendliness are more credible as opposed to claims of the company's environmental cause or activity (Phau & Ong 2007, p. 783). For example, an advertisement of a 100% organic t-shirt can draw more influence opposed to communication that promotes the company's donation to cleaning a certain neighbourhood. This is because messages about activities correcting the effect of environmental challenges are less credible, whereas consumers perceive claims about a T-shirt made from natural materials more credible than claims describing corporate donation to clean up the environment (Phau & Ong 2007, p. 783). Phau and Ong (2007, p. 783) argue that Australian clothing consumers are increasingly becoming more sceptical of cause-related environmental claims.

A study by Fernando, Suganthi, and Sivakumaran (2014) is a content analysis investigation of Indian English green print advertisements to determine whether greenwashing is common in this media platform. The study findings indicate that the veracity of claims about the financing of environmental projects and waste management are questioned and considered unauthentic (Fernando et al. 2014, p. 172). This is because financing of environmental projects by companies sometimes have hidden motives causing doubt and mistrust even when companies are truly trying to help mitigate environmental challenges. For example, campaigns run by energy, oil and gas companies receive most criticism when they make claims of clean coal and alternative energy since these companies are or used to be, considered the major contributors of environmental challenges (Fernando et al. 2014, p. 172). Fernando et al. (2014, p. 174) argue that the only way that companies can stop consumer scepticism is by fulfilling their environmental claims. Similarly, Testa, Iraldo, Tessitore, and Frey (2012, p. 9) found that there

is more corporate image in green advertisements; however, they are usually vague and occasionally ambiguous. In contrast, environmental fact and process-oriented claims are considered more reliable (Testa et al. 2012, p. 9). The study further suggests that green messages need to be clear, accurate, complete and stress the main environmental aspects for the advertisement to be relevant and credible (Testa et al. 2012, p. 21).

The study by Chan (2004) examined how consumers in China perceive and respond to company-sponsored environmental advertising claims. Chinese consumers were found to favour print advertisements as opposed to television (Chan 2004, p. 430). This may be owing to print's substantive nature that allows environmentally friendly advertisers to provide concrete and substantiated product information essential in convincing and guiding consumers shopping (Chan 2004, p. 430). Also, the study found that negative attitudes toward environmental communications are due to perceived exaggeration, poor production leading to low attraction and that the advertisements reflected little relevance to respondent's daily lives (Chan 2004, p. 430). The study findings indicate the need for a well-substantiated environmental claim in generating positive attitudinal response and the need for green marketers to ensure that execution decisions in the ad need to deliver on the attraction and relevance to the target audience (Chan 2004, p. 431). A study by Zhu (2013) researched how green advertising influences consumers' purchase intention for green products. The results indicate that the credibility of claim in green advertising plays a strongly significant role in influencing consumer purchase intention. The study further suggests that firms should refrain from using exaggerated language in their green advertisements and focus on ensuring that claims are specific, trustworthy and sincere (Zhu 2013, p. 78). Zhu (2013, p. 78) argues that when green marketers act in a credible, sincere manner and use non-ambiguous language, would help address consumers' doubts, enhance organisations' green reputations and help foster credibility with the public.

The study by Polonsky et al. (1998) examined how environmental information is communicated on the packaging. Results of this study indicate that environmental fact attributes are the most used type of environmental information (Polonsky et al. 1998, p. 87). On the whole, it seems

that substantive, product-related claims are more effective than the company, or cause-related green claims.

Kim et al. (2012, p. 7) argue that environmental claims trigger varying responses from different consumers. For example, the use of environmental claims by green marketers has been found to enhance communication effectiveness when targeting Chinese consumers (Chan et al. 2006, p. 240). However, Ruanguttamanun (2014, p. 2989) argues that the source country's green image is of importance to Chinese consumers and moderates the communication effectiveness of green advertisement that influence the credibility of the claim. Chinese consumers tend to positively perceive products from outside their borders such as Japanese, American and European products relative to their domestic products (Ruanguttamanun 2014, p. 2990). The study by Bartels and Onwezen (2014) investigated the effect of social representations and consumer's identification with organic food on consumers' willingness to buy products that make environmental claims. The study suggests that social representation dimensions of loyalty to organic food significantly predict intention to buy products that make environmental claims (Bartels & Onwezen 2014, p. 85). The study also demonstrates that loyalty to technology positively influence intentions to buy products that make environmental claims whereas, food as a necessity was suggested to be negatively related to intention to buy products that make environmental claims (Bartels & Onwezen 2014, p. 85). The study further reveals that social identification positively influences intentions to buy products that make environmental claims by environmentally conscious consumers. Concerning age, the study demonstrates that older consumers are more inclined to buy products that make environmental claims as opposed to younger consumers (Bartels & Onwezen 2014, p. 85). Other demographic factors including gender, income and education were less likely to influence consumers' willingness to buy products with environmental claims (Bartels & Onwezen 2014, p. 85). Thus, this indicates that marketers need to consider consumer differences in their green advertising since different consumers respond differently to environmental claims.

The study by Steinhart, Ayalon, and Puterman (2013) examined how environmental claims differently affect consumers' evaluations of utilitarian products such as clothes and personal

computers compared to luxuries such as a Rolex Cosmograph Daytona Platinum watch and a Louis Vuitton belt. The results indicate that when a utilitarian product has an environmental friendly claim highlighting specific global benefits which describe the broader consequences of 'saving the world', consumers evaluate it more positively relative to a utilitarian product with a claim that highlights personal benefits related to social status aspects (Steinhart et al. 2013, p. 285). On the contrary, when an environmental claim emphasises personal benefits that highlight the use of social status aspects, it is associated with more favourable evaluations as opposed to environmental claims emphasising global benefits when tied to a luxury item. Thus, it seems that environmental claims focusing on social good are more effective for utilitarian products, but environmental claims about benefits for the individual's social status may be more effective for luxury products.

The environmental claims section assists this research in determining the various green claims that marketers can use to communicate their environmental friendliness. This section further showed that environmental claims are most likely to enhance the influence of green advertising on consumers. The available literature, however, does not present what is known about the extent use of and nature of environmental claims in South Africa. Thus, this research will help report on the environmental claims use in magazine advertising in South Africa. The green advertising literature indicates that communicating a green message is sometimes done using environmental claims and that different claims have differing effectiveness. Thus, knowledge of the environmental claim's role in green advertising helps the present study determine the nature of green messages in these advertisements. The next subsection discusses the message explicitness another message structure element.

### **2.6.3 Message explicitness**

Amongst the advertising strategies, firms use message explicitness as a tool for making products' environmental characteristics stand out in an advertisement (Usrey 2020, p. 126). Yan et al. (2012, p. 153) argue that message explicitness is an important message characteristic element that may be used by advertisers to influence consumer response to advertising,

attitude toward the brand and purchase intention. The study by Yan et al. (2012) examined the influence of message explicitness on attitude toward the advertisement and brand in the United States. The research indicates that college students formed positive attitudes toward apparel brands provided the advertising message contained explicit information about green products. Contrarily, Usrey (2017) examined the use of subtle environmental attribute queues as opposed to using explicit signals to communicate a green product's environmental aspect. The overall results show that using a green understatement communication strategy results in higher performance evaluations. Similarly, Manrai, Manrai, Lascu, and Ryans's (1997) study evaluated how the strength of green claims affect product evaluations and company green image. The results reveal that an environmental message explicitly claiming a sixty per cent reduction in pollution was regarded as significantly less believable in comparison to process message claims (Manrai et al. 1997, p. 527). Product evaluations were found to be more favourable when green claims used were moderate in strength as opposed to when extremely low or high in strength (Manrai et al. 1997, p. 528).

The study by Kronrod et al. (2012) explored the use of message assertiveness in green communications in Israel. The study found that the effectiveness of assertive language depends on the audiences' perceived importance of the environmental issue (Kronrod et al. 2012, p. 100). Thus, when targeting consumers who are less concerned about environmental challenges, less assertive phrasing must be used, or the message focus should stress the importance of the issue before assertive phrasing is used (Kronrod et al. 2012, p. 100). The study suggests that assertiveness of environmental messages needs to be altered such that they are less extreme or should be directed at the more environmentally concerned consumers (Kronrod et al. 2012, p. 100).

Yan et al. (2012, p. 153) argue that the effectiveness of explicit, compared to implicit, messages may be moderated by factors such as product complexity and involvement. Marketers often use symbolic and hedonic product characteristics to appeal to the young adult market and increase chances of making a sale of non-complex product such as a T-shirt (Yan et al. 2012, p. 153). With young adult consumers familiar with the product/brand, marketers rely on implicit

messages such as brand name to communicate meaning to young adult consumers. The relationship between consumer and product determine if marketers use implicit or explicit messages. For example, implicit communications are used by marketers to influence product sale to consumers with pre-existing product knowledge. However, with limited shared understanding, explicit communication is the most appropriate since consumers are less likely to misinterpret or make incorrect inferences about the meaning of the message (Yan et al. 2012, p. 154). Thus, explicit messages are most likely to cause more consumers to positively respond to environmentally friendly claims because these claims provide more clarity and information (Yan et al. 2012, p. 154).

The study by Alniacik and Yilmaz (2012) investigated the influence of claim specificity, the product's environmental relevance and respondents' pro-environmental orientation on the effectiveness of green advertising among Turkish consumers. Findings of the study indicate that there is significant evidence showing the superiority of specific green claims relative to vague green claims concerning advertising effectiveness for low environmentally relevant products (Alniacik & Yilmaz 2012, p. 218). Examples of low environmental relevant products include watches and deodorants. Alniacik and Yilmaz (2012, p. 211) argue that environmental claims could be used to promote a low environmentally relevant product; however, it could induce negative or positive consumer reactions. As a result, the study suggests marketing managers that want to convey messages about their environmental sensitivity need to pay attention to environmental claim specificity in the advertisements (Alniacik & Yilmaz 2012, p. 219). The study found that there is no significant difference between the communication effectiveness of different claim types concerning the high environmentally relevant products (Alniacik & Yilmaz 2012, p. 218). Examples of high environmentally relevant products include laundry machines, shampoos, cars and refrigerators (Alniacik & Yilmaz 2012, p. 211). Alniacik and Yilmaz (2012, p. 210) argue that these are the products that consumers easily associate with green problems. Thus, green advertisements using environmentally claims to promote environmentally relevant products are positively received by consumers. This is because consumers expect green advertisements for these products to use environmental claims.

Hidalgo-Baz, Martos-Partal, and González-Benito (2017) investigated message explicitness in packaging claims used to promote organic products and suggest that using implicit or explicit message would result in an effective green message. The combining of these communication strategies significantly negative influences consumers' perceptions of organic products (Hidalgo-Baz et al. 2017, p. 554). Hidalgo-Baz et al. 2017, p. 554) explain this may be a result of the lack of clarity consumers' sense about organic products. Another reason could be consumers' belief when organisations use different claims as a persuasion tactic as opposed to being an information strategy (Hidalgo-Baz et al. 2017, p. 554).

Message explicitness is a key part of green advertising because it determines the advertisement influence on consumer response, attitude toward the brand and purchase intention (Yan et al. 2012, p. 153). Usrey et al. (2020, p. 126) add that through message explicitness firms could be able to make products environmental characteristics the advertisement focus. This insight is key to understanding the nature of green advertising in magazines in South Africa. The next section explores the inclusion of an eco-label in the advertisement as a mechanism used to strengthen the influence of green advertising.

#### **2.6.4 Inclusion of an eco-label**

According to Zhu (2013, p. 74), eco-labels are considered an important factor when consumers are contemplating a buying decision. As a result, consumers rely on eco-labels and information regarding a product's environmental attributes to evaluate and form attitudes toward an environmental claim. The message that is contributed by of eco-labels help makes the green message more transparent and credibility (Thøgersen, Haugaard, & Olesen 2010, p. 1787). The study by Testa et al. (2015) explored the use of eco-labels as a marketing tool used to encourage sustainable consumption behaviours by Italian consumers. The study showed that eco-labels supports the creation of sustainable consumption (Testa et al. 2015, p. 258). In addition, the study found that marketers could use eco-labels as an important purchase guarantee for the purchasing choice, given that these labels provide reliable information (Testa et al. 2015, p. 261). Thus, integrating eco-labels into companies' marketing strategies that are aimed at

preventing vague and misleading assertions helps attract consumers whose purchase choice depends on variables such as trust and reliability of the producer. A similar study by Wang et al. (2018) was conducted in China to understand the role of information in influencing consumer perceptions. Potential consumers of remanufactured automobile parts were surveyed to examine the impact of green certification. The study found that the presence of energy-saving, material saving and emission reduction information for remanufactured products was favourable in influencing consumers' perceived value and trust of the remanufactured products. Wang et al. (2018, p. 194) show that green certification is the mediating factor between energy saving and material saving information and trust in remanufactured products. Wang et al. (2018, p. 194) argue that consumers often lack the understanding of the remanufacturing process resulting in mistrust of green attributes of remanufactured products. Therefore, Wang et al. (2018, p. 194) suggest organisations should invest in educational initiatives that would enhance consumers' awareness and value of remanufactured products because certification alone is not enough in communicating the value of remanufactured products.

As organisations engage in efforts to strengthen their corporate image, the use and associations with natural and environmentally friendly products and practices are increasingly becoming a common feature (Spack et al. 2012, p. 441). These authors further argue that products that are labelled green are now being found in most retail stores. Despite the rise in popularity of green products with consumers, consumers' purchase decisions are postponed until consumers are physically in the store. Thus, marketers are using packaging, amongst other strategies to make a product's greenness more clearly to consumers (Spack et al., 2012, p. 441). As a result, large segments of consumers of green products are strongly reliant on the product packaging for information. With packaging used as an information source by consumers, there are increasing concerns about marketers claiming to be green when they are not (Bickart & Ruth 2012, p. 51). Attending to these concerns, marketers are incorporating assurance cues regarding the environmental contribution of products in the form of eco-labels (Bickart & Ruth 2012, p. 51). For example, the Environmental Protection Agency's EnergyStar is used by organisations or brands that apply for it provided they meet or exceed standards for energy efficiency.

Another example of green certification is in the building industry. As the world continues looking for more ways of addressing environmental concerns, green building is increasingly gaining popularity (Boschmann & Gabriel 2013; DeLisle, Rozelle Yates, Grissom, & Högberg 2013; Feng & Hewage 2014; Hightower & Arif 2013; Wu, Mao, Wang, Song, & Wang 2016). The construction building sector aims at addressing the environmental concerns by developing environmentally friendly construction practices that contribute in energy saving, reduction of emissions, reuse and recycling of materials (Feng & Hewage 2014, p. 281). The benefits of sustainably developed buildings result in consumers increasingly demanding this type of building as opposed to conventional buildings (Wu et al. 2017, p. 370). As a result, the construction-building sector around the world has introduced green building rating systems (Wu et al. 2016, p. 167). Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) is a commonly used green building rating system nationally and internationally for benchmarking design, construction and operation of high-performance green buildings (Wu et al. 2016, p. 167; Wu et al., 2017, p. 370). For example, Green Building Councils across the globe such as in South Africa, Namibia, United States of America, Canada, Australia, Turkey, Chile, China, Germany, and Brazil are using LEED to rate green buildings. In countries in which LEED certification is used as a rating system for green building, each construction/building project can be issued a LEED Silver, Gold, or Platinum certification depending on the points or credits that the project gained (Wu et al. 2017, p. 370). The assessment of green buildings is based on six categories consisting of sustainable site, water efficiency, energy and atmosphere, material and resources, indoor environmental quality and innovation (Wu et al. 2017, p. 371). Thus, marketers using environmental rating systems such as the LEED certification program assist environmentally conscious consumers in distinguishing and comparing product alternatives (Matisoff, Noonan, & Mazzolini 2014, p. 4). A study by Karakhan (2016) examined the completeness and effectiveness of the U.S. Green Buildings Council's LEED rating system. The study results suggest that LEED credits communicate how the building project meets the environmental and economic aspects of sustainability (Karakhan 2016, p. 2). Thus, environmentally conscious consumers are assured of building projects meeting environmental performance because LEED

certifications are granted to building projects on the condition that the project meets the environmental performance.

Matisoff et al. (2014) investigated performance and benefits associated with using LEED certification in all new construction, government buildings, non-profit buildings and for-profit buildings in the United States. The results indicate that most buildings owned by non-profit organisations are issued a higher percentage of LEED platinum certification and pursue green signals more than for-profit or government agencies (Matisoff et al. 2014, p. 14). Using green building certification levels has been found to assist marketers in improving buildings' marketability (Matisoff et al. 2014, p. 15). Thus, this further shows that marketers can use various forms of green certification to their advantage and improve company marketability. The study by Hightower and Arif (2013) explored the green Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) servicescape measure in Brazil examining the direct effects of the physical environment on the evaluation of a service encounter. The study results suggest that consumers' favourable perception of the servicescape is positively associated with their overall service quality assessment (Hightower & Arif 2013, p. 254). This can be interpreted to mean that consumers rely on environmental cues to categorise and form their initial perceptions of a green service provider. For example, for marketers to create positive first impressions for consumers, they can use LEED certification. The study further indicates that green LEED servicescape perceptions have a direct positive effect on consumers' overall satisfaction with the service provider.

A study by Bond and Devine (2014) examined the rental rates achieved by green multifamily properties with LEED certification in the United States. The study reveals that LEED certification strongly influences rental rates; when the rental unit is LEED-certified the rent per square foot is seven times higher in percentage as opposed to traditionally constructed buildings (Bond & Devine 2014, p. 22). This shows that environmentally-conscious consumers are willing to pay far more than what they can pay for apartments that are not LEED-certified. Thus, the market rate of apartments with LEED certifications helps marketers make more revenue but most

importantly, it communicates marketers' commitment to helping enhance environmental quality.

Iraldo, Testa, and Bartolozzi (2014, p. 79) argue that the increase in the use of various green schemes resulted in the International Organization of Standardization (ISO) creating a categorization of voluntary labels into three types, namely ISO Types I-III:

- Type I - eco-labels: these are multiple criteria-based third party programmes responsible for issuing a licence authorizing the use of environmental labels on products.
- Type II environmental claims: refer to self-declared labels that are used and developed by manufacturers, importers, distributors and retailers without independent certification from a third-party.
- Type III (eco-profiles): the use of these is granted to a party that has undergone independent verification of product information.

As a result of this classification, consumers are empowered to independently evaluate and interpret environmental information on their own and make informed choices (Iraldo et al. 2014, p. 79).

A study by Atkinson and Rosenthal (2014) explored which aspects of eco-label design yield more favourable effect on consumer trust, product attitude, label source attitude and purchase intent. The results suggest that environmentally conscious consumers prefer more detailed information in persuasive messages about green attributes (Atkinson & Rosenthal 2014, p. 40). When environmentally conscious consumers are presented with detailed information about a product's green attributes, they can differentiate between vague and meaningful claims. Thus, to foster consumers' trust and positive attitudes, marketers need to use eco-labels that provide detailed information that help support the credibility of the environmental claim (Alniacik & Yilmaz 2012, p. 209).

Bickart and Ruth's (2012) study investigated the use of eco-labels as means of persuasion in the USA. With consumers who vary in their environmental concern, brand familiarity and eco-label

sponsor differently affect the persuasive impact of eco-labels (Bickart & Ruth 2012, p. 52). The results of the study indicate that environmental concern affects consumer response to eco-labels (Bickart & Ruth 2012, p. 56). When consumer's environmental concern is low, the presence or lack of eco-labels on a package does not affect purchase intentions that are a result of an advertisement, regardless of familiarity with the brand. On the contrary, when the consumer's environmental concern is high, eco-labels effect in more favourable consumer intentions for brands they know and fewer intentions for unfamiliar brands. Thus, marketers need to have a strong understanding of the targeted consumers' degree of environmental concern. When marketers know consumers' environmental concern, they can then use labels that are adequately accepted by a targeted consumer.

The credibility of the source also influences the effectiveness of eco-labels. The informational influence of source credibility has the power to sway the recipient's perceptions in favour of the perceptions advocated by the information source (Fanoberova & Kuczkowska 2016, p. 24). These authors claim that information from a highly credible source is perceived as useful and reliable, enhancing the easier transfer of information. Kim and Kim's (2014) study conducted in the USA, found that messages from a credible source and that are positively framed result in strong positive attitudes toward the messages (Kim & Kim 2014, p. 69). Darnall, Ji, and Vázquez-Brust (2016) evaluated how third-party certification relates to consumers' use of eco-labels across different program sponsors in the United Kingdom. Results show that consumers trust in government-sponsored labels is positive and significant, and these consumers consider government-sponsored labels credible and a source of credible environmental information that they can use in their purchase decisions (Darnall et al. 2016, p. 9). Also, the study indicates that both government and non-governmental sponsored labels are positively significant in affecting consumers' choice in a purchase decision (Darnall et al. 2016). Similarly, Atkinson and Rosenthal (2014, p. 40) found the label source to be a significant predictor of eco-label trust with participants showing greater trust in government-sourced as opposed to corporate-sourced labels (Atkinson & Rosenthal 2014, p. 40). With consumers showing greater trust in government-sourced labels, marketers can enhance the trust of environmentally friendly products through using government-sourced labels.

Bickart and Ruth (2012, p. 57) however found that source credibility's influence depends on the consumer's level of environmental concern. They found that low- concern consumers view manufacturer-sponsored labels as a biased certification source and tend to favour third-party or government-sponsored labels since they are considered less biased sources compared to manufacturer-sponsored eco-labels. Under low concern, consumers that are perceived less knowledgeable about the environmental concerns are more likely to consider any source outside the company credible as they exhibit more independence (Bickart & Ruth 2012, p. 57). On the other hand, high environmental concerned consumers have more favourable attitudes and intentions when a manufacturer-sponsored eco-label is used (Bickart & Ruth 2012, p. 61). Thus, the manufacturer-sponsored labels are rewarding manufacturers for initiating labels helping address or bring attention to environmental concerns (Bickart & Ruth 2012, p. 61). This implies that marketers need to research targeted consumers' environmental consciousness because consumers exhibit different levels of environmental knowledge. The varying levels of consumers' environmental knowledge will affect consumer attitude and intentions towards eco-labels placed on products.

Eco-labels have been found to be important in conveying the green message (Thøgersen et al. 2010, p. 1787), this study aimed to determine the use of eco-labels in magazine advertising in South Africa. However, before this study could achieve this objective, it was important first to understand the advertising literature regarding the use of eco-labels in green advertising. Thus, the insight gained from the green advertising literature assists this research in providing knowledge of what an eco-label and the role it plays in communicating the green message in these advertisements can be. The obtained knowledge is used in this research to expand understanding of the nature of green advertising in magazines in South Africa. The following section investigates green problems that may be addressed in the content of green advertisements.

## 2.7 GREEN PROBLEMS AND GREEN ADVERTISING

Human activities are regarded as the leading causes of green problems (Jeppesen et al. 2015, p. 201). Peterson (2006, p. 196) suggests that green problems including air and water pollution, depletion of irreproducible resources, desecration of the scenic landscape and rapid population growth, necessitate the need to protect and rehabilitate the physical environment. Alniacik and Yilmaz (2012, p. 211) argue that consumers' environmental concerns influence consumers' response to green communication. Kim et al. (2012, p. 6) add that consumers concern for the environment arises as a result of a value system promoting environmental consciousness (Kim et al. 2012, p. 6). According to Tucker et al. (2012, p. 12), the general attitude consumers have towards environmental consciousness is a key predictor of pro-environmental consumption. Tucker et al. (2012, p. 12) further argued that this concern for the environment makes consumers more susceptible to environmental messages. Zubair Traiq (2014, p. 277), however, cautioned firms never to use environmental claims that are not true to communicate their green messages. When credible environmental claims are communicated in green advertising, consumers are more susceptible to environmental messages (Ganz & Grimes 2020, p. 5). This, therefore, indicates the importance of green advertisements in eliciting consumers' environmental concern that influences consumers' perception and attitude towards green problems (Alniacik & Yilmaz 2012, p. 196).

The study by Peterson (2006) researched marketers' communication of environmental problems in Canadian and American magazine advertisements with the aim of encouraging environmentally friendly behaviour in children. The results show that the proportion of green advertisements targeting children has increased (Peterson 2006, p. 206). It further shows that resource depletion was the most addressed green problem in green advertisements from the years 1987, 1997 and 2002 (Peterson 2006, p. 206). The study result reveals green problems that were previously receiving more attention were on the decline (Peterson 2006, p. 207). These green problems included littering and removal of natural vegetation, water pollution, air pollution, noise pollution, and population explosion (Peterson 2006, p. 207). Peterson's (2006, p. 207) study suggests that green marketers have raised awareness of green problems in green

advertisements since 1986's. More green advertisements were found to be from larger companies with manufacturing, retailing and service sector being the heavy sponsors of environmentally friendly advertising (Peterson 2006, p. 210). With people and other living organisms in danger because of green problems such as pollution, global warming, and depletion of natural resource, there is a strong need for continuing to build awareness of green problems.

The deteriorating, rare and precious natural resources are sending strong signals to marketers, encouraging them to use advertising and other marketing mix strategies that enhance green resource preservation (Chitra 2007, p. 173). Using these strategies could result in value benefits for consumers (Chitra 2007, p. 173).

The earth faces several environmental problems (Chen & Lee 2015, p. 195). The following briefly describes some of these concerns which represent potential content of green advertisements:

### **2.7.1 Deforestation**

Ferreira et al. (2012, p. 536) argue that countries desperate for economic growth are willing to compromise their environment. The non-holistic economic growth results in green problems, including deforestation (Ferreira et al. 2012, p. 536). Poor implementations laws and legislation such as those aimed at protecting the natural environment including forests contribute to the deterioration of the natural environment (Grillo, Tokarczyk, & Hansen 2008; Lora-Wainwright, Zhang, Wu, & Van Rooij 2012, p. 110).

A study by DeFries, Rudel, Uriarte, and Hansen (2010) researched the deforestation driven by urban population growth and agricultural trade in the twenty-first century. The study indicates that population growth increases forest loss or deforestation (DeFries et al. 2010, p. 178). The study further suggests that high forest loss is associated with a high demand for agriculture in urban and international markets (DeFries et al. 2010, p. 179). This is because changing demographic factors such as more people moving into urban areas and a growing population

often result in increased demand for agricultural products. The increase in urbanisation and international demands puts significant pressure on tropical forests. As a result, it is important that green marketers raise awareness of the dangers of deforestation. Deforestation is reported as a green problem that is on the rise (Dauvergne & Lister 2010, p. 132; Williams, Page, & Petrosky 2014, p. 11). This is resulting in more organisations in the forest sector, communicating their messages to consumers on how they meet consumers' environmental consciousness (Grillo et al. 2008, p. 44). It is possible that when consumers become more alert of the dangers of their consumption of agricultural products on deforestation, consumers would reconsider the behaviour.

### **2.7.2 Animal Welfare/Protection**

Extant research shows animal welfare/protection is amongst the green problems addressed in green advertising (Bortree, Ahern, Duo, & Smith 2012; Cembalo et al. 2016). The study by Cembalo et al. (2016, p. 238) indicated that the production process is becoming environmentally conscious. This is resulting in a growth in the organisation's green communication aiming to communicate their greenness (de Jonge & van Trijp 2013, p. 635). With animal welfare/protection receiving attention in green marketing, studies have investigated beauty without cruelty (Zimmer, Stafford, & Stafford 1994), animal treatment (Schröder & McEachern 2004; Vanhonacker, van Poucke, Tuytens, & Verbeke 2010), animal safety and quality (Vecchio & Annunziata 2012).

### **2.7.3 Reducing Oil Reserves**

De Schutter and Vanloqueren (2011, p. 34) state that the oil resource is on a rapid decline with about seven per cent yearly decrease while modern agriculture is heavily reliant on oil. With the oil resource becoming close to exhaustion, oil prices are most likely to increase, leaving more farmers in limbo as farmers need oil for irrigation, agricultural machinery, modern food processing and transportation.

## 2.7.4 Pollution

A study by Islam and Tanaka (2004) investigated the impact of pollution on coastal and marine ecosystems looking at the substances contributed by people directly or indirectly into the marine environment including estuaries that result or has the potential of resulting in damaging effects. The damaging effects can be on living resources and marine life, hazards to human health, a hindrance to marine activities including impairment of quality for the use of the seawater and reduction of amenities and fishing (Islam & Tanaka 2004, p. 624).

Islam and Tanaka (2004, p. 624) add that all forms of pollution, whether it occurs on land or in the air, eventually ends up in the ocean jeopardising the marine environment. According to Islam and Tanaka (2004, p. 625), the major pollutants range from agricultural products including fertilisers, pesticides and agrochemicals, domestic and municipal waste and sewage sludge, oils, heavy metals and trace elements, organic compounds including organochlorines, organophosphates and organometals, plastics, sediments, eutrophication and algal bloom, aquaculture activities and biological pollution. The study indicates that sewage remains the largest contributor of contamination to marine and coastal environments globally, with coastal sewage, discharges dramatically increasing in the past three decades (Islam & Tanaka 2004, p. 640). The study found that the environmental degradation in the East Asian seas is threatening the world's centre for marine biodiversity, influencing the functional integrity of an estimated third of the world's coral reefs, thirty per cent of world's mangrove systems and around forty per cent of the world's fish catch (Islam & Tanaka 2004, p. 642). Islam and Tanaka (2004, p. 645) further argue that overexploited fisheries are the most vulnerable and need immediate attention. The study by Islam and Tanaka (2004) shows that pollution poses a major danger to coastal and marine ecosystems and hence necessitates the need for marketers to raise awareness on the potential risks of pollution.

Green marketing literature shows several studies investigating pollution including water/sea pollution (Kumar, Garg, & Makkar 2012; Pettipas, Bernier, & Walker 2016; Vince & Hardesty 2017), land pollution (Akyol & Kiliç 2014; Bortree et al. 2012; Jain & Kaur 2004; Nittala 2014;

Ying Liu, Pheng Low, & He 2012), air pollution (Han, Zhou, Li, & Li 2014; Hartmann et al. 2015; Shrikanth & Raju 2012; Sueyoshi & Yuan 2015).

### **2.7.5 Global Warming and Climate Change**

Fezzi, Harwood, Lovett, and Bateman (2017, p. 1) argue that human activities are the key causes of global warming. The rapid industrialisation of Asia has been found to perpetuate green problems (Tseng, Tan, & Siriban-Manalang 2013, p. 1). However, past research indicates that the effect of global warming is not limited to Asia (Cherian & Jacob 2012; Foust & O'Shannon Murphy 2009; Fowler & Close 2012; Royne et al. 2012; Tantawi, O'Shaughnessy, Gad, & Ragheb 2009). The changes in the environment caused by the green problems results in global warming resulting in global devastations (Tantawi et al. 2009, p. 34). Extant research indicates that global warming results in green problems including water scarcity (Jeppesen et al. 2015), climate change (De Schutter & Vanloqueren 2011; Lester & Cottle 2009) and natural disasters (Tantawi et al. 2009, p. 34). Green marketers use green advertising to make the consumer aware of global warming and associated effects to develop green consumer knowledge that is important in behaviour change (Cherian & Jacob 2012, p. 121). Research in global warming indicates that the following green problems are amongst the green problems that are addressed and continue to be addressed globally (Foust & O'Shannon Murphy 2009, p. 151; Fowler & Close 2012, p. 123; Royne et al. 2012, p. 86).

#### **Water Quality**

Madani (2014) investigated the consumption of bottled water caused by declining tap water quality. The study found consumers are purchasing bottled water as the tap water quality continues to decline (Madani 2014, p. 317). The study in 1994 by Dunlap (1994, p. 117) conducted in twenty-four countries indicated water quality was the green problem that most needed to be addressed. This was supported by Fisk (1998, p. 658) that found water quality was a twenty-first-century problem affecting people from all corners of the world. More recently, Vörösmarty, Hoekstra, Bunn, Conway, and Gupta (2015, p. 478) argue that water quality problems are increasingly reported across the globe. An estimated 1.8 billion people

are affected by lack of access to quality drinking water, and this green problem is common in developing countries (Edokpayi et al. 2018, p. 2; Mukheibir 2010, p. 1028). Jambeck et al. (2015, p. 768) argue that most of the water/sea pollution is caused by the plastic that flows in the water source. Most of the water quality problems are a result of human activities (van Leeuwen, Frijns, van Wezel, & van de Ven 2012).

### **Water Scarcity**

According to the UNESCO (2016, p. 16), changes in world climate and temperature, human pressures on water, poor infrastructure and incompetent water management results in the limited water supply. The water scarcity green problem has a global effect that results in global destruction (Hoekstra 2014, p. 318; Shah, Liebrand, Vos, Veldwisch, & Boelens 2018, p. 678). With 4.0 billion people experiencing water scarcity, this indicates the seriousness and urgency that is needed to address this green problem (Mekonnen & Hoekstra 2016, p. 3). The study by Heiman (2002, p. 83) in Israel found that approximately 94% of respondents remembered a green advertisement that addressed water scarcity. Thus, communicating water scarcity in green advertisements strengthen the green message making the consumer aware of the seriousness and dangers of water scarcity (Dagher & Itani 2014, p. 193).

The green advertising literature considers global warming and climate change as message parameters potentially making up the message content in green advertising, thus offering insight into the nature of advertising in magazines.

The intensifying of green problems supports the proliferation of green advertising (Tantawi et al. 2009, p. 33). Studies that raise awareness of the environmental problems to assist people in understanding the magnitude of these problems in the world, for example, the effect of climate change. These studies provide estimates of the effects caused by environmental problems if remedial actions are not taken. However, there is not much that is known on what environmentally problems marketers in magazine advertising are raising awareness of in South Africa. The advertising literature considers green problems key message content making up the green message in green advertising (Chen & Lee 2015, p. 195). Knowledge gained from green

advertising literature assists this research in knowing the message aspects that may be used to evaluate the message content in green advertising. Thus, to provide insight into the nature of green advertising in magazines in South Africa, this research evaluated green messages addressing deforestation, animal welfare/protection, declining in oil reserves, pollution, and global warming and climate change green problems. Assessing message content aspect assists this study in providing knowledge on how the environmental problems feature in magazine advertising in South Africa. After discussing the green problems, it is now important to see what solutions businesses are proposing to address green problems.

## **2.8 GREEN SOLUTIONS AND GREEN ADVERTISING**

The surge in environmentally conscious consumers is resulting in more organisations that are targeting this segment (Chen & Lee 2015, p. 195). One way organisations are heeding the consumers' environmental consciousness demands is through green solutions that include green products (Tan, Johnstone, & Yang 2016, p. 288). With consumers considered the biggest contributors to green problems, organisations use green advertising to communicate green messages (Tan et al. 2016, p. 288). Thus, green marketers are increasingly communicating and proposing green solutions to consumers (Alniacik & Yilmaz 2012, p. 1106). According to Lui and Lui (2020, p. 14), environmentally conscious advertisers strengthened their communication of a green message by presenting solutions that reflect the context of the country in which their green advertisements are disseminated or targeting. Lui and Lui (2020, p. 15) suggest that green advertising proposing green solutions which focus on highlighting benefits as a result of using the products rather than emphasising the joy of product ownership may be an effective advertising strategy for communicating a green message. Green advertising effectiveness may be strengthened by designing a green message with one goal of informing as opposed to messages that aim to impress (Lui & Lui 2020, p. 15). Therefore, proposing green solutions in green advertisements help consumers understand how they could use their purchasing power to help address green problems by adopting green solutions that organisations are proposing (Chen & Lee 2015, p. 195).

The following briefly describes identified green solutions found in green marketing literature and which may therefore be part of the content of green advertisements and thus elaborate on the nature of green advertising in magazines in South Africa.

### **2.8.1 Veganism**

The vegan lifestyle enhances the ability to meet people's everyday needs without compromising the ability of the other species in meeting their present and future needs (Pendegrast 2017, p. 1). Gray (2015, p. 3) argues that the vegan lifestyle is a green solution that results in health, dietary benefits and contributes to the reduction of animal cruelty. The vegan lifestyle helps influence consumers' environmental consciousness (Gray 2015, p. 117). The study by Fan, Almanza, Mattila, Ge, and Her (2019, p. 468) found that the American vegan market has grown from 1% to 6% between the year 2014 and 2017. Another study by Smith and Bortree (2012, p. 532) that researched English online magazines from America, United Kingdom, Canada and Australia found 9% of green advertisements communicated veganism messages.

Pendegrast (2017, p. 1) argues that veganism is a green solution that results in a sustainable living that does not only provide for current needs but ensures that future generations can meet their own. This knowledge enables this research in understanding the use of veganism as a green solution. Therefore, green advertising literature is important in this research because it shows one of the green solutions that may be employed in green advertising. Through this knowledge, this study may evaluate whether veganism is used as a means of raising environmental consciousness. Failing to understand veganism contribution to sustainable living would have compromised this research's ability in assessing the message content element used in green advertising in magazines.

### **2.7.2 Healthy Living**

Woolf, Dekker, Byrne, and Miller (2011, p. 38) argue that physical inactivity results in the manifestation of diseases that result in fatalities. The green advertisements that are promoting a healthy diet, physical activities, and emotional wellness are increasingly becoming common because physical inactivity related diseases result in more consumers concerned about their lifestyles (Petersen, Davis, Fraser, & Lindsay 2010, p. 391).

Thus, green advertisements help green marketers promote a green lifestyle as a green solution (Suki 2013, p. 728; Tiwari, Tripathi, Srivastava, & Yadav 2011, p. 19). The comparative study by Xue and Zhou (2012, p. 8) of American and Chinese magazines found most American magazines green advertisements emphasise healthy living relative to Chinese magazines. Another study by Suki (2013, p. 731) indicated healthy living in Malaysia was increasingly helping younger consumers become environmentally conscious. The green advertising literature shows that healthy living is a green solution used in green advertising to ignite consumers' environmental consciousness.

### **2.7.3 De-consumption**

Sheth, Sethia, and Srinivas (2011, p. 22) argue that consumers' consumption behaviours exacerbate green problems in the environment. The limited resources required to sustain increasing consumer consumption behaviours and the associated risks to the environment necessitate the need for change in consumers' consumption behaviours (Sheth et al. 2011, p. 24). Sheth et al. (2011, p. 26) suggest deconsumption is a green solution that is capable of reducing consumption. Thus, Sheth et al. (2011, p. 27) state that promotion and educating consumers about the need for de-consumption or mindful consumption is key in changing consumers attitude, values and expectations about consumption behaviour.

### **2.7.4 Upcycling**

The technological developments in the electronic industry have reduced the production cycle resulting in more electronic products available to consumers (Yi, Lee, Lee, & Kim 2018, p. 74).

However, Yi et al. (2018, p. 74) argue that the increase of electronic waste and electrical equipment is changing how the electronic industry operates with the adoption of upcycling. Yi et al. (2018, p. 74) define upcycling as a strategy that uses and makes new products with added value from the recycled materials. The constant consumer demand for new fashion also presents an opportunity for environmentally conscious designers to use textile waste to create new fashion meeting consumers' tastes and benefiting the environment (Han, Tyler, & Apeagyei 2015, p. 2).

### **2.7.5 Eco-fashion**

Todeschini, Cortimiglia, Callegaro-de-Menezes, and Ghezzi (2017, p. 760) argue that fashion is synonymously associated with a negative impact on the environment and lacking sustainability. With consumers increasingly aware of green problems, the fashion sector is increasingly innovating and seeking ways of meeting consumers growing needs for alternative fashion (Todeschini et al. 2017, p. 761). Todeschini et al. (2017, p. 764) argue that the environmentally-conscious consumers are interested in eco-fashion because of developments that include zero waste, sustainable raw materials, recycling, upcycling, fair trade and vegan fashion production. Niinimäki (2010, p. 152) argues that eco-fashion is clothing that is designed to last longer, is sustainably produced, often locally made, results in less or no damage to the environment, and uses recycled materials or eco-labels. Thus, eco-fashion is a green solution addressing and changing how consumers perceive fashion and providing consumers with a green alternative.

### **2.7.6 Green Retailing**

Lee, Choi, Youn, and Lee (2012, p. 67) argue that green retailing is a key business model in the environmentally conscious world. The growing concern for the environment and environmentally conscious consumers are the drivers of the changes in the retailing sector from conventional to green retailing (Sinha 2011, p. 1). Green retailing is about providing environmentally conscious consumers with green products, including organic and wellness-related products (Lee et al. 2012, p. 68).

### **2.7.7 Green Packaging**

Consumers are increasingly environmentally conscious and aware of the impact of purchasing behaviours in the environment (Scott & Vigar-Ellis 2014, p. 642). Scott and Vigar-Ellis (2014, p. 643) argue that organisations are increasingly encouraged to play their part and act in an environmentally friendly manner. This is resulting in more organisations that are developing green product packaging as a way of contributing to green solutions (Mishra & Sharma 2010, p. 11; Scott & Vigar-Ellis 2014, p. 643).

The literature above indicates that marketers may use packaging to address consumers concern for the environment (Scott & Vigar-Ellis 2014, p. 643). Therefore, it is important to determine whether green packaging represents the content of the green message used in green advertising to strengthen the sustainability message.

### **2.7.8 Organic Food**

The study by Mhlophe (2016) researched South African consumers' purchase intentions towards organic food. The study found that environmentally conscious consumers purchase organic food because of health-related benefits that conventional products fail to offer (Mhlophe 2016, p. 6). Atkinson and Kim (2014, p. 38) argue that environmentally-conscious consumers indicate a willingness for purchasing organic food products and that the American market grew about 10%. Organic food thus represents a possible green solution that may be part of the message content in green advertising.

### **2.7.9 Green Products/Services**

Seyfang (2006, p. 383) states that sustainable consumption is increasingly communicated by organisations to make consumers aware of the dangers of conventional consumption behaviours. Sustainable consumption has resulted in the development of green products that can meet the social, economic and environmental benefits (Dyllick & Rost 2017, p. 346). The study by Dangelico and Pujari (2010, p. 479) researched green product innovation in Italian and Canadian organisations where it was found that new green product development results in

benefits including increased sales, improved corporate image, product differentiation and competitive advantage. The development of environmentally friendly products is part of the solutions that help address green problems (Darnall, Ponting, & Vazquez-Brust 2012, p. 287). Information about specific green products and services being sold is thus a possible green solution proposed in the content of green messages and may be used to better understand the nature of green advertising in magazines in South Africa.

### **2.7.10 Green Supply Chain**

Srivastava (2007, p. 53) argues that the growing decline in environmental quality, including diminishing natural resources, increasing pollution levels and overflowing waste sites necessitates the changes in overall business operations. The decline in environmental quality results in more organisations that are finding a balance between its supply chain management and the natural environment (Srivastava 2007, p. 54). Because of supply chain greening, organisations can innovate and develop green products (Maniatis 2016, p. 215). Thus, the green supply chain is defined as the integrating of sustainability into supply chain components including procurement, operations and logistics (Maniatis 2016, p. 215; Srivastava 2007, p. 55).

Information about an organisation's green supply chain is a possible green solution that may be included in the message content in the green advertisements.

### **2.7.11 Waste Minimisation**

Hasan and Ali (2015, p. 468) argue that waste minimisation is important in an organisation's environmental performance. Organisations that can reduce waste can use green advertising to communicate with consumers on how these organisations are helping address environmental problems (Hasan & Ali 2015, p. 466). Environmentally conscious organisations can find ways of minimising or eliminate waste, for example, in the manufacturing process (Wong, Lai, Shang, & Lu 2014, p. 123).

### **2.7.12 Reduction in Energy Use**

Extant research indicates a growing interest by businesses across different sectors in finding ways of becoming green with the Internet of Things (IoT) (Arshad, Zahoor, Shah, Wahid, & Yu 2017), electricity providers (Buchanan, Russo, & Anderson 2015) and computers manufacturers (Molla, Abareshi, & Cooper 2014) embracing sustainability. Arshad et al. (2017, p. 15667) argue that the Internet of Things (IoT) can be regarded as green if it could reduce energy use.

With South Africa battling an energy crisis in the country, the national energy provider implemented a variety of energy efficiency and demand-side management strategies (Ye, Koch, & Zhang, 2018, p. 2). These strategies were mainly targeting the residential sector aiming to reduce the high demand and overall electricity consumption in South Africa (Ye et al. 2018, p. 2). Monyei and Adewumi (2018, p. 3) argue that demand-side management initiatives could significantly contribute to addressing South Africa's energy crisis, considering that households contribute high electricity usage. For example, Eskom embarked on a country-wide campaign promoting energy-saving to households on national television as well as on pay television. These communications would appear on television when the (national grid) energy usage was high and encourage consumers to switch off unused appliances, lights and remind people to switch off their geysers to help mitigate high electricity use. As a result, initiatives such as this one could be the green solution helping reduce consumers' high-energy demand and mitigate the energy crisis (Monyei & Adewumi 2018, p. 3).

### **2.7.13 Pollution Reduction**

Organisations are innovating and seeking solutions towards the pollution green problems (Mainieri, Barnett, Valdero, Unipan, & Oskamp 1997, p. 190). According to Liu and Diamond (2008, p. 37), Chinese consumers are becoming more environmentally conscious as a result of the prevalence of air pollution problems in China. Past studies conducted in India (Jain & Kaur 2004), Turkey (Akyol & Kiliç 2014) and America (Innes & Sam 2008) indicate a growing need for finding pollution reduction green solutions. Li, Yang, He, and Zhao (2014, p. 1) propose that

green building is the green solution that results in pollution reduction in the construction sector.

### **2.7.14 Resource Preservation**

Stakeholders including policymakers, consumers and organisations are under pressure to find green solutions that help preserve resources (Tucker et al. 2012, p. 9; Warner, Rumble, Martin, Lamm, & Cantrell 2015, p. 65). Past research suggests proposing resource preservation in green advertisements helps influence consumers' environmentally consciousness in Israel and America (Heiman 2002, p. 79; Zimmer et al. 1994, p. 71). Resource preservation may include but is not limited to, the preservation of water (Silva, Filho, Silva, Pinto, & Vaz 2019), land (Nguyen et al. 2020) and food (Young, Russell, Robinson, & Chintakayala 2018; Welch, Swaffield & Evans 2018). For example, Silva et al. (2019, p. 2) suggest that water preservation strategies may be implemented through greywater from the taps and drinking fountains, condensed water from air conditioning, rainwater use, water reuse from distilling units and low-pressure flushing toilets.

Silva et al. (2019, p. 1) argue that water plays an instrumental part in the survival of people and throughout the whole life cycle. However, the water resource is available in limited quantities due to population growth, climate variations and prolonged regional droughts (Silva et al. 2019, p. 1). As a result, people are seeking ways to reduce the pressure on the water resource, mainly by reducing demand for water.

Minimising waste, reducing resource and energy consumption and reducing pollution are all reduction solutions that may suggested as solutions to sustainability problems in the green messages in green advertising.

### **2.7.15 Reuse**

Broega, Jordão, and Martins (2017, p. 1) argue that unsustainable consumption behaviours and waste disposal exacerbate green problems. The reuse green solution is increasingly

implemented in the hospitality sector as a way this sector is contributing to mitigating green problems (Han & Hyun 2018, p. 87). For example, the reusing of items like towels helps reduce energy and water usage (Han & Hyun 2018, p. 88). Han and Hyun (2018, p. 89) argue that towel reuse does not only benefit the environment but extends to financial aspects. Thus, reuse as a green solution has the potential of helping conserve energy/electricity and reduce water use in the context of the hotel sector. The green marketing literature indicates that the reuse strategy is a green solution that helps marketers address environmental problems (Han & Hyun 2018, p. 87) and could thus represent content in green advertisements.

### **2.7.16 Company and Consumer Supported Initiatives**

With organisations, the major drivers of green problems, organisations are increasingly initiating and involved in the environmental initiatives addressing green problems (Renwick, Redman, & Maure 2013). Thus, company-supported initiatives are one way that organisations can help address green problems.

An estimated 14.3 million tons of textiles are disposed to landfills (Lang & Armstrong 2018, p. 37). The throwaway culture and over-consumption result in waste and exacerbate the green problems (Lang & Armstrong 2018, p.37). As a result, collaborative consumption is a company-supported initiative that could help address waste that strives in fast fashion as many apparel products have a shorter life span and replaced by frequent new styles. For example, instead of consumers purchasing new clothes rather, apparel retailers coordinate the acquisition and distribution of apparel products. This collaborative consumption strategy allows consumers to rent and swap apparel products (Lang & Armstrong 2018, p.38). As a result, the company-supported initiative helps promote products reuse and reduce the making of new products that prevent waste (Lang & Armstrong 2018, p.38).

Consumer supported initiatives bring together consumers and organisations such that these parties can collaborate to create support for proposed green solutions (Romani, Grappi, & Bagozzi 2016, p. 253). These initiatives only occur when consumers support them. The consumer-supported initiatives are different from Corporate Social Initiatives that are defined

as voluntary acts by the organisation (Vitell 2015, p. 767). Environmentally conscious consumers are more likely to purchase products or support initiatives that aim to address green problems (Ergen, Bekoglu, & Giray 2014, p. 130). Sandhu, Ozanne, Smallman, and Cullen (2010, p. 356) argue that partnerships between organisations and environmentally conscious consumers are key in green message communication. These consumers collaborate with organisations by purchasing products or services that are linked to green initiatives and are developed by organisations to create collaborations with consumers towards finding green solutions. For example, The Save the Rhino is a global initiative promoting conservation of Rhinos. This is a campaign by an organisation that advocates against rhino poaching and promotes conservation of the rhinos. Through consumer-supported initiatives, the Save the Rhino can generate funds to help address poaching pandemic. Consumers are encouraged to make donations or purchase an organisation's merchandise so that the Save the Rhino can fulfil its mandate. As a result, the Save, the Rhino campaign in South Africa, is yielding positive results with a reported decline in the cases of poached or killed rhinos.

Company and consumer-supported initiatives are other communication strategies that may be used to address green problems. As a result, these initiatives may be proposed as green solutions to green problems. Therefore, knowledge of consumer and company-supported initiatives as strategies used to strengthen the communication of a green message is important in directing this research when evaluating message content elements.

### **2.7.17 Green Information Technology**

The changes in the environment encourage organisations to develop sustainable strategies that would help balance economic, social and environmental needs (Molla et al. 2014, p. 129). With technology rapidly advancing and consumers concerns for the environment increasing (Molla et al. 2014, p. 129), this results in more scrutiny on Information Technology (IT) related emissions and waste and consumers are demanding consciousness in design, manufacturing, usage and disposal of IT (Molla et al. 2014, p. 130).

Green IT practices occur throughout the IT life cycle, from procurement, manufacturing and until product disposal helping address related IT problems including electronic waste, IT emissions and reduce energy use (Molla et al. 2014, p. 133). Thus, the promotion of green IT as a green solution is likely to bring awareness of how IT organisations are addressing green issues. Green IT may thus be a message content element in green advertising in magazines in South Africa.

### **2.7.18 Recycling**

Alkaya and Demirer (2015) researched water recycling in the Turkish soft drink industry. The study found that 61% of the water resource used in the fruit concentrates production and fruit juice production lines is not recycled or reused. The production process uses most of the water resource in the soft drink production resulting in waste, and this is because the process only uses water once (Alkaya & Demirer 2015, p. 5). Alkaya and Demirer (2015, p. 5) suggest replacing the once-through cooling practice with close-circuit cooling in this sector, which would result in an 80% water saving as a benefit of water recycling. Mourad (2016, p. 461) argues that the growing quantity of food that is being produced but not used harms water and land resources. Addressing the negative effects of consumption on the environment requires consumers to play their part (Segev et al. 2015, p. 35). As a result, organisations are initiating food-recycling initiatives as a green solution (Mourad 2016, p. 461). This initiative would help reduce food waste and result in water conservation and reducing land pollution. Globally, organisations are developing campaigns to develop and promote a recycling culture to consumers (Lee, Haley & Yan 2019). Recycling is an alternative to disposing of unwanted items to landfills (Bianchi & Birtwistle 2012, p. 335). Grazzini, Rodrigo, Aiello and Viglia (2018, p. 1944) argue that recycling benefits in the tourism sector may include the reduction in disposal costs and saving natural resources. The recycling initiatives may emphasise recycling of common plastics used for beverage bottles (juice and water) and disposable food (yoghurt) and cleaning products (detergent bottles). For example, South African bread maker, Blue Ribbon's recycling campaign of bread packages in the early 1990s helped consumers become aware of plastic pollution. This nationwide recycling campaign raised awareness and promoted recycling of

plastic packages to communities, primary schools and high schools across South Africa. Thus, recycling has the potential to help mitigate green problems (Grazzini et al. 2018, p. 1944).

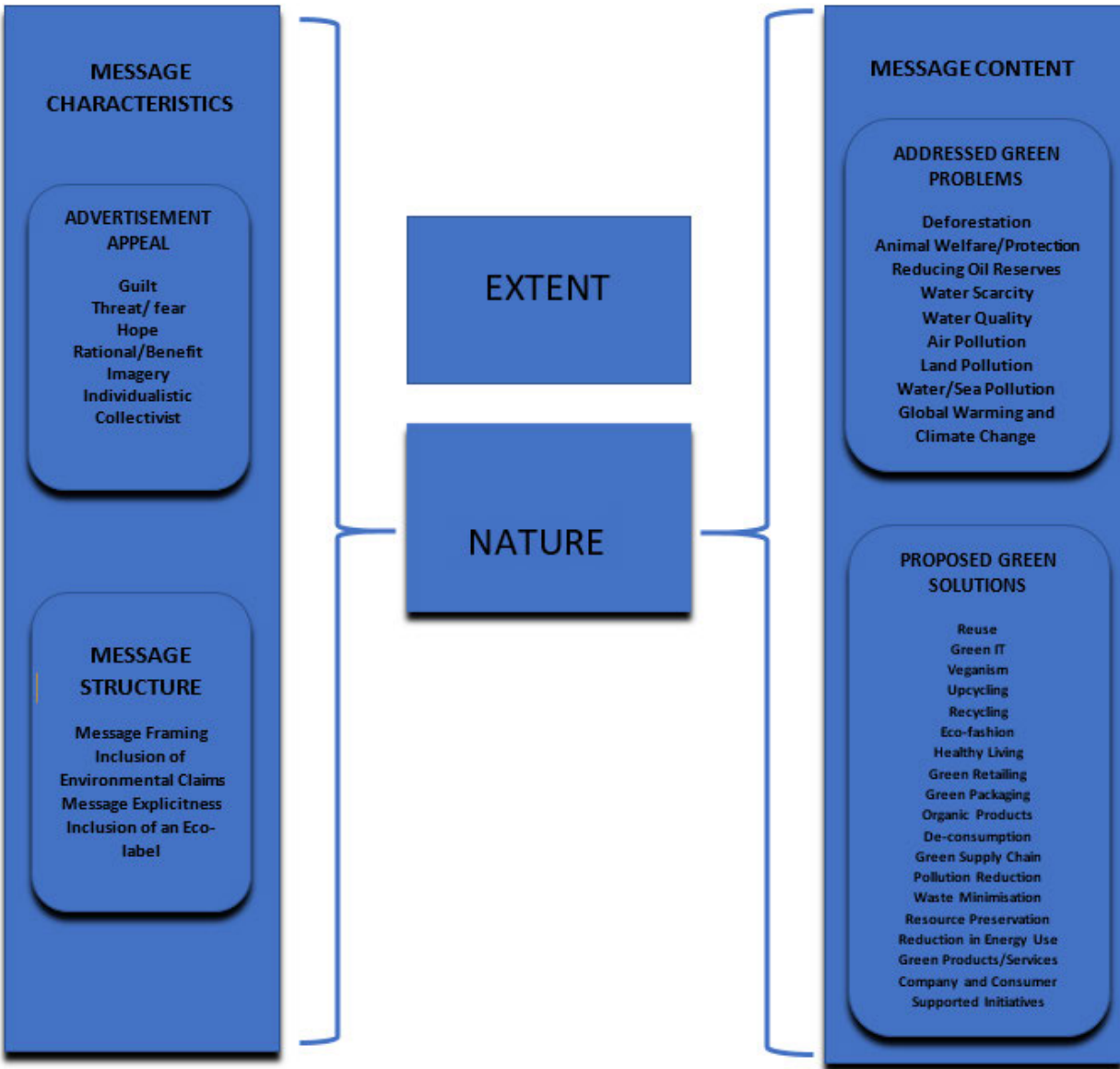
Recycling is a green solution used by marketers to address the green problems that often result because of short life-span of products that cause waste, pollution problem and exacerbate depletion of natural resources (Grazzini et al. 2018, p. 1944). Thus, recycling is a possible content inclusion in green advertising in magazines in South Africa.

The increasing calls for organisations to help in addressing the green problems have resulted in more organisation innovating and implementing strategies that are aimed at addressing these problems (Alniacik & Yilmaz 2012, p. 1106). Organisations using green advertising to communicate how these organisations are heeding the call for green and how consumers could collaborate with organisations find green solutions. Some of the green solutions proposed by the organisations consist of strategies tailored for consumers, organisational strategies and mixed strategies targeting both consumers and organisation. Green strategies that are targeted to consumers include veganism, healthy living and deconsumption. Whereas, the organisational strategies consist of upcycling, eco-fashion, green retailing, green supply chain, green packaging, organic food and green product/services. The mixed strategies towards green include waste minimisation, reduction in energy use, resource preservation, pollution reduction, reuse, company and consumer supported initiatives, green Information Technology and recycling.

The literature discussed above guided and informed on what content elements this study should search for when evaluating the message content elements. Also, it provided insight into how these green solutions may be used in green advertising to strengthen the communication of a green message. Thus, this study was able to determine the message content elements in green advertising and evaluate the nature of green advertising in magazines in South Africa. The next section presents the study's conceptual framework.

## 2.8 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

While advertising design is often discussed in terms of the appeals used, the copy text, the tone and style, images and layout (Duncan, 2005), no theory or model for advertisement design elements could be found that could be used in a comprehensive evaluation of the nature of green advertising. There are, however, numerous studies that look at specific design elements and their effects. These elements include message framing (Cucchiara et al. 2015), the inclusion of environmental claims (Kumar 2017), message explicitness (Usrey 2017), and the inclusion of an eco-label (Wang et al. 2018) which make up the message characteristics in green advertising. These are more specific design features that could be used to explore the nature of green advertisements in magazines in South Africa. As a result, a conceptual framework depicted in Figure 2.1 below was developed for this research for determining the extent and nature of green advertising in magazines in South Africa. The past research on green advertising discussed above showed that green marketers use multiple strategies to strengthen the communication of the green message. These strategies reflect the nature of green advertising and consist of message characteristics (advertising appeals and message structure) and message content strategies (addressing green problems and proposing green solutions). The green advertising strategies have been found to influence green consumer knowledge development, thus have been incorporated into the conceptual framework. This conceptual framework also includes the extent of green advertising in magazines in South Africa, contributing to understanding the proliferation of green advertising in magazines in South Africa.



**Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework for Determining the Extent and Nature of Green Advertising in magazines in South Africa**

This conceptual framework consists of the core constructs of the extent of green advertising and the nature of green advertising in magazines in South Africa. The nature of green advertising is however made up of subconstructs or elements being the message characteristics (including advertising appeals and message structural elements) and message content (including green problems and solutions covered). The following section presents a summary of the chapter.

## 2.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter provided a review of literature guiding the current study. The first section presented evidence on extant research with a green focus in South Africa. The chapter then discussed the importance of green communication in South Africa. After that, key constructs used in the investigation of the nature of green advertising, beginning with appeals that are used in the green communication to promote and enhance consumers environmentally awareness and behaviour, were discussed. The advertising appeals section identified eight advertising appeals found in the green advertising literature, including guilt, threat/fear, hope, rational/benefit, imagery, individualistic, collectivist, and motherhood. The message structure in the green advertising section critically discussed the four executional elements used to communicate a green message. These executional message elements include message framing consisting of positive and negative framing; inclusion of environmental claims consisting of product-oriented, process-oriented, imagery and environmental facts claims; message explicitness consisting of implicit/subtle and explicit; and inclusion of an eco-label. The next section explored the green problems that may be addressed in green advertising. The addressed green problems included water scarcity, water quality, air pollution, water/sea pollution, land pollution, deforestation, animal welfare/protection, reduction in oil reserves and global warming/climate change. Finally, the chapter explored green solutions that are presented in green advertising. The green solutions include veganism, upcycling, eco-fashion, recycling, waste minimisation, green packaging, organic products, reduction in energy use, resource preservation, pollution reduction, green products/services, healthy living, de-consumption, green supply chain, green information technology, reuse, company and consumer-supported initiatives and green retailing. Lastly, the chapter concludes with the study's conceptual framework. This conceptual framework was developed to address the research questions and objectives on the extent and nature of green advertising in magazines in South Africa. The next chapter presents the overall research design and methodology used in this research.

## CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

Methodology refers to various strategies used by researchers to investigate and acquire new knowledge in a systematic manner (Mohajan 2018, p. 16). It is about deciding on hypothethico-deductive, inductive and or co-operative inquiry approaches (Sekaran & Bougie 2016, p. 30). Developing well-designed research that is appropriate for research objectives, data collection, data analysis and the overall research aim is key for strengthening the research quality (Garg 2016, p. 640). Thus this chapter is used to demonstrate trustworthiness, credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability of the current qualitative research. Colorafi and Evans (2016, p. 24) argue that adequate details about decisions made in the research must be presented in a transparent and fair way, preventing any doubts on decisions made in the research.

The literature on green advertising indicates that green messages are communicated across media platforms, including television and print (Dai, Goh, & Cheng 2014, p. 1; Kim & Han 2016, p. 428; Segev, Fernandes, & Hong 2016, p. 85). In South Africa, magazine advertising is amongst the preferred communication methods employed by advertisers (Statista 2018, p.1). The magazine circulation and readership figures show that advertisers in South Africa consider this platform useful in communicating and reaching their target audience (Manson 2018, p.1). Past research has reported that consumers' environmental consciousness sometimes fails to result in green consumer behaviour (Mkhize & Ellis 2018, p. 116, Witek 2019, p. 31). Seyrek and Gul (2017, p. 317) argue that the green gap is often caused by the lack of awareness of green products. Some organisations are using green advertising to make consumers aware of what they are doing to address green problems or their green products. However, there's a gap for the research about what is known about either the extent or nature of green advertising in South Africa. This research therefore followed a descriptive qualitative research design using deductive content analysis on magazine advertising in South Africa to determine the extent and

nature of green advertising in magazines in South Africa. It drew its sample from the magazine population available in South Africa, consisting of international and local/domestic magazines.

The ten sections of this chapter are used as a way of adding transparency. These sections provide a discussion and justification for the methods and approaches adopted for this study. The discussion consists of a brief reminder of the research aim and then the objectives are justified. Details of the research design and approach and the research strategy adopted are described and justified. The chapter further justifies the methods used for this research and details the target population (magazines available in South Africa), the sample selection using random sampling, and the data collection method using a deductive content analysis template. Deductive content analysis is described and justified and the data quality control measures taken are articulated. Finally, ethical considerations are presented.

## **3.2 RESEARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES**

The overall research aim for this study was to determine the extent and nature of green advertising in magazines in South Africa. This study was guided by the six research objectives, which are to:

### **3.2.1 Determine the extent of green advertisements in magazines in South Africa**

Companies are using green advertising to communicate their pro-environment image to initiate environmentally friendly behaviours (Leonidou et al. 2011, p. 6). Leonidou et al.'s (2014) study add that companies are using magazine advertising to communicate with green-conscious consumers. Therefore, it is important to determine the extent of green advertisements in magazines in South Africa as this will provide knowledge of the extent of green communications in magazine space in South Africa to which South African consumers may be exposed.

### **3.2.2 Determine products, services or organisations using green advertising**

As a result of increased appetite by the environmentally-conscious consumers, the food retail sector is increasingly using green advertising to help provide more information and raise consumer awareness on environmental issues (Chkanikova & Mont 2011, p. 3). Likewise, the hospitality sector has increased its use of green advertising (Kim & Kim 2014, p. 64). Thongplew, Spaargaren, and van Koppen (2013, p. 107) and Lee et al. (2012, p. 69) argue that green advertising enhances environmentally friendly behaviour. Thus, it is of the essence to determine products, services or organisations that are using green advertising in magazines in South Africa. This knowledge will assist in determining which industries and organisations are at the forefront of green advertising and whether changes in product or organisational type, influence the appeals used in green advertisements.

### **3.2.3 Determine the green appeals used in these magazine advertisements**

Companies are advertising their green products using several green appeals (Yang et al. 2015, p. 2663). Green advertising studies further indicate that companies rely on the use of appeals including threat/fear (Hartmann et al. 2015), guilt (Jiménez & Yang 2008), collectivist appeals (Xue 2015), individualistic appeals (Muralidharan et al. 2016), imagery appeals (Hartmann, Apaolaza, & Eisend 2016), eco-labels (Testa et al. 2015), rational/benefit appeals (Jovanović et al. 2017) and motherhood appeals (Atkinson 2014). With green appeals found to be a prevalent feature in developed nations, it is useful to determine the green appeals in magazine advertising in South Africa.

### **3.2.4 Determine the structure of the green messages**

The manner in which the advert content is communicated significantly impacts how the message is received by the audience (Bortree et al. 2012, p. 78). Some message structural elements such as message framing (Olsen et al. 2014; Segev et al. 2015; Xue 2015), the inclusion of environmental claims (Carlson et al. 1993; Kim et al. 2012; Xue & Zhou 2012), the inclusion of eco-labels (Testa et al. 2015; Wang et al. 2018) and message explicitness (Kronrod et al. 2012;

Usrey 2017; Yan et al. 2012) have been researched concerning their influence on green behaviour. Thus, determining the structure of the green messages found in magazines in South Africa is important in understanding the nature of green advertising in this medium.

### **3.2.5 Determine the green problems addressed in these advertisements**

Lee (2014, p. 46) argues that green problems such as global warming are often communicated as a profound global problem threatening the planet and people in Japan. Also, global warming tends to be constructed as an opportunity for Japanese companies, especially companies with high-level environmental technology (Lee 2014, p. 46). It is then important to have a South African perspective on which green problems are addressed in magazine advertisements. Determining the green problems addressed in magazine advertisements will contribute to the overall research aim of determining the nature of green advertising in magazines in South Africa.

### **3.2.6 Determine the green solutions proposed in these advertisements**

Green advertisements propose a number of solutions to address green challenges. Green solutions in the literature include the protection and conservation of natural resources (Finisterra do Paço & Raposo 2010, p. 429), waste minimisation (Phillips, Read, Green & Bates 1999), recycling and environmentally friendly packaging (Mishra & Sharma 2010, p. 11), reduction in energy consumption and choosing organic food (Atkinson & Kim 2014, p. 38). As a result, determining the green solutions proposed in magazine advertising in South Africa by organisations as solutions to green problems is of the essence to further the knowledge of green advertising.

This section presented and explained the six research objectives that guided this research achieve its overall aim of determining the extent and nature of green advertising in magazines in South Africa. The next section explores the research design that informed this study.

### **3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN**

According to Sekaran and Bougie (2016, p. 95), the research design is an outline used by researchers to provide insight and direction in the collection, measurement, and data analysis needed to answer the overall research question. Matua and Van De Wal (2015, p. 23) argue that methods of inquiry in research can use descriptive or interpretive designs. Research that is descriptive focuses on providing only a description of a phenomenon, whereas in interpretive design, interpretation of the experience is the focus (Matua & Van De Wal 2015, p. 23). The current study does not intend to understand the relationships between variables. In this study, there are no dependent or independent variables. However, message characteristics and message content elements arising from a review of the literature indicated that these are variables contributing to a green message in green advertising. Thus, this research sought to descriptively investigate the extent and nature of green advertising in magazines in South Africa. The content of magazine advertisements was manually analysed to provide insight on the proliferation of green advertising in magazines in South Africa. This analysis assisted this research in investigating the extent of green advertising in these magazines. The appropriateness of descriptive design for addressing the research question for this study is because of its contribution as a research design. Colofari and Evans (2016, p. 16) argue that descriptive design is suited for researchers seeking thoughtful exploration that would result in an in-depth understanding of social problems. According to Colofari and Evans (2016, p. 17), researchers prefer this research design because of its ability to provide factual responses. These responses address questions such as the who, what and where providing insight on a phenomenon (Colofari & Evans 2016, p. 18). Matua and Van De Wal (2015, p. 23) argue that the descriptive design assists researchers in exploring, analysing and describing a question of interest without compromising its natural richness, breadth and depth important in gaining an understanding of a phenomenon under investigation near its pure form. Thus, this study followed a descriptive research design because it helps provide insight into the greenness of magazine advertising in South Africa. The present study aimed to examine and provide a comprehensive description of the greenness of advertisements in magazines in South Africa. For this reason, the descriptive design was considered appropriate for this research because it

does not aim to elicit responses to communications but to present a description of the status quo concerning the greenness of magazine advertisements in South Africa. The next section explains and presents the research approach that guided the current study research approach.

### **3.4 RESEARCH APPROACH**

The nature of the study informs the research approach (Hair, Celsi, Ortinau, & Bush 2008, p. 77). Hair et al. (2008, p. 77) argue that there are three major approaches used to investigate a phenomenon, namely: qualitative, quantitative and mixed-method. Qualitative research is a holistic approach with a focus on describing, explaining and making sense of the collected data (Williams 2011, p. 67). Williams (2011, p. 67) further explains that qualitative research is mainly conducted in order to understand the nature of the problem better and builds its premise on inductive rather than deductive reasoning. Quantitative research refers to studies where data is collected and analysed using statistical tests and calculations, excluding the use of in-depth analysis (Williams 2011, p. 66). Sekaran and Bougie (2016, p. 106) explain that the mixed method approach combines the benefits of qualitative and quantitative approaches and it is mainly used when the two approaches cannot answer the research questions alone. Advocates of a mixed-methods state that the ability to combine both inductive and deductive thinking, and the fact that the method allows researchers to use more than one research method, assist researchers in addressing the problem from different angles (Sekaran & Bougie 2016, p. 106).

According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009, p. 124), a decision made about the approach from the initial stage may influence the overall research. The research approach can either be deductive in which the research seeks to develop a theory or inductive in which the research may collect data and develop a theory that informed results of data analysis (Saunders et al. 2009, p. 123). The deductive themes in this research were informed by extant literature and existing knowledge on the use of theory indicated and determined the deductive themes of analysis. Thus, deductive content analysis suited this research. White and Marsh (2006, p. 23) defined content analysis as "a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use". Carlson et al. (1993, p.

29) argue that content analysis is effective when research aims to establish patterns in support of the existing ideas. Similarly, Zhang and Wildemuth (2016, p. 307) argue that content analysis' value is undoubtedly when the research objective is to identify patterns, frequencies, structure and types of advertising. As a result, the use of the content analysis approach suited the current study because it sought to determine patterns in terms of the extent of green advertising and advertisement message content or characteristics.

Thus, the present research followed a qualitative, deductive content analysis approach to magazine advertising in South Africa. According to Elo and Kynningas (2008, p. 109), deductive content analysis is a research method used in research when the structure of the analysis is operationalised based on previous knowledge. Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2016, p. 145) argue that the review of literature often plays an important role in the development of deductive content analysis research.

This deductive content analysis of magazines in South Africa provided insight into the extent and nature of green advertising in magazines. This insight was gained by analysing magazine advertising using advertising appeals, message elements, the content of green problems and solutions established in the literature review. As a result, this study was able to use qualitative methods. The next section explores the target population for this study.

### **3.5 TARGET POPULATION**

Population refers to the total set of observations that can be made on a group of people, events, or subjects of interest such that the researcher can make inferences (Sekaran & Bougie 2016, p. 236). For this study, all the advertisements in print and digital magazines available or sold in South Africa were the target population. These magazines include magazines of South African origin and the international magazines sold in South Africa. The magazine population in South Africa covers a wide range of genres including Home and Gardening, Leisure, Health, Fitness, Sport, Entertainment and Celebrity News, Men's market, Woman's general, Business Press, Travel, Cars and Food. Appendix B presents a list of magazines in South Africa published on bi-monthly, monthly, bi-weekly, weekly, and daily bases targeting the same or different audiences

(Magazines.co.za, 2018, p. 1; Manson, 2018, p. 18). The available magazines are mainly in three languages, namely: IsiZulu, English and Afrikaans. Also, magazines vary in scope, ranging from national, to provincial or local. Print magazines are widely used in content analysis studies aiming to understand or describe a phenomenon such as green advertising (e.g. Carlson et al. 1993; Kim & Han 2016; Segev et al. 2015). According to Chitra (2007, p. 176), green consumers are more receptive to print advertisements as an advertising medium as opposed to television communication. A variety of advertisers are using this medium, and the magazine medium receives a significant share of the advertising budget (Kim & Han 2016, p. 3). Bizcommunity (2013, p. 1) found that magazine advertising receives more attention from South African consumers in comparison to other media. South African consumers can foster personal connections with advertisements on this platform and thus resulting in preference and liking of magazine advertising (Bizcommunity 2013, p. 1). As a result, the use of magazines to determine the greenness of advertisements in South Africa is reasonable and justifiable as a target population. The next section explores the sampling strategies that were followed by this study.

### **3.6 SAMPLING STRATEGIES**

According to Hair et al. (2008, p. 140), probability and nonprobability sampling are two basic sampling designs. These authors explain that probability sampling refers to the case where the sampling unit has a known chance of being selected for the sample, whereas, nonprobability sampling is the opposite of probability sampling where the probability of selecting a sampling unit is unknown, and the selection is based on researcher judgement. Most researchers are constrained by budget, time and accessibility, making it difficult or impossible to conduct a census, resulting in favour of sampling strategies (Saunders et al. 2016, p. 272). According to Cooper and Schindler (2013, p. 348), in probability sampling, the researcher can make probability-based confidence estimates of various parameters that are impossible to do with non-probability sampling. Cooper and Schindler (2013, p. 348) further argue that simple random sampling is the purest form of probability sampling because all sample units have a known, nonzero chance of selection. The current study used simple random sampling. From the total of 204 magazines to choose from, with a 95 per cent confidence level and confidence

interval of 10, the required sample was 66 magazines (Creative Research Systems 2012). The list of magazines in South Africa (Appendix B) provides the magazine sampling frame from which the required sample was drawn. Using a simple random sampling technique, magazines were alphabetically entered into Excel. Thereafter random numbers generated through Excel random number generator were assigned to the magazines and the magazines sorted according to the assigned numbers, ranging from smallest to biggest. After sorting these magazines, a sample was selected using the generated random numbers as the deciding criteria with the first 66 magazines drawn for the required sample size. However, after this process, some magazines from the sampling frame were ineligible and excluded from selection. The ineligible magazines at least met one of the following reasons:

- The magazine was not written in English thus Afrikaans and IsiZulu magazines were excluded,
- The magazine was either not available online (digital copies) or in print copy in retail stores, in Pietermaritzburg (KwaZulu-Natal),
- The magazines had been discontinued but were still in the sampling frame.

Magazines that met the above ineligible criteria were replaced with the next magazine in the sampling frame. This continued until it was possible to draw the magazine sample of 66.

Sekaran and Bougie (2016, p. 261) caution that large sample size does not translate into an appropriate size and hence, confidence and precision determines the adequate size. Thus, confidence and precision determined the adequate sample size required for this research to determine the extent and nature of green advertising in South Africa. Segev et al. (2016, p. 87) argue that the high repetition rate of the advertisements in a multitude of magazines also compensates for magazines that are not selected in the sample. The 66 magazine sample for this research was drawn from the magazine population in South Africa (Appendix B). The next section explores green advertising definition.

### 3.7 DEFINING GREEN ADVERTISING

As discussed in the literature review, the inclusion criteria used to define the advertisement as green was used to qualify an advertisement as green if:

1. The advertisement promoted a healthy lifestyle or living, for example, advertisements promoting healthy lifestyle including outdoor living, fitness or physical activity to improve health and fitness (Rahim et al. 2012, p. 47),
2. The advertisement made reference to nature or used scenery or imagery depicting nature, for example, an advertisement using scenes of nature including natural habitats or flora or fauna in natural settings (Shen et al. 2020, p. 4; Leonidou et al. 2011, p. 9),
3. The advertisement used phrases including fitness, health, life and nature (Banerjee et al. 1995, p. 22),
4. The advertisement claimed that the product or company is sustainable or addressing sustainability (Rahim et al. 2012, p. 47). It should be noted that statements about a product being sustainable or addressing sustainability in some way, was enough to qualify an advertisement as green without determining the truthfulness of the advertisement. Thus, for this study, greenness was viewed at face value. Assessing the occurrence of greenwashing was beyond the scope of this study,
5. The advertisement used the inclusion of eco-labels, environmental claims, depicting images of green problems or proposing green solutions, environmental spokespersons or environmental contributions (Leonidou et al. 2011, p. 9).

These criteria determined whether the advertisement was considered green. All the advertisements in the 66 magazines were evaluated using these criteria and the resultant subset of advertisements represented the sample of green advertisements. By comparing the number of green advertisements to the total number of advertisements in the 66 magazines, the extent of green advertising was calculated. These green advertisements were then further analysed to determine the nature of green advertising. Thus, this set of criteria assisted this research in defining what a green advertisement was. Applying this set of criteria provided

objectivity and consistency needed in this research to determine whether an advertisement should be treated as green or not, without allowing subjectivity to determine whether the advertisement was communicating a green message or green. The criteria used to define a green advertisement resulted in consistency of analysis because all advertisements from the 66 magazines were subjected to the same set of criteria. The advertisement size was not used as a restriction for inclusion. Thus, all the advertisements were included irrespective of its size. The next section explores data collection methods.

### **3.8 DATA COLLECTION METHODS**

This content analysis study collected data from the 66 randomly selected magazines. The advertisement sample was selected from magazine issues including Summer 2018/2019, November/December 2018/Jan 2019, December 2018-January 2019, December 2018-February 2019, January-February 2019, January/February/March 2019, January 2019 and February 2019 (Appendix B). The print magazine advertisements were scanned using a mobile phone CamScanner (application/software). Using this mobile application helped provide flexibility and instantaneous saving of the advertisement data. Each advertisement was analysed to determine the extent and proportion of green advertising in magazines in South Africa. The predetermined green criteria were used to assess if the advertisement was green. Advertisements meeting the green criteria were scanned, recorded and content analysed, whereas the non-green advertisements contributed only to establishing the extent and proportion of green advertising in magazines in South Africa. Green advertisements appearing more than once in the sample were only analysed once. However, repeated advertisements were treated separately and counted as a different advertisement on the overall advertisement count when determining the extent of green advertising. The next section explores data analysis.

## **3.9 DATA ANALYSIS**

The following sections describe the analysis used to achieve the research objectives.

### **3.9.1 Analysis to determine the extent of green advertising in magazines in South Africa**

#### **Determine the proportion of magazine advertisements that are green**

The extent of green advertisement was determined by applying the green definition criteria to the total 1186 advertisements and then calculating the percentage of the total advertisements that met at least one criterion. As mentioned above in section 3.7, Rahim (2012, p. 47) defined green advertising as any advertisement that promoted a healthy lifestyle, made reference to nature or used scenery or imagery depicting nature, claimed that the product or company is sustainable or addressed sustainability, included eco-labels, environmental claims, depicted images of green problems or proposed green solutions, or included environmental spokespersons or environmental contributions.

### **3.9.2 Analysis to explore the nature of green advertising in magazines in South Africa**

Saunders et al. (2009, p. 414) claim that before the data is processed and analysed, it portrays little meaning to most people. Thus, the collected data needed to be processed to extract meaning, converting data to information that could be used to explore the nature of green advertising. This research followed a descriptive qualitative, deductive content analysis approach. Saldana (2013, p. 4) argues that there are various methods for coding data, and these include eclectic, vivo and descriptive methods. Eclectic coding is a method researchers use to capture their first impression phrases derived from an open-ended process (Saldana 2013, p. 5). The vivo coding refers to a method in which the researcher codes data using the participant's response to come up with a code that captures the participant's response (Saldana 2013, p. 4). The descriptive coding method is defined as a process in which data is coded with the purpose of capturing and summarising the primary message the data represents or communicates

(Saldana 2013, p. 4). In this research, data were coded following a descriptive coding method. This research chose descriptive coding method as a result of this method in capturing the essence of message content assisting the study in providing insight on what is being communicated. Based on Saldana (2013, p. 4) definition of a descriptive method, the present study used this method because it enables the capturing of core message content in green advertisements in the magazine, thus, assisting this research capture the core message needed to understand the nature of green advertising in magazines in South Africa.

A research template (Appendix J) was established to conduct the deductive content analysis. The template was informed by the review of literature indicating message characteristics (appeals and structural elements) and message content (green problems and solutions). These represent the message elements used by advertisers to communicate the green message in magazine advertising. Thus, this content analysis template consists of themes, subthemes and descriptive codes used to capture the message content arising in magazine advertisements. These themes and descriptive codes were designed to facilitate the development of categories and assess their connections (Saldan 2013, p. 8). Thus, deductive analysis of magazine advertising was possible after themes and subthemes were generated, data coded and later categorised to provide meaning to the advertisements data.

The columns in the template in which the advertising data was recorded, deductively coded, categorised and interpreted made up the content analysis template required for the current study to make sense of this data and provide insight on the nature of green advertising in magazines in South Africa. The themes of the content analysis template included magazine identifiers, advertiser identifiers, message characteristics elements and message content strategies. The advertisement/magazine identifier theme was divided into subthemes, consisting of:

- advertisement sample number,
- magazine name,
- magazine issue,
- the total number of advertisements,
- magazine genre.

The advertiser theme was then divided into subthemes, including:

- page number,
- advertisement genre,
- company name,
- industry/sector,
- advertisement size.

Sub-themes for the message characteristics elements were then divided into the following appeal types:

- fear/threat,
- imagery,
- rational/benefit,
- guilt,
- individualistic,
- collectivist,
- hope,
- motherhood codes.

Message framing including of:

- positive
- negative codes.

Environmental claims, consisting of:

- product orientation,
- process orientation,
- image orientation,
- environmental facts codes.

The inclusion of eco-label subtheme and the message explicitness subtheme consisting of:

- explicit,
- subtle codes.

Subthemes in the message content elements were separated into green problems and green solutions. The green problems subtheme, consisted of:

- water quality,
- water scarcity,
- animal protection/welfare,
- air pollution,
- land pollution,

- water/sea pollution,
- deforestation,
- declining oil reserves,
- global warming codes.

The green solutions subthemes included:

- recycling,
- waste minimisation,
- green packaging,
- organic food,
- reduction in energy use,
- green products or services,
- pollution reduction,
- resource preservation,
- planet preservation,
- healthy living,
- deconsumption,
- green supply chain,
- green information technology,
- green retailing,
- eco-labels, re-using,
- company-supported initiatives,
- consumer-supported initiatives,
- veganism,
- upcycling,
- eco-fashion codes.

Once the green definition criteria were applied to the 1186 advertisements to identify the green advertisements, these were then analysed using the deductive analyses to understand the nature of advertising. The advertisements were analysed for evidence of each subtheme/code and direct quotes/descriptions of the advertisement element were transcribed as evidence of the subtheme or code.

### **Determine products, services or organisations using green advertising**

For this objective, the content analysis template included magazine genre, advertising company and industry/sector columns. As a result, these columns assisted this study in determining products, services or organisations that contribute green advertisements in magazines in South Africa. In addition, the genre column assisted this study in identifying the type of magazines

that contain most of the green advertisements as well as who these advertisements are targeting.

### **Determine the green appeals used in these magazine advertisements**

This research applied the themes of content analysis template to record, descriptively code and categorise the advertisement data according to the green advertising appeals arising in the advertisements. The green advertising literature shows that advertising appeals are increasingly used to improve the influence of advertisements communicated to consumers. The green advertising appeals that are used included motherhood (Coutant et al. 2011), hope (Chadwick 2015), individualistic and collectivist (Muralidharan et al. 2017; Xue 2015), threat/fear (Peters et al. 2014), imagery (Hartmann et al. 2013), rational/benefit (Chahal & Kaur 2015; Green & Peloza 2014) and guilt (Baek & Yoon 2016). This study assessed magazine advertisements to determine which green advertising appeals that marketers used in South Africa.

### **Determine the structure of the green messages**

The green advertising literature indicates that marketers are using different strategies to help improve the influence of green advertisements and as a result message framing (Olsen et al. 2014; Xue 2015), environmentally claims (Kim et al. 2012; Xue & Zhou 2012), eco-label inclusion (Testa et al. 2015; Wang et al. 2018) and message explicitness (Usrey 2017; Yan et al. 2012) are increasingly featured in green advertising. This study used these message elements to apply content analysis to magazine advertising in South Africa. Thus, the current study used message elements to determine the structure of advertisements arising from the advertisement data. This research used themes emerging from the green advertising literature, which informed the descriptive coding and categorising of the advertisement data that enabled the determining of the message structure.

## **Determine the green problems addressed in these advertisements**

The developed content analysis template had a column designated for recording green problems that were found in the magazine advertisements. The green advertising literature indicates that green problems include deforestation (Ferreira et al. 2012), animal welfare/protection (Bortree 2012; Cembalo et al. 2016), reducing oil reserves (De Schutter & Vanloqueren (2011), land pollution (Akyol & Kiliç 2014), air pollution (Sueyoshi & Yuan 2015), water/sea pollution (Vince & Hardesty 2017), global warming and climate change (Cherian & Jacob 2012; Fowler & Close 2012), water quality (Jambeck et al. 2015) and water scarcity (Hoekstra 2014). This study used these green problems as the descriptive codes for the green problems in magazine advertising in South Africa. As a result, this study was able to determine which green problems are being addressed in the magazine advertising in South Africa.

## **Determine the green solutions proposed in these advertisements**

The green solutions column of the template recorded the solutions presented in the magazine advertisements. These solutions were recorded and descriptively coded in the content analysis template using themes that were informed by the green advertising literature. The literature identified recycling (Chan & Hom 2013), waste minimisation (Hasan & Ali 2015), green packaging (Scott & Vigar-Ellis 2014), organic food (Mhlophe 2016), green retailing (Yang, Song, & Tong 2017), consumer-supported initiatives (Ergen et al. 2014), company-supported initiatives (Renwick et al. 2013), reuse (Han & Hyun 2018), green supply chain (Maniatis 2016), deconsumption (Sheth et al. 2011), healthy living (Xue & Zhou 2012), resource preservation (Warner et al. 2015), pollution reduction (Innes & Sam 2008), green products/services (Dangelico & Pujari, 2010), recycling (Alkaya & Demirer 2015), eco-fashion (Niinimäki 2010), upcycling (Yi et al. 2018), veganism (Pendegrast 2017), green information technology (Molla et al. 2014) and reduction in energy use (Orland, Ram, Lang, Houser, Kling & Coccia 2014) and therefore they were included in the template as descriptive codes. As a result, the descriptive coding and themes allowed this research to provide insights on green solutions magazine advertising are proposing in South Africa. The next section discusses issues related to data quality control.

### **3.10 DATA QUALITY CONTROL**

Reliability and validity are universally accepted factors that determine the research quality (Sinkovics, Penz, & Ghauri 2008, p. 695). With qualitative research increasingly growing its rigour, terms such as credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability are becoming the indicators that are commonly used to evaluate quality in research (Sinkovics et al. 2008, p. 699). Validity is used in qualitative research to evaluate the rigour of the research (Sinkovics et al. 2008, p. 699). Elo, Kääriäinen, Kanste, Pölkki, Utriainen, & Kyngäs (2014, p. 4) argue that the sampling strategy influences the validity of data and thus sound sampling and saturation enhances the validity of the study. To evaluate validity of the current research trustworthiness, credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability were used as indicators of research quality.

#### **3.10.1 Trustworthiness**

The major trustworthiness issues arise in the data collection method, sampling strategy and the choosing of an appropriate unit of analysis (Elo et al. 2014, p. 2). Elo et al. (2014, p. 3) developed a checklist that may be used to enhance the trustworthiness of the study. This checklist consists of data collection method, sampling strategy, selecting the unit of analysis, categorisation and abstraction, interpretation, representativeness, reporting results and reporting analysis process (Elo et al. 2014, p. 3). According to Saldana (2013, p. 36), there are several strategies in research for assessing trustworthiness consisting of continuously checking interpretations as they are being developed against the research data. Also, trustworthiness in research may be assessed by coding data as it is transcribed (Saldana 2013, p. 36). The current study was aimed at determining the extent and nature of green advertising in magazines in South Africa. Thus, in this study trustworthiness was strengthened by instantaneous scanning and saving the advertisement data from print magazines so that when the data recording process began, the correct data was recalled and recorded on the developed content analysis template. Digital magazines were downloaded and saved in a digital folder intended for only saving digital magazine versions. A 'comment' column was added in the deductive content analysis template to allow the recording of any details about the green advertisement being analysed. The

creation of 'comment' column assisted this research to simultaneously record important details that assisted with the data analysis while data capturing is underway. Working with the experienced researcher to develop specific research objectives helped address the overall research question. Also, the experienced researcher cross-checked the advertisement sample for meeting the overall research objective as well as the coding protocol to ensure consistency of descriptive coding, interpretation and replicability, thus improving trustworthiness.

### **3.10.2 Credibility**

The use of sample size calculator to determine the appropriate sample size adds validity to the current study. Appendix B in the appendices section shows a list of magazines in South Africa from which the 66 magazines were randomly selected. A sample size calculator was used to determine the appropriate sample size using a 95 per cent confidence level and confidence interval of 10. The simple random sampling strategy was used to draw an adequate advertisement sample. The Excel random number generator and outlined ineligibility criteria were two determiners of which magazines were selected from the magazine sampling frame. The credibility of a content analysis research can be improved by the selection of the most appropriate sample size (Elo et al. 2014, p. 4). Thus, the provision of adequate information about the sample size is important in evaluating the appropriateness of the sample (Elo et al. 2014, p. 4). Also, the coder reliability was ensured by standardising and systematising the analysis based on predetermined categories established through a thorough review of literature, thus providing credibility. Potter and Levine-Donnerstein (1999, p. 267) add that the development of a good coding scheme is important in maintaining credibility in research. This research strengthened its credibility by testing the coding protocol with a senior researcher to ensure consistent coding, interpretation and replicability. Hence, the current research strictly adhered to coding guidelines safeguarding against possible errors in the coding procedure (Baccarella, Scheiner, Trefzger, & Voigt 2014, p. 402).

### **3.10.3 Transferability**

Transferability in qualitative research is equivalent to generalisability in quantitative research (Anney 2014, p. 277). White and Marsh (2006, p. 36) define transferability as the extent to which the study findings from one context or setting are applicable in another context. For the current study, advertisement data was drawn from print magazines available in the retail space as well as digital magazines in South Africa. Appendix B provides the list of magazines in South Africa from which the 66 magazines were selected as the source of advertisement data. The 66 magazines were chosen using a simple random sampling strategy, providing transparency on the use of Excel random number generator and outlined ineligibility criteria as determiners guiding which magazines were selected in the magazine sampling frame. Post magazine selection, advertisements from the various magazines were scanned and saved so that they could be coded and recorded onto the spreadsheet template. The recording of advertisements onto the spreadsheet template followed the established category codes that explain what content could be recorded in each column, further making it simpler to analyse the recorded content consistently. The development of the spreadsheet template was informed by the research objectives, research design and method and literature review. Adhering to guidelines of content analysis research also helped enhance the transferability of the current study. This is because content analysis guidelines helped systematise the data collection and analysis process making it easier to replicate (Nowell, Norris, White & Moules 2017, p. 3)

### **3.10.4 Dependability**

With data collection extending over a long time, inconsistencies are more likely to occur during the data collection process (Graneheim & Lundman 2004, p. 110). The current study's data collection period was one month. All the collected advertisement data was scanned to minimise mistakes when data was recorded, coded and categorised. When the advertisement data was scanned and rechecked, this study was able to make comparisons during the analysis stage to ensure that data was correctly recorded and dependable.

### **3.10.5 Conformability**

In qualitative research, conformability refers to the ability of the research to accurately represent and interpret information that is a true reflection of the collected data (Elo et al. 2014, p. 6). In the current study, each advertisement was scanned and automatically saved such that it was available during the analysis stage for descriptive coding and cross-checking. Also, advertisement data included in this study are presented as tables and appendices to offer more insight on how the study arrived at its results and this will help the audience to do their evaluation and understand the conclusions drawn.

### **3.11 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The study does not involve any human participation; however, ethical clearance was applied as the University of KwaZulu-Natal policy requires all studies to apply for ethical clearance. The Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee granted full study approval. The Protocol Reference number: HSS/2015/018M in the approval letter is attached (Appendix A).

### **3.12 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

The methodology chapter is used to show the transparency of this research by providing detailed information on how it was conducted. The opening section of the methodology chapter provided an introduction of what the chapter consists. Also, the introduction was used as a reminder of why this research is important, as well as what seeks to achieve. The detail from the introduction section communicated the research's aim and indicated how this research closed the knowledge gap on how advertisers communicate their green messages in magazines in South Africa. This chapter then provided an overall research aim and six research objectives guiding and indicating what this research intended to achieve. This information helped to determine the appropriate research design and approach that would contribute to addressing the research question. Thus, the descriptive research design and deductive content analysis provided important guidance to the research. The chapter provided information on the target population, sampling strategy, data collection methods, and data analysis. The research

aim and objectives, research design and research approach equally contributed to the designing of a deductive content analysis template. This content analysis template helped the study to record, descriptively code and categorise the advertisement data needed to address the research question. Data quality control and ethical considerations are also described. The subsequent chapter provides the research findings and discussions detailing the extent and nature of green advertising in magazines in South Africa.

## CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF STUDY RESULTS

### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

The content analysis approach helped this study in determining the extent and content of green advertisements in magazine advertising in South Africa. The content of the findings chapter does not reflect any discussion on relationships. Therefore, relationships are not discussed in this chapter because the conceptual framework shows no relationship. This chapter presents the study findings providing insight to answer the overall research question. Interpretation and discussion of the study findings in relation to literature further assist in giving a complete picture of the extent and nature of green advertising in magazines in South Africa. The content analysis template described in the previous chapter assisted in the recording and analysis of the advertisement data. The number and size of advertisements prompted the decision to have some advertisements in the Appendices section (Appendix D, E, F, G H and I). This decision was made to avoid unnecessarily lengthening the findings chapter. The advertisements in this chapter are only for illustrative purposes and to support analysis.

### 4.2 SAMPLE PROFILE

The information shown in this section presents the sample profile. Table 4.1 below provides a list of the 66 magazines in the sample.

**Table 4.1: Magazine Sample**

Magazine Name	Issue/Date	Magazine Genre
Men's Fitness	Jan-Feb 2019	Men's Fitness/Health
South African Country Life	Feb-19	Country Life
GQ South Africa	Feb-19	Men's Lifestyle
FINWEEK	Jan-Feb 2019	Investment & Finance
HOME	Feb-19	Home Interior Décor
Bicycling	Feb-19	Bicycling
Fitness	Feb-19	Fitness
Men's Health	Feb-19	Men's Health
Go!	Feb-19	Adventure & Outdoor

JOY	Feb-19	Faith
SA Cricket	Feb-19	Sports
Women's Health	Jan-Feb 2019	Women's Health
Muscle & Fitness Hers	Jan-Feb 2019	Women's Health
Woman & Home	Feb-19	Fashion & Beauty
CAR	Feb-19	Car/Motoring
GO! Platteland	Summer 2018/2019	Rural Lifestyle & Entrepreneurship
Kruger Magazine	Summer 2018/2019	Wildlife
The Economist	Jan-Feb 2019	News
Living & Loving	Feb-19	Pregnancy & Motherhood
Fairlady	Feb-19	Female Reads
Your Family	Feb-19	Family and Home
People	Feb-19	Celebrity news
SA 4X4	Feb-19	Overland Adventure
LOSE IT!	Jan-19	Healthy Eating
The Vegan Life	Jan-Feb 2019	Vegan Lifestyle
Financial Mail	Feb-March 2019	Business
Wild	Summer 2018/2019	Wildlife
Amandla	Dec-18	News
Drum	Feb-19	Family
Move	Feb-19	Family
Habitat	Jan-Feb 2019	Architecture/Interior Design
The Gardener	Feb-March 2019	Gardening and Landscaping
Cosmopolitan	Jan-19	Fashion
Farmer's Weekly	Feb-19	Farming
Entrepreneur	Jan-19	Entrepreneurship
Essentials	Jan-19	Lifestyle
Objekt South Africa	Jan-19	High-end Lifestyle
Travel Africa	Jan-March 2019	Travel
Super Bike South Africa	Jan-19	Motor Bikes
Longevity	Feb-March 2019	Health, Beauty and Wellbeing
Woolworths TASTE	Jan-Feb 2019	Lifestyle
Trail South Africa	Jan/Feb/March 2019	Athletics
Conde Nast House & Garden	Feb-19	Décor & Gardening
Runner's World	Feb-19	Athletics
Travel Ideas	Dec 2018-Jan 2019	Travel
Forbes Africa	Feb-19	Business
African Pilot	Jan-19	Aviation
nOmad Africa	Nov/Dec/Jan 2019	Business/Lifestyle/Tourism
Caravan & Outdoor Life	Feb-19	Adventure/Outdoor/Lifestyle
Stuff	Jan-Feb 2019	Technology/Gadgets

<b>Garden &amp; Home</b>	Feb-19	Décor & Gardening
<b>Popular Mechanics</b>	Jan-Feb 2019	Science & Technology
<b>African Review</b>	Feb-19	Business & Technology
<b>Leisure Wheels</b>	Feb-19	Adventure Motoring
<b>Ideas</b>	Jan-Feb 2019	Lifestyle/Modern Living
<b>House and Leisure</b>	Feb-19	Lifestyle
<b>GO! Drive &amp; Camp</b>	Feb-19	Adventure & Outdoor
<b>You</b>	Feb-19	Family
<b>BBC Top Gear</b>	Feb-19	Car/Motoring
<b>FHM</b>	Jan-19	Men's Lifestyle
<b>Glamour South Africa</b>	Feb-19	Women's Lifestyle
<b>True Love</b>	Feb-19	Fashion/Beauty/Lifestyle
<b>Naked Motoring</b>	Feb-19	Motoring
<b>Forbes Woman Africa</b>	Dec 2018 - Feb 2019	Business
<b>Getaway</b>	Feb-19	Travel and Outdoor Lifestyle
<b>Good Housekeeping</b>	Jan-Feb 2019	Lifestyle

The magazines covered a variety of genres. As explained in the Methodology chapter, in the selected magazines, one issue represented each magazine in the sample of 66. As a result, there was a total of 1186 magazine advertisements in the 66 magazines. From this advertisement total, 84 advertisements (Table 4.2 below) were regarded as green advertisements. These advertisements met one or more of the green advertising definition criteria. This sample represents advertisements that were content analysed to determine the nature of green advertising.

**Table 4.2: Green Advertisements in Magazines Sample**

<b>Company Name</b>	<b>Industry/sector</b>	<b>Advertisement Frequency</b>
<b>Adventure Lifestyle Show</b>	Adventure & Outdoor	7
<b>Karcher</b>	Home & Gardening Range	4
<b>BP</b>	Energy	4
<b>BIOGEN</b>	Vitamin & Supplements	3
<b>Betadine Intimate Care</b>	Cosmetics/Beauty	3
<b>World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)</b>	Non-Profit Organisation	2
<b>Generosity Water</b>	Bottled Water	2
<b>SpeedShred</b>	Technology	2
<b>Trail Brooks</b>	Sports Garments	2

<b>Freddy South Africa</b>	Sports Garments	1
<b>DBV SPCA</b>	Non-Profit Organisation	1
<b>LifeSmart</b>	Technology	1
<b>Body &amp; Soul Fitness</b>	Fitness	1
<b>Made by Mosaic</b>	Non-Governmental Organisation	1
<b>Total Sports</b>	Technology	1
<b>Women's Health</b>	Fitness	1
<b>Checkers</b>	Retail	1
<b>Planet Fitness</b>	Fitness	1
<b>Villiera Wines</b>	Wine	1
<b>Adventure Boot Camp</b>	Adventure & Outdoor	1
<b>Planet Fitness &amp; USN</b>	Adventure & Outdoor	1
<b>Sandton Action Sports</b>	Sports	1
<b>Aveeno Active Naturals</b>	Cosmetics/Beauty	1
<b>South African National Parks Honorary Rangers</b>	Non-Profit Organisation	1
<b>Skinny Green</b>	Weight Loss	1
<b>Bon Tierra</b>	Cosmetics/Beauty	1
<b>Linda McCartney's</b>	Retail	1
<b>Nature &amp; Moi</b>	Retail	1
<b>South African Mushroom Farmers Association</b>	Mushroom Industry Body	1
<b>Faithful to Nature</b>	Retail	1
<b>Inovar Floor</b>	Flooring	1
<b>Polar Africa</b>	Cooling System	1
<b>Husqvarna</b>	Home & Gardening Range	1
<b>STIHL</b>	Home & Gardening Range	1
<b>Rand Water</b>	Government	1
<b>Poken</b>	Home & Gardening Range	1
<b>DStv Home Channel</b>	Television & Media	1
<b>New Holland</b>	Agriculture	1
<b>EPSON</b>	Office Equipment	1
<b>Sable Sands</b>	Tourism	1
<b>Idube Game Reserve</b>	Tourism	1
<b>Lapalala Wilderness</b>	Tourism	1
<b>Team Dr Joseph</b>	Cosmetics/Beauty	1
<b>Ngwenya Glass</b>	Sustainable Glass (drinking)	1
<b>BOSCH</b>	Kitchen Equipment	1
<b>Asmara Coffee Roasters</b>	Coffee	1
<b>Foreva Straws</b>	Straw	1
<b>Dopper</b>	Water Bottle	1
<b>Evergreen Lifestyle</b>	Retirement Village	1
<b>1% for the Planet</b>	Non-Profit Organisation	1

<b>Triple Orange</b>	Cleaning Products	1
<b>Fresh Trail</b>	Adventure & Outdoor	1
<b>Bravecto</b>	Animal Care	1
<b>Discovery</b>	Financial Services	1
<b>2019 KZN Trail Running</b>	Adventure & Outdoor	1
<b>Klipspringer Challenge</b>	Adventure & Outdoor	1
<b>Hoka One One</b>	Adventure & Outdoor	1
<b>Ultra-Trail Drakensberg</b>	Adventure & Outdoor	1
<b>Quartz Carpet</b>	Flooring	1
<b>SportsPONG</b>	Cleaning Products	1
<b>Elsewedy Electric</b>	Energy	1
<b>Newmont Africa</b>	Mining	1
<b>Wirtgen</b>	Construction/Recycling	1
<b>EcoTraining Guide and Guardians</b>	Education	1

Table 4.2 depicts green advertisements in the magazine sample identified in this study. This table consists of three columns, including company name, industry/sector and advertisement frequency. The company name column is used in the table to record the company contributing to the green advertisement. With industry/sector column is used to indicate the sector or industry is advertising company operates. The advertisement frequency is used in the table to show the frequency of green advertisements in magazines in South Africa.

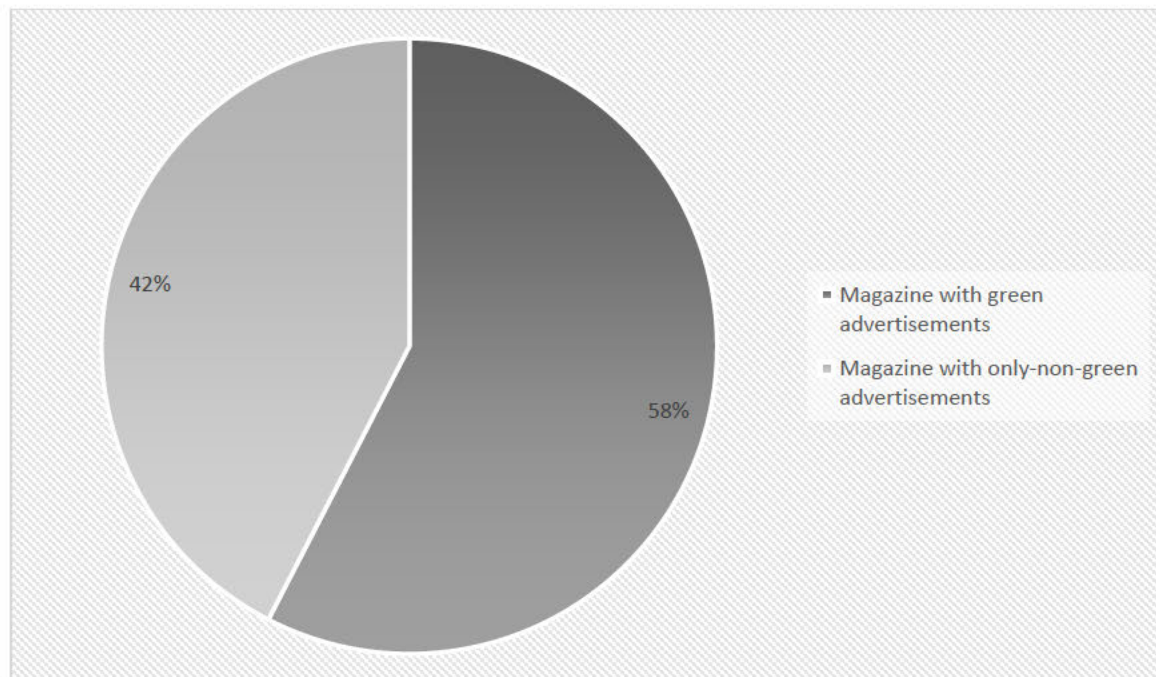
As discussed in more detail in the Methodology chapter, advertisements were determined to be green if they promoted a healthy lifestyle or living, used images or messages promoting the natural environment (flora or fauna), or promoted or supported environmental sustainability. An interesting finding indicates that Adventure and Outdoor category features most often in green advertising in magazines in South Africa. In a somewhat related study by Xue (2012, p. 11) which explored the use of environmental claims between Chinese and American magazine advertising found that automobile is the leading advertiser for green advertisements (24.6% and 32.8%, respectively) in both countries. Another study by Dai et al. (2014, p. 8) which investigated green advertising in China found that manufacturing accounted for most (86.7%) of the green advertisements in newspaper and magazine advertising. These two studies are not directly comparable to the present study. The differences in methods and research objectives are

acknowledged. However, these studies provide some evidence of the major contributors of green advertising in countries like China and the United States of America.

Knowledge of the sample profile could play a key role in understanding the study's findings. The next section discusses the extent of green advertisements in magazines in South Africa.

### 4.3 Extent of green advertisements in magazines in South Africa

Objective 1 sought to determine the proliferation of green advertisements in magazines in South Africa. Figure 4.1 below depicts data analysis on the extent of green advertisements in magazines.

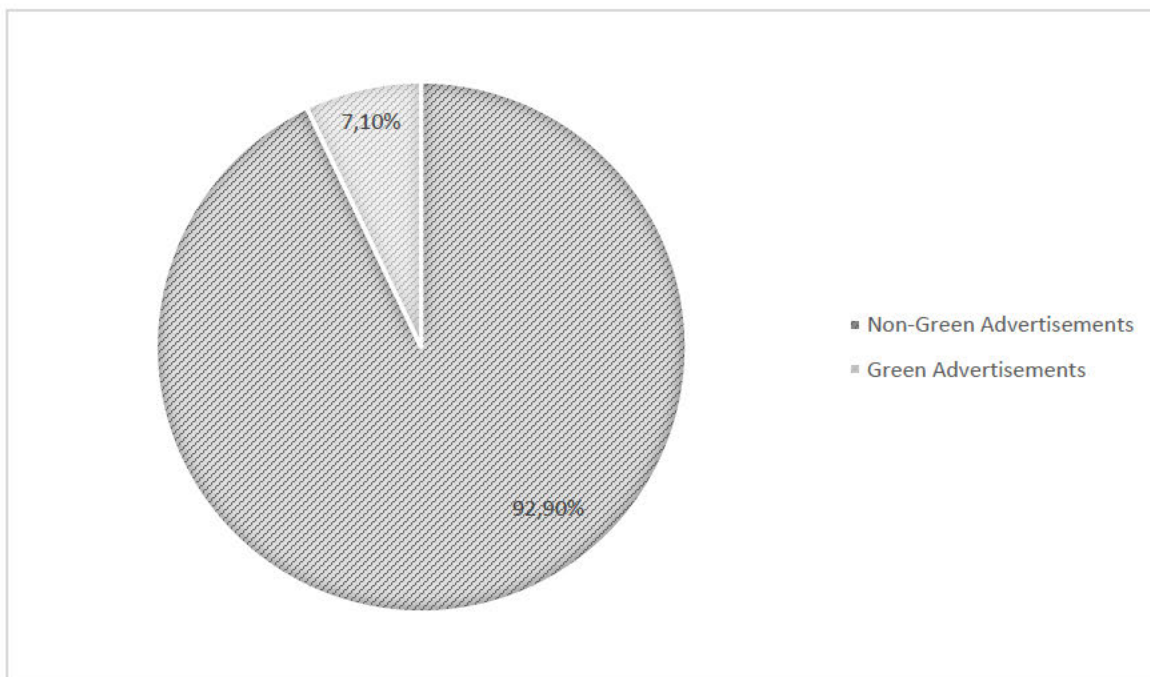


**Figure 4.1: Magazine Sample of Green and Non-Green Advertisements**

At a magazine sample level of analysis, from 66 magazines in the sample, 38 (57.58%) of the 66 magazines contained green advertisements. Figure 4.1 above, thus may suggest that magazines in South Africa are reasonably green. Although a directly comparable study could not be found, Hopkins' (2019, p. 552) study investigated green advertising use in 52 apartment management firm's websites from the United States of America found that 52% of these companies are not

communicating a green message on their websites. America. According to Hopkins (2019, p. 555), the low proliferation of green advertisements by the apartment management firms may indicate a lack of commitment in communicating a green message or these companies could be communicating their green messages in other media platforms.

Looking at the advertisements in the sample magazines, the advertisement sample of 1186 provides more insight into the extent of green advertisements in magazines. Based on the green advertising definition and criteria described in the methodology chapter, only 84 advertisements are green. Thus, a mere 7.1% of the advertisements in the 66 magazines in South Africa were green, indicating that the majority of organisations advertising in these magazines are not communicating a green message in their advertisements as can be seen in Figure 4.2 below.



**Figure 4.2: Extent of Magazine Green Advertisements**

The results of this research found that green advertising is used in magazines in South Africa, although the extent is limited. According to Kim and Han (2015, p. 3), green advertisers continue to invest in magazine advertising in Korea. Similarly, Kim and Kim's (2016, p. 6) study that investigated green advertising in the print space found that green advertising use in Korea is

limited, only 8% of the total advertisements were green. The results of the present study and these past studies suggest low use of green advertising which may mean that advertisers are not using magazines and websites a tool for communicating their green messages. Thus, these advertisers are missing an opportunity to communicate their green messages to multiple audiences.

It is interesting to note that had it not been for the adoption of Rahim et al.'s (2012, p. 47) definition of green advertising in this study, which includes a healthy lifestyle, the number of green advertisements would have been even lower (5.9%) in magazines in South Africa.

Table 4.3 depicts magazines with green advertisements and overall green advertisements percentages. It further indicates the percentage of contribution per magazine in the sample. Thus, Trail SA, for example, contained 12 (14.29%) green advertisements of a total of 84 green advertisements found in the magazine sample in South Africa.

To further explore green advertisements, Table 4.3 presents the number of green advertisements per magazine.

**Table 4.3: Magazines with Green Advertisements and Percentages**

Magazine Name	No. of Green Advertisements Per Magazine	% of Total No. of Green Advertisements (%)
Trail South Africa	12	14.29
Women's Health	9	10.71
Woolworths Taste	6	7.14
The Vegan Life	5	5.95
The Gardener	5	5.95
The Economist	4	4.76
Travel Africa	3	3.57
Men's Health	3	3.57
Fitness	2	2.38
Woman & Home	2	2.38
African Review	2	2.38
Habitat	2	2.38
Joy	2	2.38

The remaining magazines from the sample not included in the table contained only one green advertisement each. These were South African Country Life, GQ South Africa, Home, Bicycling, Go, Longevity, Conde Nast House & Home, SA Cricket, Muscle & Fitness Hers, Car, Kruger, Garden & Home, Popular Mechanics, Leisure Wheels, Go! Drive & Camp, Drum, Farmer's Weekly, Entrepreneur, BBC Top Gear, Glamour South Africa, Getaway, Forbes Africa, Runner's World, Men's Fitness, and Lose It! Magazine.

The results of the present study show that Trait South Africa, Women's Health and Woolworth's Taste are the top three magazines with most green advertising. Contrarily, Dai et al. (2012, p. 8) study in China indicate that most magazine green advertising are contributed by Elle (12.5%), Life Magazine (11.7%) and Sales and Marketing, and Finance (9.6%). The differences in the present study and Dai et al. (2012) findings may be due to differences in magazines that are available in the two countries and in the respective samples.

Some advertisements appeared in more than one magazine. For example, the Adventure Lifestyle Show advertisement appeared in seven magazines with the Karcher, the second-highest, appearing in four magazines. The following advertisements all appeared in three magazines Biogen and Betadine Intimate Care. The Generosity Water, SpeedShred and WWF advertisements each appeared in two magazines. The remaining 77 green advertisements appeared only once across the magazine sample.

Multiple postings of the same or similar advertisement could indicate that the companies target different audiences through different magazines. For example, the Adventure Lifestyle Show advertisement appeared in Home magazine (refer to Figure 4.3 left) whereas the other was found in the Women's Health magazine (refer to Figure 4.4 right). For easier viewing, these

advertisements are presented in full size in the appendices section (Appendix D and E)



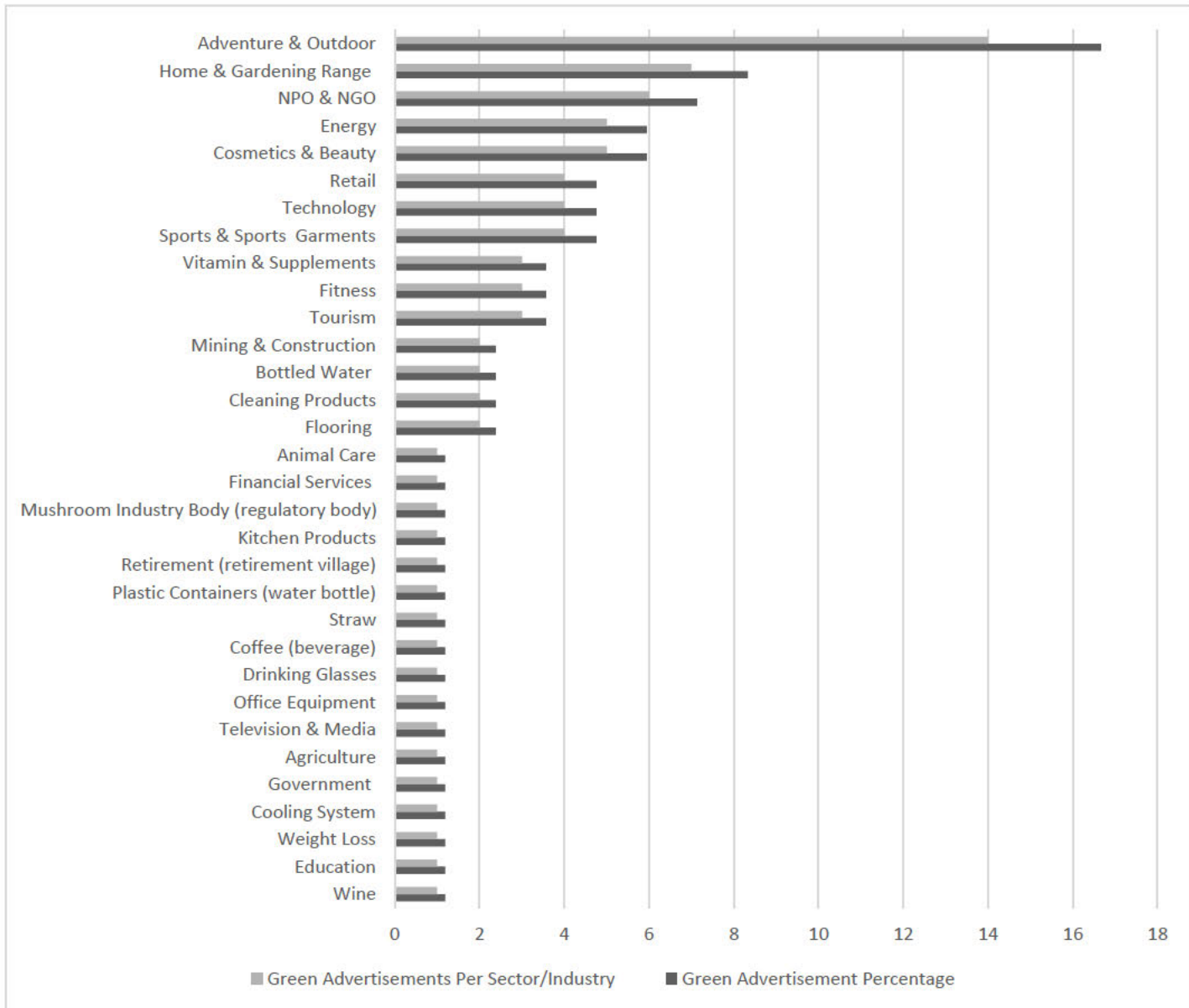
**Figure 4.3 & 4.4: Adventure Lifestyle Show Advertisement in Home (left) and Women's Health Magazine (right)**

The Adventure Lifestyle Show advertisement also appeared in Bicycling, Men's Health, Go, Runner's World and Go! Drive & Camp magazines. There were minor differences in the communication of the Adventure Lifestyle Show's green messages in the seven magazines in which the advertisement appeared. The overall content of the Adventure Lifestyle Show advertisements, however, communicated healthy living as a green solution. A complete version of the advertisement was used for the analysis.

#### **4.4 Products, services or organisations using green advertising**

The presentation of results on which products, services or organisations are using green advertising in magazines in South Africa is important in providing more insight into the extent of

green advertising. Figure 4.5 below depicts sector/industry greenness by indicating the number of green advertisements contributed by each sector.



**Figure 4.5: Green Advertisements per Sector/Industry**

The light grey bars refer to the number of green advertisements per sector/industry. The dark grey bars indicate the percentage of green advertisements contributed by each sector/industry. The 84 green advertisements were used to calculate the sector percentage contribution. Thus, for example, the Adventure & Outdoor sector contributed 14 (16.67%) of the 84 green

advertisements. Past research indicates that different business sectors or industries contribute to green advertising in magazines (Akyol & Kiliñç 2014, p. 336; Leonidou et al. 2014, p. 676). Akyol and Kiliñç (2014, p. 336) found that energy/recycling (18.4%) disseminating most green advertisements in Eko IQ magazine. Research by Leonidou et al. (2014, p. 676) shows that most environmental claims in The Economist are contributed by electricity/oil/energy sector (23.3%).

The results reveal that 33 **business sectors** contributed at least one green advertisement in the 38 magazines out of the 66 magazine sample. This finding does not support Leonidou et al.' (2011, p. 14) study on 473 international green advertisements during 1988-2007 period in The Economist magazine international edition. Leonidou et al. (2011, p. 14) found that the manufacturing sector contributed most (93.4%) of green advertisements while in 2014 Leonidou et al. (2014, p. 676) showed that most environmental claims in The Economist were contributed by the electricity/oil/energy sector (23.3%). Akyol and Kiliñç (2014, p. 336) study in Turkey found that energy/recycling disseminated the most green advertisements (18.4%) in Eko IQ magazine. The current study suggests a contrasting view as most green advertisements were contributed by the Adventure & Outdoor (16.67%), Home & Gardening (8.33%), NPO & NGO (7.14%), Cosmetics & Beauty (5.95%) and Energy (5.95%) sector.

Leonidou et al.'s (2011, p. 14) study also found that 438 (92.5%) of green advertisements were contributed by firms from developed **countries** with Germany contributing the most (20.7%). In the current study, most of the green advertisements in the 33 sectors were contributed by South African firms 24 (72.31%) and less than 30% contributed by companies from outside South Africa. The main international companies that contributed green advertisements in magazine advertising in South Africa were from Germany (6.25%), USA (4.69%) and Italy (3.13%), see Table 4.4 below. Leonidou et al.'s (2011) study researched green advertisements only from international or multinational firms as opposed to the current study's analysis of all green advertisements in magazines in South Africa. This could explain the differences between the findings of this study and Leonidou et al. (2011).

**Table 4.4: Green Advertisements by International Companies in Magazine Advertising in South Africa**

<i>ADVERTISING ORGANISATION</i>	<i>COUNTRY OF ORIGIN</i>
EPSON	JAPAN
BRAVECTO	USA
HUSQVARNA	Sweden
KARCHER	Germany
NEW HOLLAND	Italy
NGWENYA GLASS	Eswatini
WIRTGEN	Germany
BIOGEN	India
STIHL	Germany
POKEN	USA
BOSCH	Germany
TEAM DR JOSEPH	Italy
LIFESMART	China
WORLD WIDE FUND FOR THE NATURE (WWF)	Canada & USA
ELSEWEDY ELECTRIC	Egypt
BP	United Kingdom
TRAIL BROOKS	USA
NEWMONT AFRICA	Ghana

Table 4.4 depicts advertising companies from outside South Africa that contributed 27.69% green advertisements in magazine advertising in South Africa. The two columns of Table 4.4 indicate the contributing company and company's country of origin. With 72.31% green advertisements from various sectors in magazine advertising in South Africa and contributed by South African companies suggests that multiple sectors in South Africa are committed to some aspect of sustainability. However, the number of green advertisements is still very low compared to non-green advertisements.

Looking at the specific **product or service** advertisements (Table 4.2), the Adventure Lifestyle Show (see Figure 4.3 & 4.4) contributed seven advertisements (50%) to the Adventure & Outdoor sector and the highest number of individual advertisements (7) (see Table 4.2). These advertisements are encouraging the audience to make adventure their lifestyle and thus lead to

a healthy lifestyle. According to Reynolds and Hritz (2012, p. 3), adventure tourism is sometimes confused with ecological tourism. Reynolds and Hritz (2012, p. 3) define ecological tourism as travelling to a natural and pristine area focusing on conservation and quality of life for those residing in these communities. However, adventure tourism's, sole purpose is to fulfil the thirst for experience with a certain level of excitement (Reynolds & Hritz 2012, p. 3). Reynolds and Hritz (2012, p. 3) argue that the adventure lifestyle centres on nature, physical activity and learning about different cultures. Rock climbing, mountain biking, bird watching, camping and canoeing that are all part of the adventure lifestyle show provide a close link between this lifestyle and nature. This close relationship between the adventure lifestyle and nature and between adventure lifestyle and a healthy lifestyle, is the reason, in the current study, the adventure lifestyle is considered green

The Home & Gardening sector contributed to the second-highest percentage of green advertisements (8.3%). Karcher contributes four (50%), Husqvarna, STIHL and Poken, each contributing one green advertisement in the Home & Gardening sector. It is also the second most common individual advertisement. Karcher (Figure 4.6) is thus the most committed to the communication of its green message in this sector's magazine advertising in South Africa.

Home & Garden Range

**PERFECT EQUIPMENT.  
PERFECT CLEANLINESS.**

Save water with a high pressure washer. Up to 80% savings\*

A high-pressure cleaner is the ideal helper around the home and in the garden. They also save water: about 3500 litres of water per hour flows through a normal hose with a pressure of about 3 to 5 bar. A powerful high-pressure cleaner only requires about 500 litres in the same amount of time.  
\*Read more at [www.karcher.co.za](http://www.karcher.co.za)



**CAN DRAW WATER  
FROM A BUCKET  
OR WATERTANK**

**KÄRCHER**

makes a difference

**Figure 4.6: Karcher Advertisement in Home & Gardening Sector**

The Karcher advertisement appeared in CAR, Garden & Home, Leisure Wheels and Popular Mechanics magazines. This advertisement argues that its high-pressure washer saves water. Karcher's greenness stems from its ability to save up to 80% water, thus addressing calls for sustainability.

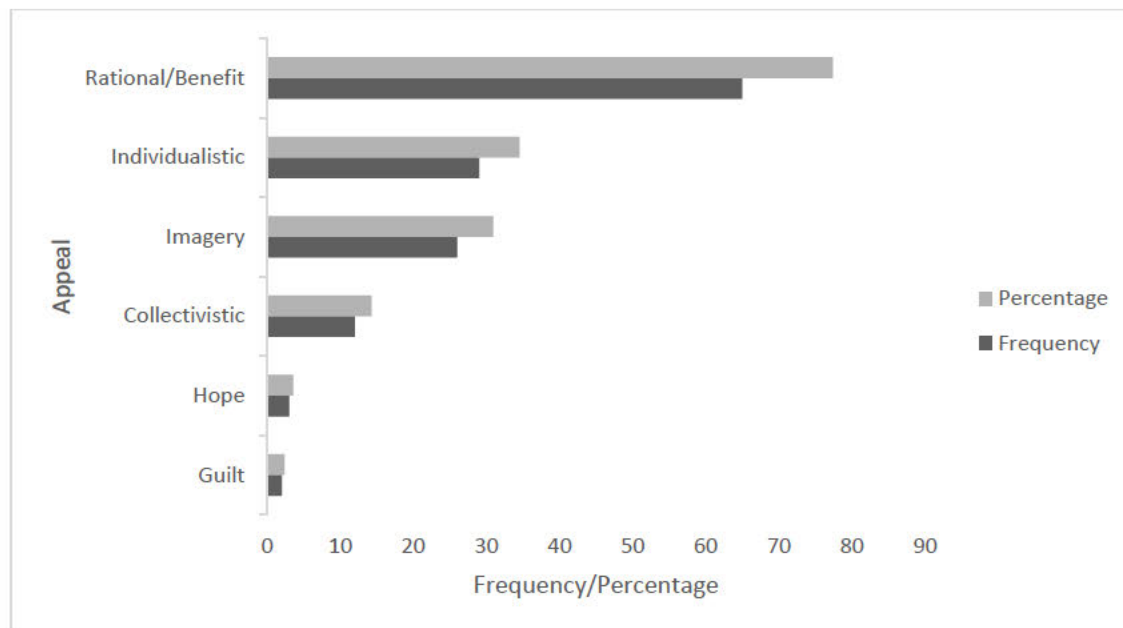
The next most frequently occurring individual product or service green advertisements were Appendix F, Appendix G and Appendix H. The BP advertisement argues that there is an increasing demand for energy and for lower emissions across the globe. This advertisement communicates its green message using environmentally friendly production systems that meet the growing demand while reducing pollution as a result of using alternative energy. Betadine is another advertisement that argues that the product is made from natural ingredients. The Betadine advertisement used product ingredients to communicate its green message. Similarly, Biogen communicates its green message using product ingredients. This advertisement argues that Biogen is made from real vegetables.

This section determined the sectors and products, services or organisations using green advertisements in magazines in South Africa. This section has determined the extent of green advertising in total and by sector and product. The next section addresses the nature of green advertisements in magazine advertising in South Africa by investigating their advertising appeals.

#### **4.5 APPEALS USED IN GREEN ADVERTISEMENTS IN MAGAZINES**

Advertising appeals including guilt, rational/benefit, imagery, fear, individualistic and collectivism, hope and motherhood are the communication tools used to alter consumers' consumption patterns (Schmuck et al. 2018, p. 414). The use of advertising appeals in green advertising is due to increasing global consumers' environmental consciousness (Schmuck et al. 2018, p. 414). These appeals are used in green advertising as a way of influencing and raising consumers' environmental awareness (Wang et al. 2017, p. 32).

This study analysed the 84 green advertisements to provide insight into the advertising appeals found in magazine advertising in South Africa. Figure 4.7 below depicts the advertising appeals found.



**Figure 4.7: Advertising Appeals in Green Advertising in Magazines in South Africa**

The following subsections discuss the different appeals from most to least frequently use in green advertisements. The discussion includes the extent use of the appeal and provides examples to illustrate its use. Chahal and Kaur (2015, p. 87) argue that advertising appeals allow advertisers to persuade and influence consumers product purchases. The ability of advertising appeals in triggering consumers' product purchase is caused by how these appeals contribute to designing a message that may appeal to individual consumers (Chahal & Kaur 2015, p. 87). Thus, advertisers are using several advertising appeals when promoting their green products (Yang et al. 2015, p. 2663).

The current study could not find existing research that investigated various advertising appeals use in green advertising. In somewhat related research by Dai et al. (2014, p. 10) investigated print advertising and found that the imagery appeal was the most (65.1%) used in Chinese newspapers and magazines to strengthen the communication of a green message. The results of the study show that 903 out of 1388 green advertisements used imagery appeal (Dai et al. 2014, p. 10). Past research indicates that advertising appeals are effective communication strategy used by green marketers to influence consumer behaviour (Li & Song 2011, p. 2; Kusumasondjaja 2018,

p. 1138). Wang et al. (2017, p. 32) argue that emotional appeals can trigger an individual's emotions. Li and Song (2011, p. 4) indicate that using emotional and rational appeals may result in a different effect on consumers. Thus, various advertising appeals are used in green advertising to influence consumers' green behaviour (Li & Song 2011, p. 2).

#### **4.5.1 Rational/Benefit Appeal**

According to Schmuck et al. (2018, p. 415), rational/benefit appeals are used by advertisers to communicate product's useful attributes making the green product stand out when compared to non-green products.

The results of this study indicate that 65 (77.38%) of 84 green advertisements in magazines used a rational/benefit appeal thus indicating the importance and role of rational/benefit appeals in the communication of a green message. These results are similar to those of Jovanović et al. (2017, p. 39), who also found that a rational appeal is the most commonly used advertising appeal. The high use of the rational/benefit appeal in the current study and the past study suggests the key role of rational appeals in providing information to consumers for making their purchase decisions. Figure 4.8 below shows Freddy South Africa as an example of a green advertisement using a rational/benefit appeal to communicate a green message.

**GET THE PERFECT FIT**  
**15% OFF**  
Ts. & Cs Apply | Only valid in-store  
 Not valid in conjunction with any other promotions or specials

**100% MADE IN ITALY-** The exclusive line of green sport garments - devised, designed and produced in Italy. With special sustainable, organic Italian performance fabrics developed by Brugnoli™. This innovative, lightweight and extra stretchy material ensures zero compromise between our environment and your performance! 100% Made In Italy is an athleisure collection of sports garments, which details highlight their fashion and feminine spirit.  
 Available at selected Freddy branches.

**MOVE YOUR MIND** | **100% MADE IN ITALY**

ONLINE SALES:  
[www.freddy.co.za](http://www.freddy.co.za)

INQUIRIES:  
 Head Office  
[holics@freddy.co.za](mailto:holics@freddy.co.za)  
 011 026 8801  
 Please visit our website to find a store near you

Freddy SA | Freddy South Africa

**FREDDY**  
 the art of movement

**Figure 4.8: Freddy South Africa Advertisement Using Rational/Benefit Appeal**

The Freddy South Africa advertisement strengthened communication of a green message by using the rational/benefit appeal, and this is because it says "100% made in Italy. The exclusive line of green sport garments-devised, designed and produced in Italy. With special sustainable, organic Italian performance fabrics developed by Brugnoli. This innovative, light weight and extra stretchy material ensures zero compromise between our environment and your performance! Made in Italy is an athleisure collection of sports garments, which details highlight their fashion and feminine spirit". The advertisement provided information which would form the rationale in consumers' minds for purchasing the advertised brand. The advertisement emphasises benefits related to being 100% Italian, depicting quality, as well as fit for purpose in terms of female

exercise wear. The green benefits are also important benefits emphasised in the advertisement. Special mention is made of the fabric being *sustainable* and *organic* and that the environment is not compromised, implying that the products and production do not harm the environment. Thus, the consumer is provided with specific green benefits on which to make a rational product choice. The information in the advertisement thus provides a basis that consumers can use to make their purchase decision. As a result, consumers are made aware of the benefits of purchasing this eco-friendly brand over competing brands.

This subsection described the extent of use and provided evidence of how a rational/benefit advertising appeal was used as a strategy for communicating a green message in the magazine advertisements in South Africa. The next subsection discusses the extent and evidence of the individualistic advertising appeals, the second most frequently used appeal in the magazine green advertisements.

#### **4.5.2 Individualistic Appeal**

According to Xue (2015, p. 155), individualistic appeal assists companies better communicate with individualistic societies.

The results revealed that 29 (34.52%) of 84 green advertisements in magazines used an individualistic appeal. The impact of globalisation is causing shifts in countries' cultural dynamics (Muralidharan et al. 2016, p. 57). These cultural shifts are resulting in more individualistic cultures in countries initially regarded as collectivist societies (Muralidharan et al. 2016, p. 57). Muralidharan et al. (2017, p. 406) study examined the influence of cultural congruency in green advertising appeals on attitudes toward advertisement and brand in India and the United States. Muralidharan et al. (2017, p. 406) found that Americans liked green advertisements using individualistic appeals. Their results further indicate that green advertisements that used individualistic appeals influenced consumers' attitudes toward the brand (Muralidharan et al.

2017, p. 406). Muralidharan et al. (2017) results are consistent with the current study, which suggests that individualistic appeals are more common than collectivist appeals. Rajbhandari et al. (2017, p. 135) argue that how a country performs in its socio-economic growth (including literacy and life expectancy) and economic development determines the prevalence of individualistic and collectivist culture living in a particular country. This implies that developed countries have more individualistic societies, whereas developing countries are considered collectivistic cultures (Rajbhandari et al. 2017, p. 135). However, South Africa is a developing country with both individualistic and collectivist societies. van Zyl et al. (2018, p. 699) further argue that in South Africa, most of the black ethnic group are considered more collectivist while the white ethnic group are generally individualist. The high use of individualist appeals in green advertisements could mean the target market for a green product is likely to be more individualistic, and according to van Zyl et al. (2018), white. Figure 4.9 below shows an advertisement that used an individualistic appeal to communicate a green message.

**A** ADVENTURE  
BOOT CAMP *for Women*

The outdoor fitness programme for women, where everyone fits in and no one is left behind

Drop a stress size with our Fit Figures pricing for 2019, that offers you all of this, for less...

- NO JOINING FEES • NATIONWIDE ACCESS
- FITNESS POINTS • GROUP PERSONAL TRAINING
- EXCLUSIVE DISCOUNTS • NUTRITIONAL ADVICE
- UNLIMITED TRAINING SESSIONS

Pop over to [adventurebootcamp.co.za](http://adventurebootcamp.co.za) for more

Join our exclusive Adventure Me programme to make life even easier.

We understand how life can get in the way of you reaching your goals. That's why we have introduced a debit order option that helps you make the commitment to yourself, with less admin and lower rates you have more time to focus on the important things in life.

ADVENTURE *Me*  
COMMITTED • BY ME • FOR ME

**Figure 4.9: Adventure Boot Camp Advertisement Using an Individualistic Appeal**

This is an individualistic appeal because the Adventure Boot Camp advertisement says "We understand how life can get in the way of you reaching your goals. That's why we have introduced a debit order option that helps you make the commitment to yourself, with less admin and lower rates you have more time to focus on the important things in life", "ADVENTURE ME" and "BY ME. FOR ME." By using an individualistic appeal in the Adventure Boot Camp advertisement, the

advertisement was able to communicate and focus the advertisement message to individuals. As a result, this advertisement appeals to people that are more individualistic and seeking products that address their individualistic needs for becoming healthier.

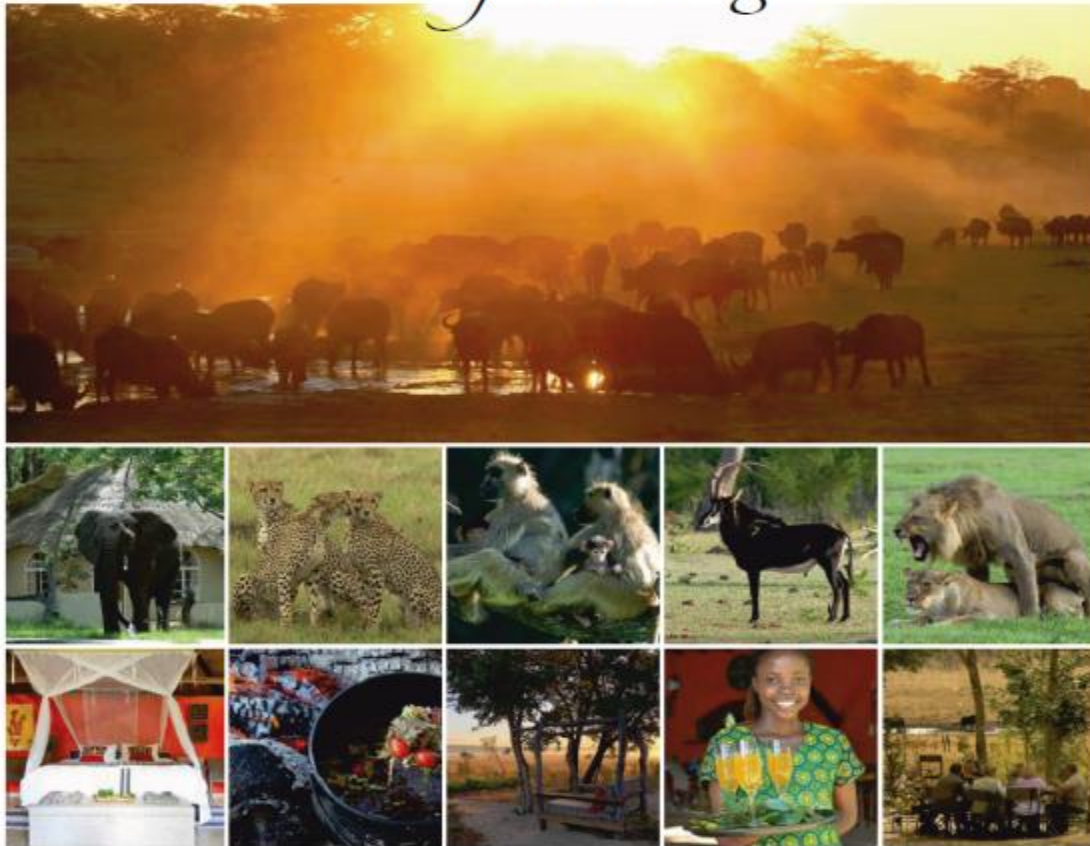
This section described the findings on the use of individualistic appeals in magazine advertising in South Africa. This study reported significant use of individualistic appeals in green advertisements with 29 (34.52%) of the green advertisements using this advertising appeal. The next subsection discusses the use of an imagery appeal, the third most common appeal found in the magazine green advertisements.

### **4.5.3 Imagery Appeal**

According to Hartmann and Apaoloza (2016, p. 427), imagery appeal in green advertising highlights environmental product features by the use of images in a manner that influences the cognitive processes of consumers.

The findings revealed that an imagery appeal is the third most used advertising appeal in green advertisements in magazines in South Africa. From 84 green advertisements in magazines, 26 (30.95%) of these advertisements used an imagery appeal. The inconsistent finding is reported in Dai et al. (2014, p. 10) study that found imagery appeal is the most (65.1%) used in Chinese newspapers and magazines to strengthen the communication of a green message. The high use of imagery appeal in green advertising in China may be explained by the Chinese characters use of visual cues for strengthening communication of a message in advertisements (Dai et al. 2014, p. 10). The current study thus found moderate use of imagery appeals which, according to the literature, can positively influence the green message in green advertisements in magazines. Figure 4.10 is an example of a green advertisement found to use an imagery appeal to communicate a green message.

# Beautiful Hwange



*A safari home with the earth, people, conservation and wildlife @ heart*

This charming owner-managed lodge is located on a private concession along the famous Hwange National Park and 200km from the majestic Victoria Falls. The African home-style rondavels are scattered in the teak forest and along the old river bed that is the Dete Vlei; the vlei is home to an abundance of birdlife and wildlife including the famous Presidential elephants, huge herds of buffalo, sable, lion, cheetah, zebra and the African wild dog to name a few. Brian and Marleen's other passion is impactful community development, wildlife conservation and environmental awareness and are therefore involved in a number of projects in the communal areas of Mabale and Dete. Sable Sands offers an authentic safari and nature experience that will leave a footprint on the soul.



[www.sablesands.co.zw](http://www.sablesands.co.zw) [reservations@sablesands.co.zw](mailto:reservations@sablesands.co.zw) [info@sablesands.co.zw](mailto:info@sablesands.co.zw)  
Mobile: +263 778 715588 / +263 778 454840 [f](#) [g+](#) [p](#) SableSands



Figure 4.10: Sable Sands Advertisement Using an Imagery Appeal

This is an imagery appeal because the advertisement shows images of different animals in their natural habitats. These images of nature connect the Sable Sands with nature and support the green message that this organisation supports the conservation of wildlife and the environment.

This subsection described the use of imagery appeals in green advertising in magazines in South Africa. Figure 4.10 demonstrated how this imagery appeal is used to help communicate the green message in the advertisement. The next subsection will assist the current study in determining the use of collectivist appeal, the fourth most commonly used appeal in green advertisements in magazines.

#### **4.5.4 Collectivist Appeal**

According to Xue (2015, p. 155), green advertisements using collectivist appeals tend to emphasise family and collective actions, whereas personal goals and accomplishments are not celebrated.

This study found that 12 (14.29%) of 84 green advertisements in magazines used a collectivist appeal to communicate a green message. Muralidharan et al. (2017, p. 406) study in India and the United States found that Americans respond more positive to green advertisements using individualistic appeals while Indians like green advertisements with collectivist characteristics. The cultural differences may explain this variance in attitude towards green advertisements or brand (Muralidharan et al. 2017, p. 407). Like India, South Africa is a developing country, and thus collectivist appeals may be expected to be the most often used appeal. However, this study found that individualistic appeals are the commonly used appeals in green advertising in magazines in South Africa. Samarasinghe (2012, p. 93) study examining the influence of cultural values and environmental attitudes on green consumer behaviour in Sri Lanka found that the collectivist appeal in green advertisements has a significant favourable impact on environmental concern. Likewise, Xue's (2015, p. 160) research on Chinese consumers indicated that using a collectivist

appeal in green advertising has a significant positive effect on attitude toward the advertisement and advertised brand. South Africa is a country of mixed cultures with communities that are individualist and collectivist (van Zyl et al. 2018, p. 699). In line with this argument, using a collectivist appeal could help communicate a green message to cultures less responsive to an individualistic appeal. This may arise because collective societies could favour green advertisement that use collectivist appeals to communicate the green message related to sustainability and the natural environment criteria for the greenness where the benefits are more for the future generations rather than the individual.

Ijabadeniyi, Govender and Veerasamy (2015) investigated the influence of cultural differences in advertising communications targeted to Africans and Indians in Durban, South Africa. Ijabadeniyi et al. (2015, p. 879) found that both ethnic groups are originally collectivists. However, cultural modifications to a dominant global culture caused by the influence of phenomena such as increased exposure to foreign cultures, global media, and globalisation may trigger individualistic values (Ijabadeniyi et al. 2015, p. 879). As a result, cultural modifications could explain the dominance of individualistic values in advertising in South Africa, even though the country is predominantly collectivistic. Figure 4.11 below shows a green advertisement that used a collectivist appeal to communicate the green message.

**HELP  
SAVE  
THE  
T-SHIRT**

The T-shirt needs help. Because the cotton crop it's made from absorbs thousands of litres of water, WWF is helping farmers grow thirsty crops, like cotton, rice and sugarcane, more sustainably with less water. This takes pressure off freshwater ecosystems, benefiting people and nature. We also help businesses understand the amount of water in their raw materials and final products, so they can be more efficient, and look after nature as well as their bottom line. Help us look after the world where you live at [www.wwf.org.za](http://www.wwf.org.za)



Zambezi river.  
© Nature PLC / Peter Doherty / WWF

Figure 4.11: WWFs Help Save the T-Shirt Advertisement Using Collectivist Appeal

This is collectivist appeal because the advertisement says "*Help save the t-shirt.... WWF is helping farmers grow thirsty crops, like cotton, rice and sugarcane, more sustainably with less water. This takes pressure off freshwater ecosystems, benefiting people and nature. We also help businesses understand the amount of water in their raw materials and final products, so they can be more efficient, look after nature as well as their bottom line. Help us look after the world where you live at [www.wwf.org.za](http://www.wwf.org.za)*". The use of collectivist appeal in the WWF's Help Save the T-Shirt advertisement assisted the advertisement in communicating to the audience the need to work together to help the WWF make the world a more sustainable place. The advertisement encourages consumers to become part of a solution that would help address water scarcity. Each individual would be contributing to solutions that would exceed individual benefits but benefits society and nature. Also, WWF, with the help of consumers, will be able to help farmers become more sustainable. Figure 4.11 shows the benefit and power of a collective, indicating that joining forces has the potential of benefiting society and nature. This subsection discussed the use of collectivist appeal in magazine advertising in South Africa. The next subsection discusses the use of the hope appeal in green advertisements in magazines.

#### **4.5.5 Hope Appeal**

Hope appeal is a message communication strategy that attempts to encourage the behaviour by invoking assessment of possible rewards or desires and helps consumers avoid unfavourable outcomes (Chadwick 2015, p. 598).

The results of this study indicate that the hope appeal is not a well-used advertising appeal in the 84 green advertisements in magazines. This study found only three (3.57%) of the green advertisements in magazines in South Africa used a hope appeal to highlight the green message. Chadwick (2015, p. 605) suggests that hope is greater among people with positive expectations about the future. Messages with strong goal congruence, future expectation and possibility are most likely to effectively communicate an advertisement's green message (Chadwick 2015, p. 607). The limited use of this advertising appeal could represent an opportunity for differentiating

and enhancing green messages in magazine advertising South Africa. Effective use of hope appeal in advertising does, however, necessitate the need for the green marketer to understand their targeted audience/s thoroughly. Figure 4.12 below shows an advertisement that used a hope appeal to communicate the green message in the advertisement.

Do you want to become a Guardian of Nature?  
**IT ALL STARTS HERE.**  
 A better world is waiting for you to take action.

EcoTraining, the pioneer and leader in safari guide and wildlife training offers a variety of nature courses that are designed to provide you with a greater understanding of nature and the environment while experiencing the excitement of the African wilderness. You will learn about the infinite variety of living organisms that exist in nature and understand the underlying elements that support this variety of life such as geology, soils, plants and climate. All courses are conducted from eco-camps located in the most attractive un-spoilt remote areas of the African bushveld!

Tel: +27 (0)13 752 2532  
 enquiries@ecotraining.co.za  
 www.ecotraining.co.za

**NATURE COURSES**  
 EcoQuest Course: 7 or 14 days  
 EcoTracker Course: 7 or 14 days  
 Birding in the Bush Course: 7 days  
 Wilderness Trails Skills Course: 6 days  
 Wilderness Photography Course: 7 days  
 Masai Mara EcoQuest: 7 or 14 days

**EcoTraining**  
 Guides and Guardians

**Figure 4.12: EcoTraining Guides and Guardians Advertisement Using Hope Appeal**

This is a hope appeal because the EcoTraining Guides and Guardians advertisement says "Do you want to become a Guardian of Nature? IT ALL STARTS HERE. A better world is waiting for you to take action". Figure 4.12 proposes that by becoming a guardian of nature, this will result in a better world. Also, this EcoTraining is the beginning of a better world wherein the guardian of nature will gain an extensive understanding of nature, the environment and experience the African wilderness. As a result of becoming a guardian of nature, the foreseeable future of a better world is promised.

This subsection discussed the limited use of the hope appeal in magazine advertising in South Africa. The next subsection covers the final appeal found in green advertisements in magazines, the guilt appeal.

#### **4.5.6 Guilt Appeal**

According to Baek and Yoon (2016, p. 440), green marketers are using guilt appeals in their advertisements to influence and stimulate self-conscious emotions that would motivate environmental consciousness in consumers.

This study found limited use of the guilt appeal in the green advertisements in magazines in South Africa. The guilt appeal was only used in two (2.38%) of the 84 green advertisements. The current study's finding on guilt appeal used in magazine advertising in South Africa may be explained by Odeleye and Dejong (2013, p. 444) that suggest that consumers dislike green communications with guilt appeals and these advertisements induce negative, rather than positive responses. This is because these advertisements tend to focus more on what consumers are not doing or doing wrong (Odeleye & Dejong 2013, p. 445). Contrarily, Chang (2012, p. 743) suggests that green marketers need to use appropriate levels of guilt that are appropriate for the targeted consumers' environmental consciousness. Chang (2012, p. 759) found that for green advertisements targeting people with low environmental awareness, high levels of guilt are more effective. However, when a green advertisement is targeting people with high environmental consciousness, low levels of guilt result in a more effective advertisement (Chang 2012, p. 759). The low use of guilt appeals in green advertisements in South Africa may be due to the complexity of using this appeal. Figure 4.13 below shows an advertisement that used a guilt appeal to communicate a green message in the advertisement.

**Triple Orange™**

**ARE YOU MAKING A POSITIVE DIFFERENCE?**  
 It's easier than you think. Our Earth is suffering and we need to help, in any way we can.

Pollution, climate change, ocean destruction, deforestation, water shortages, fracking, genetically modified foods: the list seems endless. Although these may feel like complex global issues beyond our scope of influence, it is imperative that we contribute to both effective and harmless change on our planet, through our daily actions and decisions.

Part of the solution can be simple. By using products in and around our homes that are non-toxic and 100% natural, we will not only ensure our own personal health and wellbeing, but that of our immediate environment as well.

Welcome to a new generation of cleaning. A generation that gives back each and every time it is used. Triple Orange is a range with a conscience. After years of experience, we have considered our carbon footprint, your health, your pocket and our planet, every step of the way.

Some of the benefits of buying and using Triple Orange products include that you will:

- use far less water,
- be able to recycle the grey water produced to feed your garden and veggie patch,
- be able to use one single cleaning product for a multitude of purposes,
- spend less and clean more,
- purchase less plastic and produce less waste.
- Lower your carbon footprint

Triple Orange products are completely organic, child and pet-friendly, and they come from a renewable source. They have not been tested on animals, are biodegradable and formulated with naturally-derived ingredients that are hypoallergenic and non-toxic. Our key ingredient is oil derived from squeezing orange peel. This fabulous 'orange oil' is a brilliantly strong and natural de-greaser, yet gentle enough for your baby's skin.

**TRIPLE ORANGE MEANS**  
 Chemical free cleaning  
 No toxic vapours  
 Incredible degreasing properties  
 Multi-purpose application  
 100% biodegradable ingredients  
 A pH-balanced solution

[www.tripleorange.co.za](http://www.tripleorange.co.za) | 011 023 7208 | [orange@tripleorange.co.za](mailto:orange@tripleorange.co.za)

**Figure 4.13: Triple Orange Advertisement Using Guilt Appeal**

This is a guilt appeal because the advertisement says "Are you making a positive difference?" "It's easier than you think. Our Earth is suffering and we need to help, in any way we can". As a result of Triple Orange asking individuals if they are making a positive change, it helps the audience question themselves as to whether they are making a positive difference, triggering feelings of regret, remorse or self-blame. This then assisted the advertisement direct, motivate and remind consumers of expected behaviour. The advertising appeal helps connect the Triple Orange brand with consumers that are willing to be part of the solution towards helping the suffering planet (earth).

This subsection discussed the use of the guilt appeal in green advertising in magazines in South Africa. Overall this section addressed Objective 3, which was to determine the advertising appeals used in green advertising in magazines in South Africa. The results indicate that the majority of these advertisements used rational/benefit appeals 66 (77.38%), followed by individualistic 29 (34.52%) and imagery 26 (30.95%) appeals. Collectivist (14.29%), hope (3.57%) and guilt (2.38%) appeals were far less evident in communication of a green message in magazine advertising in South Africa. Fear/threat and motherhood appeals were the two advertising appeals not found in these advertisements. The next section explores the message structure in green advertisements in magazines.

#### **4.6 Message structure of green advertisements in magazines**

Green consumer segments necessitate the need for tailored green advertisements (Xue & Muralidharan 2015, p. 85). This has prompted green marketers to seek ways that effectively communicate a product's greenness (Olsen et al. 2014, p. 120). According to Chen and Lee (2015, p. 196), reaching consumers and influencing their attitudes necessitates that green advertisements are designed in a manner that appeals and addresses various segment's needs. Besides the appeals discussed in the section above, the message elements making up the message structure are key in developing a green message that can influence the targeted audience's attention and memory of the advertisement (Tu et al. 2013, p. 1083). According to Chen and Lee (2015, p. 197), message elements contributing a green message help the green advertisement communicates information detailing the product/service's greenness. Thus, the message structure could communicate a green message in green advertisements. Message structural elements found in green advertising include message framing (Segev et al. 2015; Xue 2015), the inclusion of environmental claims (Kim et al. 2012; Xue & Zhou 2012), message explicitness (Urray 2017; Kronrod et al. 2012) and the inclusion of eco-labels (Testa et al. 2015; Wang et al. 2018). This study analysed 84 green advertisements to determine how the message is structured in magazines in South Africa.

**Table 4.5: Message Structure in Magazine Green Advertisements**

MESSAGE ELEMENT	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
<b>Message Framing</b>		
Positive Message Framing	83	98.81%
Negative Message Framing	0	0
<b>Environmental Claims</b>		
Product-Oriented Environmental Claims	35	41.67%
Process-Oriented Environmental Claims	7	8.33%
Image-Oriented Environmental Claims	0	0
Environmental Facts Claims	3	3.57%
<b>Message explicitness</b>		
Explicit	43	51.19%
Subtle	41	48.81%
Inclusion of eco-label	3	3.57%

Table 4.5 depicts message structure elements in green advertisements in magazines in South Africa. This table consists of three columns, including message element, frequency and percentage. The sample of 84 green advertisements was used to calculate the percentage in the table.

#### **4.6.1 Message Framing**

According to Olsen (2014, p. 122), message framing is among the communication strategies used by advertisers to direct and highlight message aspects in a way that make them stand out from the communication (Olsen 2014, p. 122). This section seeks to determine how the green message is framed in green advertising in magazines in South Africa.

This study found advertisers often use positive message framing in green advertising in magazines in South Africa. Positive message framing is used in 83 (98.81%) of the 84 green

advertisements. The only exception was one advertisement that is neither positively nor negatively framed. Figure 4.14 below shows a green advertisement that used positive message framing to communicate the green message. For easier viewing, this advertisement is presented in full size in the appendices section (refer to Appendix I).



**Figure 4.14: Bon Tierra Advertisement Positive Framed Message**

The overall message in Figure 4.14 is positively framed "*kind to skin, kind to earth*" and "*Just pure goodness, the way it should be – naturally*" indicating the positive gains from using this product. Other green message structural elements used in this advertisement include product-oriented environmental claims and the inclusion of an eco-label. These elements and their roles in supporting the positive message framing are discussed in the relevant sections later.

Kim and Kim (2014, p. 69) found that positively framed messages are more effective in promoting and directing behaviour. These messages are found to influence and enhance attention, attitude and purchase intention toward the green advertisements and the advertised green product (Kim & Kim 2014, p. 69). Similarly, Segev et al. (2015, p. 44) found that positively framed messages are more effective in eliciting a positive response toward an advertisement, brand and purchase intention. Cucchiara et al. (2015, p. 1557) found that positive message framing is more powerful relative to negative message framing in encouraging green purchase behaviour of organic seafood. Lee (2014, p. 42) also supported the use of positively framed messages in promoting and strengthening the green message. Similar to the current study, Lee's (2014, p. 42) study in Japanese newspapers found that most green advertisements used positively framed messages to communicate its green message.

Thus, based on the above literature, positively framing the green message is likely to influence attitudes towards the green advertisement and advertised green product. This may explain and support the common use of this strategy in green advertisements in South Africa. The next subsection discusses the use of environmental claims in the magazine green advertisements.

#### **4.6.2 Environmental Claims**

The four environmental claims that are used to enhance the green message include product-oriented, process-oriented, image-oriented and environmental facts (Kim et al. 2012, p. 7).

This study found product-oriented environmental claims were the most commonly used environmental claim with 35 (41.67%) of the advertisements in the 84 green communications using this strategy. Process-oriented environmental claims and environmental facts claims are found in seven (8.33%) and three (3.57%) of the advertisements, respectively. Analysis of magazine advertising in South Africa shows that image-oriented environmental claims were not found. These findings are consistent with Lee's (2014) content analysis study on a sample of 153

green advertisements in Japanese newspapers. Lee (2014, p. 14) reported that product-oriented environmental claims are the most commonly used (82.2%) with process-oriented environmental claims and environmental facts sometimes used (6.2% and 6.9%, respectively). Chan et al. (2006, p. 242) argue that the relatively high use of substantive claims in green advertising is due to its ability for communicating information that is detailed and concrete. In contrast, associative is useful for communicating general information aimed at presenting information that supports the environmental friendliness of the advertised product or service (Chan et al. 2006, p. 242). Contrarily, Lee (2014, p. 42) found imagery-oriented environmental claims the second most used (41.7%). The significant differences in the frequency of environmental claims between this study and Lee (2014) may be explained by the period in which the study was conducted. Lee (2014, p. 36) explains that the 1990s and early 2000s is a period in Japan in which Japanese companies were aggressively introducing green products into the market as a way of mitigating global warming. This could have resulted in the higher use of product-oriented environmental claims in green advertisements with Japanese companies needing to communicate how these new products were going to address global warming. However, the current study is conducted in a period in which not only global warming is receiving attention; there are many environmental and social sustainability challenges. As a result, product-oriented environmental claims are still the most commonly used, however relatively less dominant compared to the late 1990s and early 2000s period. Figure 4.15 below depicts an example of a green advertisement that used a product-oriented environmental claim to communicate its green message.

**BIOGEN**  
FOR THE RESULTS YOU WANT  
SINCE 2004

- Vegan friendly
- 100 million CPU probiotic
- Gluten-Free
- Fat-free
- High Fibre
- Dairy Free probiotic
- Non-GMO
- Low calories
- Preservative-free

**PUT YOUR HEALTH FIRST**  
With High quality SUPERFOODS!

**NEW! FROM BIOGEN & LISA RALEIGH**

Exclusively available at:  
**Dis-Chem**  
PHARMACIES

BiogenSA

Super Scoop is an all-in-one, superfoods solution that contains high quality phytonutrients, in a convenient and tasty powdered solution, without any additives, preservatives or GMOs. Designed to help you lead a more plant-based diet, each serving contains over 50 superfoods, and is packed with dairy-free probiotics & fibre, but low in sugar and calories. Available in Berry & Vanilla flavours.

**Figure 4.15: Biogen Superfood Advertisement Using Product-Oriented Environmental Claim**

In the figure, product ingredients are provided, shedding more insight on the ingredients used to produce the advertised product. The product-oriented environmental claim did not only provide a list of ingredients used but linked product ingredients with greenness. For example, "*Super Scoop is an all-in-one, superfoods solution that contains high quality phytonutrients, in a*

convenient and tasty powdered solution, without any additives, preservatives or GMOs. Designed to help you lead a more plant-based diet, each serving contains over 50 superfoods, and is packed with dairy free probiotics & fibre, but low in sugar and calories. Available in Berry & Vanilla flavours" highlighted and focused on how the advertised product helps consumers lead a plant-based diet. The product-oriented environmental claims in the figure showed how the advertised product is green and helps the consumers lead a 100% organic and plant-based lifestyle. Figure 4.16 presents an example of a green advertisement that used a process-oriented environmental claim to communicate its green message.



**Figure 4.16: BP Advertisement Using Process-Oriented Environmental Claims**

This advertisement uses a process-oriented environmental claim because the advertisement claims, "from renewable energy and cleaner-burning natural gas to advanced fuels and new low carbon businesses. BP is working to make energy cleaner and better". By using this environmental claim, it assisted the advertisement in showing advancements in BP energy production. Thus, the process-oriented environmental claim supported the green message in the green advertisement by showing changes that BP has undergone to improve its power generation and help mitigate

environmental degradation. Figure 4.17 below shows an example of a green advertisement that used environmental facts claim to communicate the green message.



**Figure 4.17: South African Mushroom Farmer's Association Initiative Advertisement Using Environmental Facts Claim**

This is an environmental fact claim because the advertisement provided substantial information linking the advertisement content with healthy eating. The advertisement claims, "Although a 100g serving of white button mushrooms (between 4/5) contains only 3.3g of protein per 100g, the type of protein is more important than the amount because these proteins are unique. Research is indicating that lectins bind to the surface of cancer cells preventing proliferation whilst

*they also stimulate the production of insulin that controls glucose levels. Other proteins in mushrooms appear to have both anti-viral and anti-bacterial properties. Lastly, although only 70% of mushroom proteins are digestible, the undigested proteins enter the colon where they prevent pathogenic bacteria from adhering to the gut wall".* The presented detailed information helps to build the connection between mushroom eating and healthy eating, *"who knew that besides being delicious, kind to nature and a great meat substitute, these funky fungi are also packed with uniquely beneficial nutrients"*. Thus, the advertisement also links health eating to a green lifestyle.

This study found two green advertisements that combined environmental claims to communicate the green message. Figure 4.17 above, discussed as an example of a process-oriented environmental claim, combined environmental facts and process-oriented environmental claims. This is an environmental claim because the advertisement says *"natural gas burns 50% cleaner than coal in power generation"*. As a result of using this statement, it indicated natural gas is a better source for power generation relative to using coal because it burns 50% cleaner. As discussed above with the figure, a process-oriented environmental claim is also used. By using process-oriented environmental claims, the advertisement was able to show changes BP has implemented and what it seeks to do to improve its production process. The changes in the energy generation process included using renewable energy, cleaner-burning natural gas, advanced fuels and developing new low carbon businesses. Figure 4.18 below shows an example of the second advertisement that combined environmental claims to communicate a green message in magazine advertising in South Africa.



**Figure 4.18: Inovar Floor Advertisement Using the Product and Process-Oriented Environmental Claims**

In this example, product-oriented and process-oriented environmental claims are simultaneously used. This is a combination of product-oriented and process-oriented environmental claims because the advertisement claims, "*FinOak encompasses the usage of renewable raw material and we work diligently with all our suppliers to minimize our environmental impact. Get the genuine wood experience, without harming natural forests*". This assisted the Inovar Floor advertisement to indicate its product quality and how these products provide customers with a genuine wood experience. Also, the process-oriented environmental claim made it possible to communicate the processes Inovar Floor undertakes to green the production process. By using

renewable raw materials and continuously forging close relationships with its suppliers, this helps Inovar Floors reduce its supply-chain environmental impact.

Studies have shown mixed results in terms of the effectiveness of different claims. Chen and Lee (2015, p. 203), for example, revealed that the process-oriented environmental claim is a more effective green claim that enhances the green message. However, Carlson et al. (1993, p. 35) found that green advertisements using environmental facts are more effective. Similarly, Kumar (2017, p. 71) reported that environmental facts claims enhance green advertisement credibility making this environmental claim more effective in communicating a green message.

The product-oriented environmental claims are used in green communication (Segev et al. 2016, p. 89) however, no research could be found supporting the effectiveness of product-based environmental claim, and thus it is interesting that so many of green advertisements use this environmental claim in South Africa. Given the evidence supporting environmental facts claims effectiveness particularly in building credibility, future green advertising may be better off providing South African consumers with verifiable facts that support the green message to convince them of the authenticity of the green message. With the rise in greenwashing (Atkinson & Kim 2015, p. 41; Segev et al. 2016, p. 85), convincing consumers of the authenticity of green messages will become increasingly important".

This study reported product-oriented claims are the most commonly used environmental claim, followed by process-oriented and environmental facts claims, respectively. Contrary to past studies, this study found that green advertising in magazines does not use image-oriented claim. Chan et al. (2006, p. 240) suggested environmental claims help green message effectiveness in green advertisements. This may indicate why this message strategy is used to communicate green messages in magazine advertising in South Africa. The next subsection addresses the structural element of message explicitness in green advertisements.

### 4.6.3 Message Explicitness

Message explicitness is a holistic communication strategy that determines message content in the green advertisement, including information richness, assertiveness and strength of the claim (Alniacik & Cengiz 2012, p. 209). The message in green advertisements can be either explicit or implicit communicated. This makes it important to determine the message explicitness use in magazine advertising in South Africa.

In this study, 43 (51.2%) of green advertisements explicitly communicated the green message relative to 41 (48.8%), which subtly communicated the green message. The prevalence of more explicit messages in green advertisements in magazines in South Africa may be supported by the findings of Yan et al.'s (2012) study on 343 college students in the United States. Yan et al. (2012, p.162) found that using more explicit messages enhanced green consumer knowledge and brand attitude is most likely to influence purchase intentions positively. One way of maintaining green advertisement credibility is by providing more details that are explicitly stating how the advertised product/service and brand is green (Mkhize & Ellis, 2018, p. 123). Thus, explicit green messages strengthen the communication of key information in magazine advertisements in a clear manner helping further consumers' green knowledge (Yan et al. 2012, p. 154). With about 52% of green advertisements in magazines in South Africa shown to be using explicit messages, consumers are less likely to misinterpret and should, therefore, improve consumer knowledge. Kronrod et al. (2012, p. 100) suggested that when the green advertisement targets consumers with a high environmental concern, assertive green messages could be more effective in pushing consumers into action. South African consumers' level of concern for the environment is fairly high (Mkhize & Ellis 2018, p. 123). Also, Mkhize and Ellis (2020, p. 5) reported that the concern for the environment by South African consumers is fairly great. Thus, using more assertive messages may be effective in turning the South African consumers' environmental consciousness into green behaviour. Figure 4.19 demonstrates an advertisement that used explicit message communication in the green advertisement.



**Figure 4.19: Planet Fitness Advertisement Explicit Communicating Green Message**

This is an explicit message because the advertisement says "A stronger fitter you in 2019, join planet fitness". As a result of using explicit message in the advertisement, it strongly communicated what one needs to do to be stronger, fitter in 2019, and that is to join Planet Fitness. This message covers the urgency as well as expected behaviour and thus clearly communicate its message that highlights and supports healthy living/lifestyle.

Inconsistent findings on the effectiveness of explicit messages in green advertisements have been reported in the past. Kim, Beak, Yoon, Oh & Choi (2017, p. 554) found that using assertive or subtle green message results in no difference in message persuasion. This may explain why almost as many of the green communications in magazine advertising in South Africa used subtle message explicitness. Other research has found subtle messages to be more effective.

The current study reporting 41 (48.8%) subtle green advertisements may be explained by the findings of Usrey (2017), suggesting that subtly communicating a green message lead to positive product appraisal. Hidalgo-Baz et al. (2017, p. 552) also found that subtle messages improve green messages by influencing consumers' perceptions of organic products. Kronrod et al. (2012, p. 100) also suggested that less assertive messages are more effective when the green advertisement is targeting consumers with less or low concern for the environment. There are still consumers in South Africa with low concern for the environment (Mkhize & Ellis 2020, p. 5) and thus, these advertisements could be more effective with these consumers. Kim, Beak, Yoon, Oh & Choi (2017, p. 554) reported that using assertive messages results in a negative attitude towards the green advertisement. This may be because assertive message phrasings are often found to reduce compliance with the message, compared to subtle message phrasing (Kronrod et al. 2011, p. 687). The appropriateness of assertive and subtle messages for particular advertisements would depend on the specific target markets for these communications, and this an area for future research. Figure 4.20 below is an example of a green advertisement that used a subtle green message.



**Figure 4.20: Husqvarna Advertisement Subtle Communicating Green Message**

This is subtle message communication because the advertisement says "one battery system powers them all" and "get ready to switch to Husqvarna battery-powered equipment". The message in the advertisement is not clear, thus not explicitly detailing how the Husqvarna battery-powered system is connected to green. The use of an implicit message communication strategy in the advertisement positions Husqvarna products as an environmentally friendly product as they use an alternative energy source which helps to address and reduce heavy reliance on power/electricity. The message in the advertisement further indicates that one battery system can power multiple types of equipment.

The 2.4% difference between green advertisements that used explicit 43 (51.2%) and subtle 41 (48.8%) messages indicate a fairly even split between the two levels of explicitness. Thus, green advertisers in South Africa do not seem to have a clear preference for the one message strategy or the other. This may be due to the types of products or consumers that the green advertisement is targeting. Kronrod et al. (2012, p. 100) for example, cautions green marketers that explicit messages should be directed at consumers exhibiting deep environmental concern. Possibly the advertisements using more explicit message strategies assume, or specifically target, more environmentally concerned consumers. Several advertisements were classified as green since they were promoting healthy living, outdoor living and using phrases such as sustainability, implying green. Thus, several outdoor life, healthy living, and wine advertisements are subtly promoting a green message. Further research would be needed to determine the reasons behind the uses of explicit and subtle message strategies. The next subsection explores eco-label inclusion as a structural message element, in the green advertisements.

#### **4.6.4 Inclusion of an Eco-label**

According to Thøgersen et al. (2010, p. 1787), the inclusion of eco-labels help provides information that enhances transparency and message credibility. Thus, it is important to determine whether the inclusion of an eco-label is used as an element in the green message in magazine advertisements in South Africa.

This study found only three green advertisements of the 84 are using eco-labels (3.6%) in the green message. Figure 4.21 below demonstrates an example of an advertisement that used an eco-label to communicate its green message in a magazine advertising in South Africa.

**NOW FALLING LEAVES WON'T MAKE YOU BLUE**

LIGHTWEIGHT BATTERY OPERATED LEAF BLOWER  
BGA 45 / 56

This autumn, falling leaves won't make you think of how much clearing up you'll have to do. STIHL has a choice of battery-powered blowers that will make clearing small outdoor areas like pathways, poolsides, patios and driveways a breeze. The BGA 56 blower is part of the COMPACT range that offers the total convenience of one AK battery that is interchangeable between the COMPACT chainsaw, hedge-trimmer, brushcutter and blower. This lightweight yet powerful blower weighs 2.1 kg (without the battery), and is quiet and emission-free. Another option is the STIHL BGA 45 blower, which has an integrated Lithium ion battery and a charge level indicator. Both models offer cordless convenience and are easy to handle. Both are ideal for small suburban gardens and similar noise-sensitive areas. Get a STIHL blower, and you'll be able to enjoy the falling leaves this autumn - without irritating the neighbours!

*Like any precision tool, STIHL products are only available at specialised dealers nationwide, for expert advice and superior after-sales service.*

**ZERO EMISSIONS**   **BATTERY OPERATED**   **NO NOISE**

**Figure 4.21: Stihl Advertisement Using Eco-labels to Strengthen Green Message**

This advertisement includes *zero emissions*, *battery operated* and *no noise* eco-labels. Because of the inclusion of eco-labels, the environmentally friendliness of the Stihl products is evident. Integration of eco-labels helps make the subtle communication of Stihl's greenness a little

stronger and helps highlight the products' greenness. Had the inclusion of eco-labels not been used in the advertisement, knowing the environmental benefits that the products offer would not have been easily identifiable. Through the inclusion of eco-labels, it is possible to deduce that the advertised products have zero emissions, help address and conserve power/electricity because Stihl products are battery powered and result in zero noise pollution.

Testa et al.'s (2015, p. 258) study on the role of eco-labels in guiding consumers' purchase decision found that in Italy, the inclusion of eco-labels significantly influenced and enhanced consumer's likeliness to purchase green products. In line with this, eco-label use is interestingly low in this study, considering that this study found only three green advertisement use eco-labels. Scott and Ellis (2014, p. 646) suggest that eco-labels are amongst the tools that consumers use to determine environmental friendliness of the products. The low use of eco-labels in South Africa as found in this study may be associated with the absence of unified global standards for environmental friendliness that result in consumer confusion as to what constitutes an eco-label or environmentally friendly certification (Scott & Ellis 2014, p. 646). Based on low percentage use of eco-labels in green advertisements in magazine advertising in South Africa it is possible that green marketers have limited knowledge on the use of eco-labels in terms of understanding what, when and how to use eco-labels in green advertisements in South Africa.

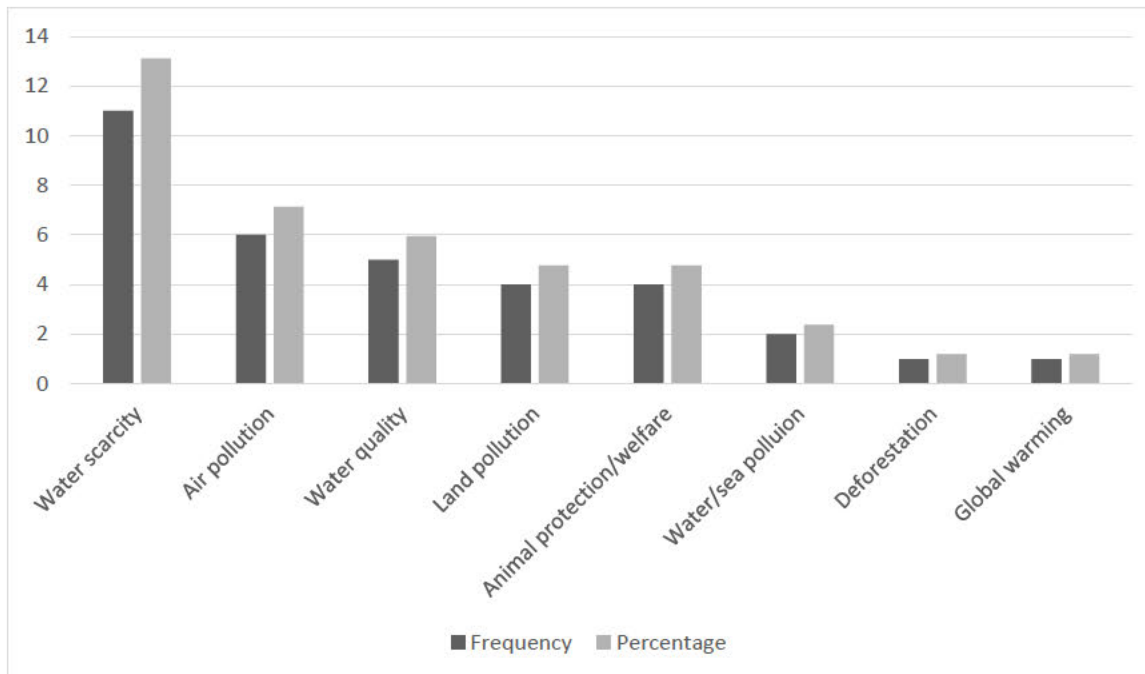
This section determined the message structure in green advertising in magazine advertisements. The green message may be structured using message framing, environmental claims, message explicitness and the inclusion of an eco-label. This study found that the majority of green advertisements in magazines in South Africa are positively framed and use product-oriented environmental claims. The message explicitness was reported to favour explicit message. However, about 3% difference between explicit and subtle message communication strategies was reported indicating a fairly even split. The message strategies have been shown through past research, to be important structural elements of green messages in green advertisements. The onus is on green marketers to design and structure a green message in green advertisements in

a manner that would highlight the green message. The following section presents the findings on the green problems that green advertisements address in magazine advertising.

#### **4.7 Green problems being addressed in green advertisements in magazines**

Green problems helped raise consumers' awareness and resulted in more consumers that are willing to use their consumption behaviour to help mitigate these problems (Chen & Lee 2015, p. 195). Thus, addressing green problems in green advertisements may enhance consumers' environmental concern.

In this study, 34 (40.5%) of the green advertisements in magazine advertising in South Africa addressed one or more green problems. Thus, there appears to be moderate use of green advertising to alert consumers to, or show how organisations and products are addressing, specific green problems. These green problems present an opportunity for South African advertisers in the future. Figure 4.22 below depicts the various green problems that green advertisements address in magazines in South Africa.



**Figure 4.22: Green Problems in Magazine Advertisements in South Africa**

In the figure, the dark grey colour refers to the frequency, whereas light grey is the percentage (of 84 green advertisements) that each green problem is addressed in these advertisements.

The rise in the frequency of green problems indicates a need for change (Jeppesen et al. 2015, p. 201). According to Alniacik and Yilmaz (2012, p. 211), consumers' environmental concern is a key factor that may influence effective communication of a green message. Thus, addressing problems in green advertisements may enhance consumers' environmental concern.

Tucker et al. (2012, p. 12) argue that environmental consciousness is often a result of the general attitude consumers have about the environment. As a result, addressing green problems may influence consumers' environmental concern and making them susceptible to green messages in green advertising (Tucker et al. 2012, p. 12). In a somewhat related study by Lee (2014, p. 40) on message framing use in Japanese green advertising in Asahi Shimbun magazine, findings indicate that addressing global warming increased from 1998 to 2005. No other studies on green advertising specifically addressing green problems could be found. The following

sections discuss the extent to which specific green problems are addressed and provides evidence of how this content is presented.

#### **4.7.1 Water Scarcity**

According to Shah et al. (2018, p. 678), failure to address water scarcity problems will result in global destruction. Hoekstra (2014, p. 318) argues that water scarcity is amongst the top three green problems in the world. Thus, green marketers are using green advertising to bring awareness and highlight the severity of the water scarcity problem.

The results of this study indicate that water scarcity is the most addressed green problem as it appears in 11 (13.1%) in green advertisements in magazines in South Africa. Mokennen and Hoekstra (2016, p. 3) reported that 4.0 billion people are faced with water scarcity, indicating that water scarcity is in a dire situation. In line with this, it shows a strong need to communicate the water scarcity green problem in green advertisements. Heiman's (2002, p. 83) study in Israel researching the use of advertising to promote water conservation found that 185 (93.91%) in 197 respondents remembered green advertisements that address water scarcity. Heiman (2002, p. 83) further indicated that addressing the water scarcity problem in green advertisements influenced behaviour significantly because about 143 (73%) of respondents started to conserve water. Increasing reports on the water scarcity problem may result in a perception change concerning the seriousness and magnitude of this green problem. Dagher and Itani's (2014, p. 193) study in Lebanon also reported a positive relationship between green purchase behaviour and perception of the seriousness of environmental problems.

Figure 6 showed how Karcher communicated its green message by addressing water scarcity green problem. This advertisement argues water scarcity green problem is addressed by helping *"save water with a high-pressure washer. Up to 80% savings"* and *"They also save water, about 3500 litres of water per hour flows through a normal hose with a pressure of about 3 to 5 bar. A*

*powerful high-pressure cleaner only requires about 500 litres in the same amount of time".* The emphasis on water savings reinforces the connection between Karcher's high-pressure washer that saves water and the water scarcity problem solution because of its ability to save up to 80% of water.

The frequency of this green problem being addressed in the green advertisements may suggest that marketers believe more consumers perceive water scarcity as a serious green problem. Thus, addressing this green problem may positively influence the green message in the green advertisement in magazines in South Africa. A further possible explanation is that water scarcity green problems are no longer a distant reality as they are increasingly reported across the world (Vörösmarty et al. 2015, p. 478). Chang (2012, p. 743) revealed that in South Africa, the water scarcity green problem is no longer a possibility as South Africans are feeling the real effects of this green problem. Rodina (2019, p.1) argues that South Africa's water crisis is a major green problem facing the country. According to Rodina (2019, p. 1), Cape Town's "Day zero" received the world's media attention with reports made about millions of people that are left without drinking water. The water challenge in Cape Town is likely to explain the prevalence of water scarcity as a green problem found in green advertisements in magazines in South Africa. The next subsection investigates air pollution in the green message.

#### **4.7.2 Air Pollution**

The air pollution green problem is a global phenomenon. The prevalence of the air pollution problem compromises human health, and thus, this green problem needs to be addressed (Calef & Goble 2007, p. 1).

The findings of this study indicate that air pollution is the second most addressed green problem with a frequency of six (7.14%) of green advertisements in magazines in South Africa. Consistent findings are indicated in Testa et al.'s study (2012, p. 17) in Italy that found air pollution or

emissions are the most (66.4%) addressed the green problem in green advertising. Addressing the air pollution problem in green advertisements helps influence and increase consumers' willingness to pay higher prices for the advertised product (Shrikanth & Raju 2012, p. 34). Sakar (2012, p. 44) argues that the majority of consumers in Greece are increasingly becoming aware of the dangers of industrialisation, resulting in more green advertising that addresses air pollution. Hartmann et al. (2015, p. 745) argue that addressing green problems in green advertisements may trigger consumer's environmental behaviour that enhances environmental protection. This is because green advertisements help communicate the magnitude and effect of green problems resulting in stimulation of consumers' environmental consciousness and positive environmental attitude (Tuna & Özkoçak 2012, p. 133). Figure 4.23 demonstrates an example of a green advertisement that communicates its green message by addressing the air pollution green problem in magazine advertising in South Africa.



**Figure 4.23: BP Advertisement Using Air Pollution to Strengthen Green Message**

This advertisement is addressing the air pollution green problem because the advertisement says, "*...from renewable energy and cleaner-burning natural gas to advanced fuels and new low*

*carbon businesses* "and *"BP is working to make energy cleaner and better"*. The advertisement details the efforts BP has put in place to help address air pollution. Renewable energy and cleaner-burning natural gas are an indication that BP is bringing attention to the air pollution problem and seek to address this green problem by committing to finding ways that would make energy generation cleaner and better.

Studies have shown that consumers respond positively to green advertising (Fernando et al. 2014, p. 223; Shrikanth & Raju 2012, p. 34). With consumers argued to like green advertisements, magazine advertising in South Africa may use air pollution problem to communicate the green message. As a result, green communications addressing air pollution has the potential of making consumers more aware of the severity of the air pollution problem in South Africa. The fact that this is the second most addressed problem in the green advertisements shows that organisations targeting South African consumers consider air pollution as an important green problem that could reinforce the communication of the green message. The next subsection explores the inclusion of water quality in the green message.

### **4.7.3 Water Quality**

Edokpayi et al. (2018, p. 2) argued that approximately 1.8 billion people globally do not have access to safe drinking water, with developing countries the most affected. This shows the worldwide severity of the water quality green problem. Thus, addressing water quality in green advertisements would help bring attention to and make consumers more aware of this green problem.

This study revealed water quality to be the third most addressed green problem in five (5.95%) in green advertising in magazines in South Africa. Dunlap's (1994, p. 117) study on international attitudes towards the environment with respondents from 24 countries revealed that water quality is regarded as a green problem that needs to be addressed. More recently, Cherian and

Jacob's (2012, p. 120) study on consumers' attitudes towards environmentally friendly products in the United Arab Emirates found that water quality forms part of the most commonly addressed green problems. This shows that water quality is a green problem that green advertising could address to make consumers more aware of the dangers associated with this green problem. Figure 4.24 depicts an example of a green advertisement that communicates its green message by addressing the water quality green problem in magazine advertising in South Africa.



**Figure 4.24: Generosity Water Advertisement Addressing Water Quality**

This advertisement is addressing the water quality green problem because the advertisement says "*by drinking 1 single bottle of Generosity Water you are able to provide 2 people access to clean drinking water for an entire month*". The advertisement message focus is on the goodness

of an individual to help two more people to access quality drinking water that would not have been otherwise possible.

The current study finding shows that water quality green problem amongst the three most addressed green problems in green advertising in magazines in South Africa. This finding is an indication that addressing this green problem is perceived, at least by some advertisers to be a relatively important green problem in South Africa to include in green message in magazines. However, with less than 6% of green advertisements addressing water quality, it is important to note that addressing this problem may be perceived as less important compared to the use of other structural elements of green communications as discussed in the sections above. The next subsection explores land pollution in the green message.

#### **4.7.4 Land Pollution**

Nittala (2014, p. 139) argue that consumers are important players that can help address the land pollution green problem. The growing influence of green advertising on green knowledge could help build consumers' environmental consciousness (de Groot & Steg 2009, p. 61).

This study found land pollution received relatively limited attention in green advertising in magazines in South Africa, with a reported four (4.76%) of green advertisements addressing this green problem. This finding is consistent with the study by Akyol and Kiliñç (2014) involving a content analysis of green advertisements in magazines in Turkey. The study found that land pollution was not the most addressed green problem (12.5%) in Turkish green advertisements (Akyol & Kiliñç 2014, p. 341). On the contrary, Bortree et al. (2012) in a longitudinal content analysis study of 577 green advertisements from the National Geographic Magazine issues from the year 1979 to 2008. They found that land pollution was the third most addressed green problem (17%) in green advertisements (Bortree et al. 2012, p. 82). Jain and Kaur (2004, p. 174) indicated that land pollution is the most addressed green problem in Indian green

advertisements. This resulted in several pieces of legislation being enacted to help address land pollution problem in India (Jain and Kaur 2004, p. 174). As mentioned above, Rodina (2019, p. 1) argues that South Africa's water crisis is a major green problem facing the country which received the world's media attention. Thus, this could explain why the land pollution green problem is receiving less attention relative to the water crisis that has taken precedence in magazine advertising in South Africa. Figure 4.25, however, shows an example of an advertisement that communicates its green message by addressing the land pollution green problem in magazine advertising in South Africa.



**Figure 4.25: Asmara Advertisement Addressing Land Pollution**

This advertisement is addressing land pollution problem because the advertisement says, "*packaging made from 60% renewable plant base resources and 100% compostable*". The contents used to make the packaging of Asmara coffee roasters can be disintegrated into natural elements that are absorbed, leaving no trace of any harm in the soil. Because this packaging can

be disintegrated and absorbed, this helps address the land pollution green problem. The message contained in the advertisement communicates the green message by detailing how the coffee roasters are earth-friendly as well as how it helps address land pollution. The next subsection investigates animal protection/welfare in the green message.

#### **4.7.5 Animal Protection/Welfare**

The number of consumers who are increasingly demanding animal welfare, addressing animal protection/welfare provides green marketers with an opportunity to bring attention to the animal protection/welfare green problem (Cembalo et al. 2016, p. 239). This opportunity also means green marketers can communicate how their organisations and products are addressing the animal protection/welfare problem.

Similar to land pollution, this study found the animal protection/welfare green problem only received limited attention in green advertising in magazines in South Africa, with this green problem addressed in only four (4.76%) of the 84 green advertisements. This finding may be explained by Vanhonacker et al.'s (2010) study in Belgium. The survey reported that respondents regarded animal welfare less important relative to other product attributes, including health (47.3%) and safety (59.3%) (Vanhonacker et al. 2010, p. 599). Only about 10% of respondents reported animal welfare more important than primary attributes including health, safety and quality (Vanhonacker et al. 2010, p. 599). Figure 4.26 presents an example of a green advertisement that communicated the green message by addressing animal protection/welfare problem in magazine advertising in South Africa.



**Figure 4.26: Bravecto Advertisement Addressing Animal Welfare/Protection**

This advertisement is addressing the animal protection/welfare green problem because it says, "12 weeks of continuous tick and flea protection". The message focus in the advertisement revolves around animal protection, detailing how the advertised product enhances animal health. This twelve-week protection will make it easier and provide peace of mind to dog owners knowing their pets are protected from ticks and flea diseases. The next subsection explores water/sea pollution problem in green advertisements.

#### **4.7.6 Water/Sea Pollution**

Tantawi et al. (2009, p. 31) argue that human activities such as consumption are perpetuating the water pollution problem and thus call on consumers to be conscious about the possible

impact their consumption choices may have on the environment. As a result, the emphasis on the water pollution problem in green advertisements may enhance consumers' knowledge of the severity and dangers associated with this green problem.

This study found water/sea pollution addressed in only two (2.38%) of green advertising in magazines in South Africa. This is despite the finding by Vince and Hardesty (2017, p. 123) that the water pollution problem is a global green problem attributing approximately six to twelve million tonnes of plastic (annually) that end-up in oceans. Vince and Hardesty (2017, p. 123) argue that governments, non-profit organisations and corporations are developing strategies, including green advertising, for addressing the impact of pollution in water/sea. This is supported by Tantawi et al. (2012, p. 31) that suggested green advertising plays a key role in green consumer knowledge building because this advertising highlights and reinforces what consumers may know about green problems or raises concern for the environment. However, the current study showed that the water pollution green problem received limited attention in green advertisements in South Africa. Figure 4.27 is one of the green advertisements addressing water/sea pollution in the green message.

# WATER BOTTLE ON A MISSION

At Dopper, we absolutely LOVE clean water. In every ocean, from every tap. And yet, every year, 8 million tons of plastics make their way to our oceans. Together, we can do better! We sell reusable tap water bottles. Every bottle sold helps to reduce plastic pollution and supports projects to bring clean drinking water where people need it the most.

- Dutch Design
- Reusable Bottle
- Dishwasher Proof
- Cradle to Cradle
- BPA free
- B-Corp licensed

Available at the following retailers:

YUPPIECHEF.COM SUPERBALIST.COM Faithful to Nature wellnesswarehouse

For sales enquiries contact us on 011 402 0062 or email info@eco-concepts.co.za

**Figure 4.27: Dopper Advertisement Addressing Water/Sea Pollution**

This advertisement is addressing the water/sea pollution green problem because it says "At Dopper, we absolutely love clean water. In every ocean, from every tap. And yet, every year, 8 million tons of plastic make their way to our oceans". The message presented in the advertisement indicates the magnitude of plastic pollution that flows into oceans. By addressing the cause of pollution in the oceans, this advertisement helps address, and bring attention to, water/sea pollution. The next subsection investigates the deforestation problem as part of the green message.

### **4.7.7 Deforestation**

The heightened focus on environmental protection by politicians combined with increasing consumer's environmental concern for deforestation contributed to the proliferation of green advertising by forest product firms (Grillo et al. 2008, p. 40). In turn, addressing the deforestation green problem in green advertisements could help consumers become more aware of the extent and impact of deforestation.

This study's finding showed that deforestation is one of two green problems with only a single green advertisement addressing the green problem. Despite Williams et al. (2014, p. 11) study in green sustainability in social media reporting that global trends indicate deforestation is amongst the green problems on the rise. Similarly, Dauvergne and Lister (2010, p. 132) argue that the deforestation problem is continuing at an alarming rate with greater than 12 million hectares annually. Yet, green advertising in South Africa is not addressing this problem. Thus, addressing the deforestation green problem in green advertising may be an opportunity to better the green message and bring the needed awareness making consumers environmentally conscious of this problem in the future. The next subsection explores the use of global warming in green advertising to communicate the green message.

### **4.7.8 Global Warming**

Cherian and Jacob (2012, p. 121) suggest that green advertising influences consumers' environmental consciousness and thus alters their behaviours to green because of the knowledge and understanding of the negative effects of global warming trigger self-introspection. Thus, addressing global warming in green advertising has the potential to strengthen a green message and achieve green behaviours.

Similar to the deforestation green problem, this study found that only one (1.19%) of the green advertisements addressed this green problem. The low use of deforestation problem may be

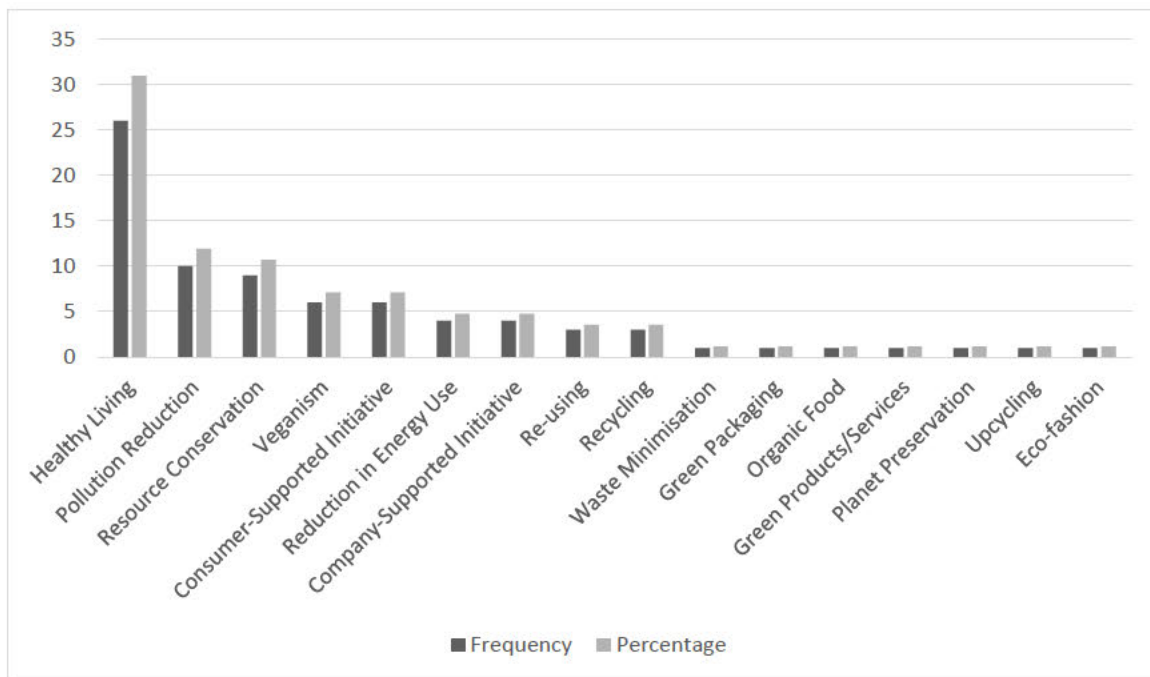
explained by the finding of Foust and Murphy (2009, p. 151) that Americans consider global warming a serious green problem, however, it is treated as a low priority relative to other green problems. Other studies have, however, found global warming to be amongst the green problems that green advertisements are addressing (e.g. Fowler & Close 2012). These advertisements tend to detail the implications of global warming on wildlife and thus entice consumers to help address this green problem (Fowler & Close 2012, p. 123). Royne et al. (2012, p. 86) argue that 60% of the company executives in a McKinsey Global survey regard climate change as an important green problem that needs to be considered when designing the green advertisements. Perhaps given the greater effects of green problems such as water scarcity and quality and the various forms of pollution such land pollution, global warming is not perceived by advertisers to be a green problem that could make the green message better. Thus, this green problem is rarely used in green advertising.

This section presented the results on what green problems green advertisements are magazines addressing in South Africa. Also, it contributed to understanding how advertisers use green problems to strengthen the green message. The current study reported water scarcity, air pollution, and water quality to be the most commonly addressed green problems in green advertising in magazines in South Africa. To a certain degree, Peterson's (2006) study indicated similarities in green problems that are addressed in green advertisements. Overall, Peterson (2006, p. 207) reported that by 2002 most advertisements focused on the depletion of scarce resources and destruction of the landscape with water pollution, air pollution, noise pollution and population explosion receiving notable attention. However, Peterson (2006) investigated the extent of green advertisements addressing green problems in magazine communications targeting children in the years 1987, 1997 and 2002. Chen and Lee (2015, p. 195) argued that green communications bring about attention and awareness of green problems, making consumers more receptive to green advertisements. Thus, combining green problems with other message strategies could help communicate the green message in green advertisements. The next section investigates the proposed green solutions in green advertisements.

## 4.8 Proposed green solutions in green advertisements in magazines

Tan et al. (2016, p. 288) suggest that green advertising helps green marketers propose green solutions that would allow environmentally conscious consumers to use their purchasing behaviour to help address consumers' negative effects on the natural environment. Figure 4.28 presents the green solutions proposed in green advertisements in magazines in South Africa.

In this study, 16 (19.05 %) of green advertisements in magazines in South Africa are proposing one or more green solution. Thus, there is weak/low use of presenting green solutions as a way to alert consumers to or show what green solutions organisations and products are proposing towards mitigating green problems. This presents an opportunity for South African advertisers in the future.



**Figure 4.28: Green Solutions in Green Advertisements in Magazines in South Africa**

This figure shows 16 green solutions found in green advertising in magazines in South Africa. The following sections discuss the main solutions proposed.

Several authors have called for the need for green advertisements to propose specific green solutions. For example, Li et al. (2014, p. 4) suggest that the energy-saving benefit as a result of green building needs to be proposed as a green solution in green advertisements promoting green building. Heiman (2012, p. 79) also suggested that there is a strong need for green advertisements proposing water conservation as a green solution. Heiman (2002, p. 79) explained that proposing water conservation as a green solution in green advertisements would enhance consumers' green knowledge. However, no studies could be found that actually assess the extent to which green solutions are proposed.

#### **4.8.1 Healthy Living**

Green advertisements that are encouraging consumers to make healthy choices about diet, exercise and emotional wellness are becoming more prevalent (Petersen et al. 2010, p. 391).

This study found healthy living to be the most proposed green solution in 26 (30.95%) of green advertisements in magazines in South Africa. Similarly, Xue and Zhou (2012, p. 8) in their comparative study between American and Chinese magazines found that most American magazines tended to emphasis green lifestyles. Grillo et al.'s (2008) content analysis study investigated the development of green advertising in the forest sector in the United States. The study found that between the years 2001 and 2005, health has increasingly being addressed with green advertising proposing more health- and quality of life-related green messages (Grillo et al. 2008, p. 45). Grillo et al. (2008, p. 46) suggest that human health is popular with environmentally conscious consumers and thus proposing healthy living in green advertisements reinforce the green message. Also, Suki's (2013, p. 731) study examined the effect of environmental knowledge, healthy food and healthy lifestyles on young consumers' green behaviour where it found healthy lifestyles as the major influencer in Malaysia translating younger consumers to environmental consciousness. This finding was explained to mean that green advertising raises consumers' awareness and concern for green problems and communicates the benefits of healthy living and thereby enhances consumers' green knowledge (Suki 2013, p. 733). Figure 4.29

presents an example of an advertisement proposing a health living green solution as a way of communicating the green message.



Figure 4.29: Hoka One One Advertisement Using Health Living

This is a healthy living solution because the advertisement advertises the Addo trail run with details of various events including a 100 mile, 76 km and 44 km regarded as "Africa's Wildest Ultra" in which "Legends Are Born". The advertisement uses subtle communication in support of healthy living. In the advertisement, health living is presented in the form of an active/athletic and outdoor lifestyle.

With Grillo et al. (2008, p. 46) reporting that environmentally conscious consumers are more receptive of green communications about human health, proposing healthy living in green advertisements is most likely to enhance the green message. The next subsection explores the pollution reduction solution in green advertisements.

## 4.8.2 Pollution Reduction

Mainier et al. (1997, p. 190) suggested that consumers' green behaviour (green buying) could drastically and significantly contribute to green solutions that would reduce pollution. Thus, green advertisements that are proposing the pollution reduction green solution may strengthen the communication of a green message in magazine advertising in South Africa.

The current study found that the pollution reduction solution is the second most proposed green solution in 11 (11.90%) of green advertisements in magazines in South Africa. Li et al. (2014, p. 4) suggested pollution reduction green solutions as a result of the green building need to be strongly promoted to consumers. This is because the benefits associated with green buildings include pollution reduction (Li et al. 2014, p. 1).

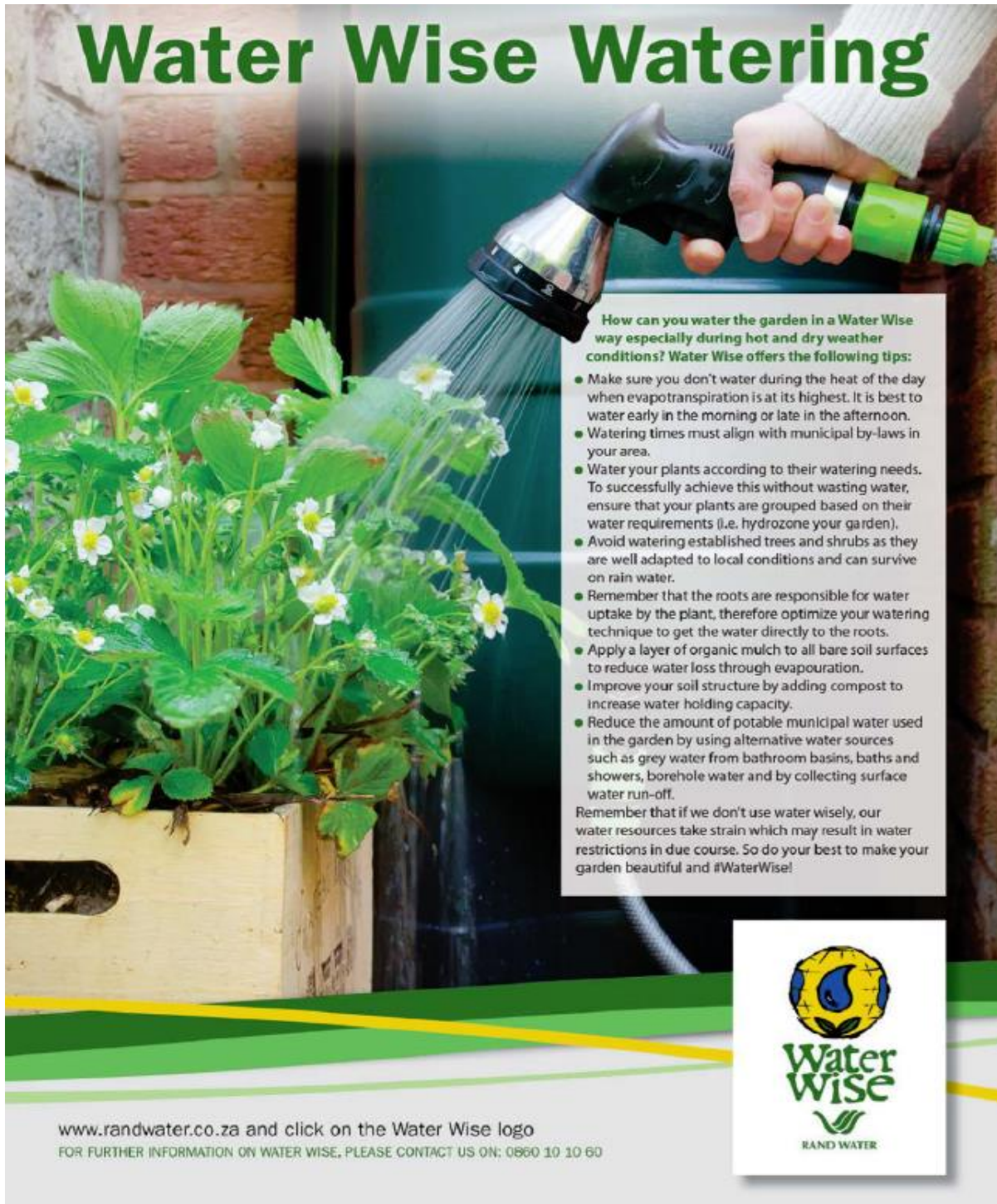
As previously shown in Figure 4.27, this advertisement proposes the pollution reduction solution as it says "*...every year, 8 million tons of plastics make their way to our oceans. Together, we can do better! We sell reusable tap water bottles. Every bottle sold helps to reduce plastic pollution*". The pollution reduction solutions are made possible by the reusable water bottles. The single-use water bottles most likely end-up in oceans, whereas, reusable water bottles may be used for years. The next subsection investigates resource preservation proposed as a green solution in green advertising.

## 4.8.3 Resource Preservation

Warner et al. (2015, p. 60) argue that designing green advertisements targeting and highlighting how individual behaviours can contribute to resource preservation, effectively elicits green behaviours.

This current study's results indicate resource preservation is the third most proposed green solution in nine (10.71%) green advertisements in magazines in South Africa. Heiman (2002, p. 83) conducted research in Israel, where it was found that green advertisements proposing water conservation were effective, with 72.59% of the respondents engaged in acts that conserve water. Zimmer et al.'s (1994, p. 71) study determined the green problems that consumers considered as important in the United States. It also found that respondents regarded resource conservation, including energy conservation and energy efficiency as areas in which green solutions should be included in the advertising of new green products. This may be explained by the role that is played by awareness of green problems in developing green knowledge (Zimmer et al. 1994, p. 71). Figure 4.30 below is an example of a green advertisement in magazine advertising in South Africa that communicates the green message by proposing a resource preservation solution.

# Water Wise Watering




How can you water the garden in a Water Wise way especially during hot and dry weather conditions? Water Wise offers the following tips:

- Make sure you don't water during the heat of the day when evapotranspiration is at its highest. It is best to water early in the morning or late in the afternoon.
- Watering times must align with municipal by-laws in your area.
- Water your plants according to their watering needs. To successfully achieve this without wasting water, ensure that your plants are grouped based on their water requirements (i.e. hydrozone your garden).
- Avoid watering established trees and shrubs as they are well adapted to local conditions and can survive on rain water.
- Remember that the roots are responsible for water uptake by the plant, therefore optimize your watering technique to get the water directly to the roots.
- Apply a layer of organic mulch to all bare soil surfaces to reduce water loss through evaporation.
- Improve your soil structure by adding compost to increase water holding capacity.
- Reduce the amount of potable municipal water used in the garden by using alternative water sources such as grey water from bathroom basins, baths and showers, borehole water and by collecting surface water run-off.

Remember that if we don't use water wisely, our water resources take strain which may result in water restrictions in due course. So do your best to make your garden beautiful and #WaterWise!

[www.randwater.co.za](http://www.randwater.co.za) and click on the Water Wise logo  
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON WATER WISE, PLEASE CONTACT US ON: 0860 10 10 60



**Figure 4.30: Rand Water Water Wise Advertisement Proposing Resource Preservation**

This advertisement is proposing a resource conservation solution because it says "...make sure you don't water during the heat of the day when evapotranspiration is at its highest. It is best to

*water early in the morning or late in the afternoon. Remember that roots are responsible for water uptake by the plant, therefore optimise your watering technique to get water direct to the roots".* The message in the advertisement is explicit and proposes ways in which water usage may be reduced. The advertisement offers various solutions that garden owners can make use of to help preserve water. Water-wise watering is a green solution that is aimed at reducing the quantity of water used for gardening purposes. The next subsection explores consumer-supported initiatives used in a green advertisement to communicate the green message.

#### **4.8.4 Consumer-Supported Initiative**

According to Ergen et al. (2014, p. 130), consumers growing environmental consciousness, more consumers are purchasing products that are connected or associated with initiatives that would help mitigate green problems.

This study found that consumer-supported initiatives constitute six (7.14%) green advertisements in magazine advertising in South Africa. This percentage indicates that at least some organisations regard the act of proposing consumer-supported initiatives as an important green solution able to help communicate the green message. This may be because consumers can spread positive messages to other family members or across media platforms and thus partnerships and collaborations with consumers are important in the green message (Sandhu et al. 2010, p. 357). The GENOROSITY WATER advertisement below shows a green advertisement in the magazine advertising in South Africa that is communicating its green message by proposing a consumer-supported initiative green solution.



**Figure 4.31: GENEROSITY WATER Advertisement Proposing a Consumer Supported Initiative**

This advertisement is proposing a consumer-supported initiative green solution because it says " *By drinking 1 single bottle of generosity water you are able to provide 2 people access to clean drinking water for an entire month*". The advertisement message details how an individual could help another person get access to quality drinking water. This would only happen if consumers purchase Generosity Water, and thus, the positive initiative's outcome is dependent on whether consumers purchase the advertised product. The green problem that consumers are helping to address their water scarcity and quality problems. The next subsection investigates the veganism green solution used to communicate the green message.

#### **4.8.5 Veganism**

The vegan lifestyle advocates animal rights by not eating animal products, not purchasing clothing made from animal by-products and advocating for the abolishing of animal exploitation, including animal testing (Pendegrast 2017, p. 1). Thus, proposing veganism as a green solution may strengthen the communication of green message in magazine advertising in South Africa.

This study found six (7.14%) green advertisements in magazine advertising in South Africa propose the veganism green solution. Consistent with this finding is Smith and Bortree's (2012, p. 532) content analysis study from 19 online teen girl magazines from the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom where it found that 12 (9%) of green advertisements in these magazines consisted of veganism proposed as a green solution. The Smith and Bortree (2012) study was conducted in developed countries. In contrast, this study presents a developing country's perspective. The differences between the two study's frequency of the veganism solution in green advertisements is however minor. Figure 32 below is an example of a green advertisement in magazine advertising in South Africa that is reinforcing its green message by proposing the veganism green solution.



**Figure 4.32: Faithful to Nature Advertisement Using Veganism to Strengthen Green Message**

This subtle advertisement proposes veganism as a green solution through its name and offering "Faithful to Nature", "the online vegan market" and "over 4000 vegan products online". This online vegan market provides a wide range of vegan products including health, kids, body, food, beauty, lifestyle and home products subtly saying it easy to become a vegan. Convenience is made simple, and the advertisement shows veganism is not only limited to food. Thus, the Faithful to Nature advertisement communicates its greenness in the form of various options that potential and practising vegans have to pursue the vegan lifestyle.

## 4.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter presented and discussed the results of the study of green advertisements in magazine advertising in South Africa. The objective of this chapter was to provide meaning to the study results, further contributing to the overall study objective to determine the extent and nature of green advertisements in magazines in South Africa. This study found that 7.1% of green advertisements in magazines in South Africa are communicating a green message. Various sectors are using magazine advertising to communicate a green message. Adventure & Outdoor is the sector with most green advertisements in the 66 magazines. Most (72.3%) of green advertisements were contributed by South African firms. The results showed that six advertising appeals are used in magazine advertising to strengthen the communication of a green message. The rational/benefit appeal is the most commonly used advertising appeal in magazine advertising in South Africa. The message structure in this study was evaluated using message framing, environmental claims, message explicitness and the inclusion of an eco-label. The results indicate that most green advertisements in magazine advertising are positively framed and use product-based claims. There is a narrow difference in green advertisements in magazine advertising using explicit and subtle messages. The message content elements are used in green advertisements to communicate a green message in magazine advertising. This research found that 40.5% of green advertisements in magazine advertising are addressing at least one green problem. Water scarcity is a green problem that is addressed the most. Lastly, this study found that 19.05% of green advertisements in magazine advertising are proposing a green solution. Healthy living is the most proposed green solution in green advertisements in magazine advertising in South Africa. The following chapter presents conclusions, recommendations and limitations.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LIMITATIONS**

### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

Based on the presentation and discussion of the current research results, this chapter consists of conclusions, recommendations, limitations and overall study summary section. The first section presents and concludes on research objectives guiding this research. Recommendations for green marketers, policymakers and future research follow this section. After presenting recommendations, the section acknowledges the limitations of this research. The last section presents the overall study summary.

### **5.2 CONCLUSIONS**

With the planet increasingly showing signs of distress (Hartmann et al. 2014, p. 741), this is making consumers increasingly environmental consciousness, causing consumers to challenge organisations to address green problems (Kerakla et al. 2012, p. 25). As a result, organisations are also becoming more environmentally conscious and developing green strategies including green processes, green products, green packaging, eco-labelling, green advertising and other strategies (Narula & Upadhyay 2011; Wang et al. 2017). Green advertising is one-way organisations are promoting and communicating their green messages to consumers (Leonidou et al. 2014, p. 672). Magazine advertising is one medium that has been used by organisations to further the communication of a green message.

This study aimed to determine the extent and nature of green advertising in magazines in South Africa as an indicator of what communication organisations are sending to consumers about their commitment to addressing or mitigating the impact of green problems. The following section provides conclusions to the six research objectives for this study.

### **5.2.1 Research Objective One: Determine the extent of green advertisements in magazines in South Africa**

This objective helped the study ascertain the prevalence of green advertising in magazines South Africa, a key aspect in the overall research question. It assisted this study in providing insight on the extent of green advertisements that South African consumers are exposed to in magazine advertising. The results of this study indicate that 84 (7.1%) green advertisements appeared in 38 (57.6%) of the 66 magazine sample. The current research analysis was conducted on 1184 advertisements generated from this randomly selected magazine sample. It is important to note that a broad definition of green was used in this study, which included a healthy lifestyle. These advertisements were the greatest contributor to the green advertisement count. Using a different definition based only on not harming the environment would have meant an even small number of green advertisements. Nonetheless, 7.1% of the green advertisements in magazine advertising in South Africa indicates that the majority of organisations are not communicating a green message. Green advertising helps organisations communicate their green messages with the environmentally-conscious consumer (Leonidou et al. 2011, p. 6). This low percentage presents an opportunity for South African advertisers to increase their communication of a green message.

### **5.2.2 Research Objective Two: Determine the products, services or organisations using green advertising**

The second objective was to determine the contributors to green advertisements in magazines in South Africa. This objective helped this study in determining which industries and organisations are at the forefront of green advertising. Using a broad definition of 'green' affected the findings of this study. The results of this study show that five sectors are the main contributors to green advertisements in magazines in South Africa. The Adventure & Outdoor 14 (16.7%), Home & Gardening 7 (8.3%), NPO & NGO 6 (7.1%), Cosmetics & Beauty, and Energy each contributing 5 (6.0%) are contributing the most green advertisements. The remaining green advertisements were contributed by 33 sectors. Adventure & Outdoor's 16.7% is the highest contribution to the

green advertisements in magazine advertising in South Africa. This sector is the highest contributor because this study adopted a broad definition of green. The results of this research show, however, those green advertisements are spread across business sectors, with each contributing at least one green advertisement. Objective two determined the use of green advertisements in magazine advertising in South Africa contributed by the various products, services or organisations. Thus, providing a picture of green advertising by sector and product.

### **5.2.3 Research Objective Three: Determine the green appeals used in these magazines advertising**

Advertising appeals have been used in green advertisements to influence and encourage green consumer behaviour (Yang et al. 2015, p. 2663). Objective Three determined the green appeals used in green advertisements. The content analysis of the 84 green advertisements provides insight to address Objective Three. The findings of this study show that multiple green advertising appeals are used in magazine advertising that is communicating a green message in South Africa. This research shows that 65 (77.4%) of green advertisements used a rational/benefit appeal to communicate the green message in magazine advertising in South Africa. Also, the results of this research show that South African advertisers used individualistic 29 (34.5%) and imagery appeals 26 (31.0%). The seldom-used advertising appeals in this study includes collectivist (14.3%), hope (3.6%), and guilt (2.4%). This study indicates that the fear/threat and motherhood appeals are not used in green advertising in magazines in South Africa. South African advertisers may use one or a combination of multiple advertising appeals in green advertising to influence and raise consumer awareness (Wang et al. 2017, p. 32). The great use of rational/benefit appeals in this study could be because this appeal makes green product's useful attributes the advertisement focus and thus, help these products stand out from conventional competing products (Schmuck et al. 2018, p. 415).

#### **5.2.4. Research Objective Four: Determine the structure of the green message**

Objective Four aimed to determine the structure of the green messages found in magazine advertising in South Africa. This objective is important in understanding the nature of green advertising in magazines in South Africa. The message structure was assessed in terms of message framing, environmental claims, message explicitness and inclusion of eco-labels.

The research results show that an overwhelming number of green advertisements in magazine advertising in South African is positively framing the green message. This study shows that positive message framing is used in 83 (98.8%) of the 84 green advertisements. The greater use of positive message framing in magazine advertising in South Africa may be because positively framed messages have been found to be more likely to influence attitudes towards the green advertisement (Kim & Kim 2014, p. 69).

The results showed product-oriented claims 35 (41.7%) are the main environmental claims used in green advertisements in magazines in South Africa. The study results further show that the process-oriented claims (8.3%), and environmental facts (3.6%) are sparingly used to communicate the green message. This study indicates zero use of image-oriented environmental claims when communicating a green message. Eco-labels are also only used in 3.6% of green advertisements. Despite its low use in this study, eco-labels are the communication tool that helps provide credible information and enhances message transparency (Thøgersen 2010, p. 1787). Thus, the limited use of eco-labels in green advertising in magazines in South Africa may suggest that advertising organisations are missing an opportunity of reinforcing and communicating the green message.

The magazine advertising in South Africa reveals a closely even use of explicit and subtle green messages in green advertisements. This study shows that 43 (51.2%) of green advertisements explicitly communicate their green message as opposed to 41 (48.8%) that subtly communicate

their green message. The small margin in the difference between explicit and implicit green messages in magazine advertising in South Africa indicates that both communication techniques are perceived to be important when or for communicating with different consumers. According to Kronrod et al. (2012, p. 100), consumers' environmental concern affect the choice of message explicitness use in green advertisements. Kronrod (2012, p. 96) argue that green advertisements that explicitly communicate its green message support and effectively communicate the perceived issue urgency and expected behaviour to consumers with a high concern for the environment. However, implicit messages may be preferred when the green advertisement is targeting consumers with less concern for the environment (Kronrod et al. 2012, p. 100).

#### **5.2.5 Research Objective Five: Determine the green problems addressed in these advertisements**

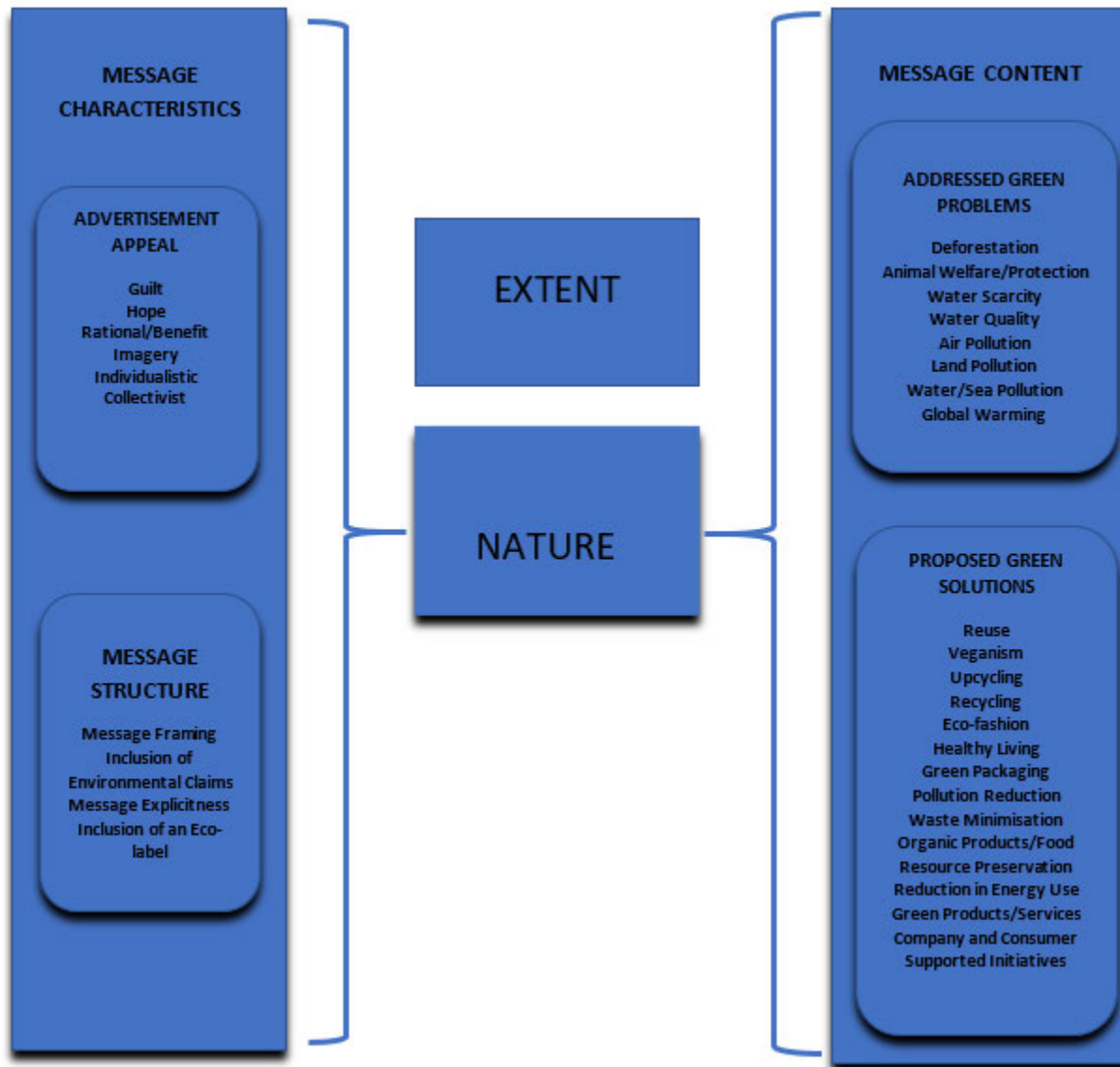
Objective Five was to determine the green problems addressed in green advertisements in magazines in South Africa. This objective is important in providing insight into which green problems are addressed in magazine advertising in South Africa. Also, it contributes to the overall research aim of determining the nature of green advertising in magazines in South Africa. The results of this study indicate that 34 (40.5%) of the green advertisements in magazine advertising in South Africa are addressing green problems. The green advertising in magazines in South Africa is addressing eight green problems, including water scarcity, air pollution, water quality, animal protection/welfare, land pollution, water/sea pollution, deforestation, and global warming. The top three addressed green problems in magazine advertising in South Africa were water scarcity (13.1%), air pollution (7.1%) and water quality five (6.0%). This finding may suggest that the advertising organisations in South Africa are moderately using green advertisements to alert consumers to or show how their organisations and products are addressing specific green problems. This knowledge assists in understanding the green problems that the advertising organisations considered important. The extent to which water scarcity and even to some extent, water quality is evidenced in the green advertisements is perhaps not surprising given the recent water shortages in the country and growing concern globally about decreasing supplies of quality

water to support the growing global population. (Rodina 2019, p. 1; Shah et al. 2018, p. 678). Also, say water scarcity and quality issues are something consumers in South Africa can relate to and thus including these problems in the advertisements is likely to attract attention at least but possibly also improve consumer attitudes and intentions to purchase.

### **5.2.6 Research Objective Six: Determine the green solutions proposed in these advertisements**

This objective also contributed to the understanding of the nature of green advertisements in magazine advertising in South Africa. Objective Six determined the green solutions proposed in green advertisements. The study findings indicate that multiple green solutions are proposed in green advertisements in magazines in South Africa. Results show that 16 green solutions are proposed in these advertisements, with healthy living (31.0%), pollution reduction (11.9%) and resource preservation (10.7%) being the most often proposed green solutions. The top three proposed green solutions in green advertisements in magazines advertising in South Africa may suggest that the advertising organisations consider these solutions important relative to the remaining thirteen green solutions. Overall, the use of green solutions is low in these advertisements, with 19.05% of 84 green advertisements that proposed a green solution. Thus, organisations are missing the opportunity of demonstrating how they are helping mitigate green problems or make consumers more aware of green solutions that are available (Tan et al. 2016, p. 288). This finding provides an opportunity for South African advertisers in the future to investigate green solutions that are popular with South African consumers. This finding presents an opportunity for South African advertisers to use green solutions in their future communication of a green message. The next section explores and presents recommendations for various stakeholders.

### 5.3. CONCLUSIONS IN RELATION TO THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



**Figure 5.1: Framework for the Extent and Nature of Green Advertising Found in magazines in South Africa**

Figure 5.1 depicts the message characteristics and message content elements found in magazine advertising in South Africa.

Past research indicated that green marketers use guilt, hope, fear/threat, rational/benefit, imagery, individualist, collectivist and motherhood appeals to strengthen the communication of a green message and used these to alter consumers' consumption patterns (Schmuck et al. 2018, p. 414). Contrarily, the results of this study found that only guilt, hope, rational/benefit, imagery, individualistic and collectivist appeals are used in green advertisements in magazine advertising in South Africa.

Tu et al. (2013, p. 1083) argued that message elements making up the message structure are key in developing a green message that can influence the targeted audience's attention and memory of the advertisement. The study findings support the important role of these elements as the results show that green advertisements in magazine advertising are in South Africa used message framing, environmental claims, message explicitness and the inclusion of eco-labels to communicate the green message in these advertisements.

According to Chen and Lee (2015, p. 195), communication about green problems contributed in raising consumers' awareness and resulted in more consumers that are willing to use their consumption behaviour to help mitigate these problems. Alniacik and Yilmaz (2012, p. 211) argue that consumers' environmental concern is a key factor that may influence the effective communication of a green message. The study results show that green advertisements in magazine advertising in South Africa are addressing many of the green problems in the literature including water quality, water scarcity, animal protection/welfare, air pollution, land pollution, water/sea pollution, deforestation and global warming.

Tan et al. (2016, p. 288) argue that green marketers proposing green solutions in green advertisements may trigger positive consumer respond and green behaviour helping address the negative effects of unsustainable consumption on the natural environment. The findings of this study show that green advertisements are proposing a multitude of green solutions as a way of communicating a green message in magazine advertising in South Africa. There is a multitude of

green solutions found in green marketing and advertising literature. However, it is interesting to note that green advertising in magazines in South Africa did not propose green solutions that include, green information technology, green retailing, green supply chain and de-consumption. The following section presents and discusses recommendations for this study.

## **5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS**

This section presents and explains the proposed recommendations for green marketers, policymakers and future research.

### **5.4.1 Recommendations for green marketers**

The study results suggest that only a few organisations advertising in magazines in South Africa are communicating green messages. Limited green communications may cause environmentally conscious consumers into assuming organisations are not doing enough to help mitigate green problems or the impact of these problems. Borin et al. (2011, p. 76) argue that organisations need to communicate and make consumers aware of how they are heeding consumers' calls for environmental consciousness. Thus, organisations in South Africa may be overlooking the importance of informing consumers of the changes they are implementing and could benefit from communicating these changes to consumers.

This study shows that rational/benefit appeals are the most commonly used appeals for communicating a green message in magazine advertising in South Africa. This may be explained by the finding that the rational/benefit appeal is known to help provide information to consumers that influences their purchase decisions (Jovanović et al. 2017, p. 39). The South African advertisers could use rational appeals in their future green messages because this appeal has been found to help highlight green product's benefits or features against the competing products (Schmuck et al. 2018, p. 415). The other green advertising appeals including collectivist (Muralidharan et al. 2017), individualistic (van Zyl et al. 2018) and imagery (Hartmann et al. 2013)

have been found to have positive effects to green consumption. The South African advertisers can use collectivist appeals because Xue (2015, p. 160) found that using of this appeal in green advertisements results in a significant positive effect on consumers attitude about the advertised product and advertisement. Individualistic appeals can also be used by the South African advertisers to communicate their green messages because van Zyl et al. (2018, p. 699) argued that using individualistic appeals could positively influence the ability to communicate a green message to individualistic cultures in South Africa. Also, South African advertisers can use the imagery appeal because Hartmann et al. (2013, p. 184) found this appeal to help restore consumers attention, resulting in positive psychophysiological responses towards the advertisement.

A further problem related to building trust amongst consumers is that extant research indicates inconsistent use of green terminology (Usrey 2017; Suki 2013; Harvey 2014; Tshuma et al. 2010). These terms include and not limited to organic, environmentally friendly, made from natural ingredients, plant-based that are all associate to and connote green. The inconsistent terminology use in green advertisements may have unintended consequences. It may cause consumer confusion as a result of not knowing what is green when these consumers see green advertisements. Thus, green advertisers could collaborate with the South African government in the drafting of legislation that details terms that may or not be used in a green advertisement. This collaboration could help put consumers in a better position of interpreting a green message free from any confusion.

Kim et al. (2012, p. 7) argue that environmental claims, including product-oriented claims, process-oriented claims, image-oriented environmental claims and environmental facts claims are communication strategies that may be used to strengthen the communication of a green message. This study shows that green advertisements in magazines in South Africa often use product-oriented claims to communicate a green message. Ruangttamanun (2014, p. 2992) argue that green advertisements using product-based claims make the product's greenness or characteristics meets environmental consciousness needs the message focus. Thus, the influence

or benefit of product-based claims presents an opportunity for advertisers in South Africa to use this claim to help communicate a green message. South African advertisers may consider differentiating their green communication by using other claims because there is an increase in green marketers targeting environmentally conscious consumers (Tu et al. 2013, p. 1085). Given the rise in greenwashing makes the environmental facts claim a possible solution for providing and building credibility (Atkinson & Kim 2014, p. 41; Segev et al. 2016, p. 85). Thus, the benefits of environmental facts claims present an opportunity for South African advertisers to use this claim when communicating a green message.

The results of the study on message explicitness indicate that almost half of the green advertisements contained implied green messages. These could potentially be missed or misinterpreted by consumers. As consumers in South Africa often claim that the reason for their lack of knowledge of green product alternatives (Mkhize & Ellis 2018, p. 124), it is important that green advertisers make their messages explicit to avoid being missed or misinterpreted.

Bickart and Ruth (2012, p. 51) argue that consumers are suspicious of green advertisements and thus building trust through green communication is important to encourage the consumption of green products and support for organisations committed to environmental sustainability. This is because message explicitness decision to whether to use explicit or implicit green messages in green advertising has an influence on consumers' trust (Yan et al. 2012, p. 153).

This study shows that only 3.6% of the green advertisements in magazines in South Africa are using eco-labels. Contrarily, eco-labels are known for assisting the communication of a green message because of information contributed by eco-labels favourable influences consumers trust and product perception (Rashid 2009, p. 133; Scott & Vigar-Ellis 2014, p. 647). Thus, South African advertisers have an opportunity of using eco-labels in their green advertisements. Using eco-labels in green advertisements may strengthen green message credibility.

The study results show that 34 (40.5%) of the green advertisements addressed at least one green problem. Thus, South African advertisers are moderately using green advertising to alert consumers to or show how they and/or their products are addressing specific green problems. This study shows that water scarcity is the most commonly communicated green problem, with a few other green problems also used in green advertising in magazines in South Africa. The water scarcity problem is considered a global problem affecting the lives of people across the world (Vörösmarty et al. 2015, p. 478; Chang 2012, p. 743). Thus, the water scarcity problem presents advertisers in South Africa with an opportunity to use this green problem as a tool of bringing attention to these problems as well as communicate how their products help mitigate this problem. Also, South African advertisers may use green advertisements to improve consumers' awareness of other green problems. This could help advertisers in South Africa communicate a differentiated green message in these advertisements.

In this study, only 16 (19.05 %) of green advertisements in magazines South Africa that are proposing one or more green solutions. Thus, there is weak/limited use of presenting green solutions in green advertisements as a way to alert consumers to or show what green solutions organisations and products are proposing towards mitigating green problems. South African advertisers have the opportunity to use a variety of green solutions to help communicate a green message. As an example, Li et al. (2014, p. 4) argue that green building is a green solution that contributes to reducing the pollution problem. Thus, green building is a pollution reduction green solution that South African advertisers could explore and use to influence consumers attitude towards green advertisements. The following subsection presents recommendations for policymakers.

#### **5.4.2 Recommendations for policymakers**

As the extent of green advertising in magazines in South Africa was found to be low, to encourage green advertising both in terms of the extent and the creative execution, across the various advertising media, the government could implement yearly initiatives (awards or ratings) that

would acknowledge the best green advertisements. The South African public could vote and nominate the best green advertisements. Such initiatives would reward excellent work and simultaneously enhance attention to and the development of green knowledge in South Africa.

South African consumers have low levels of green consumer knowledge (Mkhize & Ellis 2018, p. 115). Thus, policymakers may channel more resources towards sustainability research and thus, improve the quality and availability of research but also enhance green knowledge in South Africa. The availability of quality research could assist advertisers to structure their message more effectively to communicate with consumers about the green problems they address and the solutions they provide. The policymakers may consider the development of a repository of credible facts about green problems that advertisers could use in their advertisements to not only use credible environmental facts claims but also to build South African consumer knowledge about the problems and trust in the green messages.

Also, policymakers could consider making findings from past and new research available to South Africans in a simple and easy to understand manner. These could be available on government websites, Twitter and Instagram in simple and summarised versions of multiple research findings. Depending on green consumer knowledge, detailed research may be available as links in these platforms. Policymakers could help build South African green consumers knowledge. The following subsection presents recommendations for future research.

### **5.4.3 Recommendations for future research**

Zhang and Wildemuth (2016, p. 11) praised the contribution of content analysis research but also acknowledged its limitation as a research method. Zhang and Wildemuth (2016, p. 11) argue that when the study purpose is to identify patterns, frequencies, structure and types of advertising, content analysis is the best option, but this method is not suited for providing an understanding of the effects of advertisements on consumers behaviour. The purpose of the current study was

not to understand consumers' responses to green advertisements. As a result, this limitation does not impact the current study. However, the current study has provided a snapshot of the status quo of the extent and nature of green advertising in magazines in South Africa. It has identified various structural elements evident in the advertisements, which could then be used in research to determine the effects on consumers. Understanding how different consumers respond to the different structural elements in green advertisements can help marketers better communicate with their target markets.

The current study provided insight into the extent and nature of green advertising in magazines in South Africa. It helped understand what businesses are communicating to consumers about their commitment to sustainability in the magazine medium. Future research could investigate the effectiveness of green advertising in enhancing green knowledge development and ultimate green behaviours in South Africa. This research could help advertisers incorporate a better understanding of green knowledge needed to achieve green behaviour.

The introduction of new green products with less or no detriment on the environment makes the green market more competitive (Dubihlela & Ngxukumeshe 2016, p. 163). Thus, green advertising is important in notifying and promoting green products to environmentally conscious consumers (Mkhize & Ellis 2018, p. 123). The current study provides insight that is limited to green advertisements in magazines in South Africa. Future research may consider extending this investigation of green communications to websites, social media and television advertisements. This prospective research could provide a complete assessment of the status quo of green advertising in South Africa.

This study shows that green advertisements in South Africa use multiple advertising appeals when communicating a green message. Wang et al. (2017, p. 32) argue that green appeals help advertisers influence and raise consumers environmental awareness. However, no study has researched the effectiveness of using green appeals when communicating a green message in

South Africa despite these being used. Thus, future research could investigate which green appeals effectively communicate the green message in South Africa. This future research could help provide insight to South African advertisers on how to design messages that would effectively communicate green messages.

The green message consists of multiple message structural elements that help communicate information which shows how the products or organisation is green in the green advertisements (Chen & Lee 2015, p. 197). The results of this study show that multiple message structural elements are used in green advertisements. The message framing, environmental claims, message explicitness and eco-labels are message structural elements used in this study to communicate a green message. Future research could investigate how advertisers determine their processes and decision making in designing green messages. This future research could investigate the extent to which South African advertisers consciously use the different message structural elements, their knowledge and perceptions of the effectiveness and even their own beliefs about the role their communication could play in changing consumer behaviours to be more green.

Message framing is one strategy that helps advertisers motivate or discourage behaviour by presenting prospective future outcomes (Gerend & Sias 2009, p. 999). The study results show that the green message in magazine advertising in South Africa consisted more of positively framed messages. However, the influence of positive message framing on South African consumers, specifically, is not known. Thus, future research may investigate the influence of positively framing the green message in magazine advertising in South Africa. The knowledge gained from this future study could help green advertisers in using a message framing that effectively communicates a green message.

Using product-oriented environmental claims could help convince consumers to buy green products because using this environmental claim focuses on showcasing products characteristics

making the product green (Ruanguttamanun 2014, p. 2992). In this study, more green advertisements use product-based environmental claims than any other claims when communicating a green message. Future research may consider investigating whether product-based environmental claims are the best strategy for specific markets. Knowledge gained from this research could provide insight into how advertisers may communicate their green messages to the South African consumers.

The rise in greenwashing makes the environmental facts claim a prospective solution that may help build credibility in green advertisements (Segev et al. 2016, p. 85). Thus, South African advertisers may investigate the effectiveness of environmental facts claims in building credibility and communicating a green message. This prospective research could provide insight into how advertisers could design messages that effectively communicate green messages in South Africa.

In this study, green advertisements used message explicitness for communicating a green message. Yan et al. (2012, p. 153) argue that message explicitness use in the green advertisement can be influenced by the level of existing or lack of consumers concern for the environment. South African consumers include a large number of consumers with low concern for the environment (Mkhize & Ellis 2020, p. 5). Thus, future research could investigate whether subtle message communication effectively communicates a green message for consumers with moderate low concern for the environment as proposed by Kronrod et al. (2012, p. 100).

The inclusion of eco-labels help provides transparency and credibility in the green message (Thøgersen et al. 2010, p. 1787). The results of this study show that eco-label use is low in magazine advertising in South Africa. Future research may investigate South African advertisers' knowledge of, and perceptions about, eco-labels. This future research could provide insight into what South African advertisers know about eco-labels, when to use them, and how to use these labels in green advertisements. The knowledge gained from the prospective study could help South African advertisers' better use of eco-labels when communicating a green message.

The water scarcity problem is considered a global problem affecting the lives of people across the world (Vörösmarty et al. 2015, p. 478). In this study, water scarcity is the most addressed green problem, with a few other green problems also addressed in green advertising in magazines in South Africa. South African advertisers may consider investigating the influence of addressing green problems in green advertisements. Thus, future research could investigate the influence of addressing green problems in changing South African consumer behaviour. Also, future research may investigate which green problems South African consumers consider important and which should, therefore, be addressed in green advertisements. The knowledge from such studies could help provide insight into the influence of using green problems to communicate a green message and which problems are likely to resonate with South African consumers in green advertisements.

The results of this study show that advertisers in magazines in South Africa are proposing multiple green solutions in their green messages. Yet, no research could be found that has investigated the effectiveness of proposing green solutions in green advertisements. Thus, future research may investigate the effect of using green solutions when communicating a green message. Also, future research could investigate which green solutions the South African consumers consider important in green advertisements. The knowledge from this research could help guide the message design that could influence green consumer knowledge and attitudes towards green advertisements in South Africa.

The results of this study show that company and consumer-supported initiatives are used when communicating a green message in magazine advertising in South Africa. Thus, a future study could investigate the effectiveness of using Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Corporate Social Initiatives (CSI) to communicate a green message in South Africa. Knowledge from this future research could help provide insight into whether company actions such as CSR and CSI could help advertisers in South Africa to effectively communicate the green message and influence green behaviours.

There is a scope for research into consumer responses to each of the solutions proposed in the literature in terms of identifying what the important components of the message should be, i.e. from a content perspective as well as what appeals would work best with the particular solution being proposed. As an example, this research shows that veganism as a green solution in green advertising in magazines in South Africa is lowly used. Contrarily, Fan et al. (2019, p. 468) argue that American vegans have surpassed 100% growth from one per cent in the year 2014 to six in the year 2017. With the current research finding indicating a portion of green advertisements targeting vegans, a future study may consider investigating the effectiveness of veganism in triggering associated green behaviour. The insight gained from this future research could indicate whether vegans are more likely to engage in other green behaviours. Thus, this insight could help inform green message design and promote green behaviour in South Africa. The following subsection presents and discusses the study limitations.

## **5.5 LIMITATIONS**

The current study has its limitations that could be addressed in future research. This section presents these limitations.

This study followed a qualitative research approach. As with most qualitative research, subjectivity could influence the interpretation of advertisements, thus impacting on the overall research. Subjectivity is noted as one of the challenges in research (Ratner 2002, p. 1). This study used the advertising literature as the basis of informing criteria applied to qualify and analyse the green advertisements in the study. This advertising literature informed the content analysis protocol in an attempt to address this limitation by clearly defining the descriptive codes used to deductively analyse each advertisement. As the dissertation is an individual exercise, having multiple coders who would address this risk, was not possible. However, discussion of advertisements that were not straightforward to descriptively code caused the researcher's supervisor to assist in reducing the extent of subjectivity. However, there is still the chance that

other researchers may have interpreted the existence of the criteria in the advertisements differently. For similar future research having multiple, independent coders is recommended.

This study was also limited to advertisements from magazines in South Africa. There are numerous communications platforms available to organisations today. Thus, green advertisements could communicate a green message using another platform and not magazines. This may result in wrong conclusions being made about organisations' lack of communicating a green message, which may not be a true reflection. Thus, the study findings cannot be generalised to be representing the overall extent and nature of green advertising in South Africa. The current study finding generalisability is limited to magazine advertising in South Africa. As mentioned above, future research could extend the study to other media.

This study presents a snapshot of green advertising in a randomly drawn sample of magazines at a particular time in South Africa. It is possible that a different sample or a different time of the year may have presented a different picture. Future research could address these limitations.

Finally, this study presents the status quo in terms of the extent and nature of green advertising in magazines in South Africa. However, it does not investigate either the advertiser perceptions or consumer responses to the different green advertisements. This can also be explored in future research. The next subsection presents an overall research summary.

## **5.6 OVERALL STUDY SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

This study consists of five chapters. The first chapter laid the foundation for the study in terms of what was to come and how it will be achieved. The second chapter reviews the literature underlying the advertising literature, and the related research applied to green advertising specifically. Through this review of literature, the underpinning conceptual framework for this study is developed. The third chapter assists this study to provide transparency on how the study

was conducted and provides justifications for the decisions made about the research methods used. Chapter Four then presents and discusses the results of this study, providing insight on the extent and nature of green advertising in magazines in South Africa in relation to previous research. The last chapter concludes on each of the six research objectives, presents and discusses recommendations for green advertisers, policymakers and future research. After the recommendations, this chapter acknowledges the limitations of this research.

This study has shown that only a small portion of advertisers are communicating their green messages in magazine advertising in South Africa. Based on this knowledge, this platform is lacking in the proliferation of green advertisements. The South African consumers' lack of green behaviour may be attributed to the limited communication of green messages in magazine advertising in South Africa. Given that only a few organisations are communicating their green messages, South African consumers have less chance of knowing what businesses are doing to mitigate green problems. As a result, this creates impairment in green consumer knowledge that is often cited as a reason for lack of green behaviour (Biswas & Roy 2015, p. 468; Cherian & Jacob 2012, p. 123; Mkhize & Ellis 2020, p. 5). This research makes three important contributions. Firstly, it showed that only a small fraction of advertisers are communicating their green messages in magazine advertising in South Africa. This insight helps advertisers in South Africa realise how their lack of green communications may contribute to the lack of green consumer behaviour in South Africa. Secondly, this study provides insights on how consumers and marketing academics may appraise green communications that green advertisers use to influence green behaviour. This research has broken down the message structural elements, advertising appeals, green problems and solutions that green advertisers use when designing a green message in magazine advertising in South Africa. These may be used in future analyses of green advertisements. Lastly, this research has provided insights into the nature of green advertising in magazines in South Africa. It has shown how green advertisers can use message design elements to build and strengthen green consumer knowledge in South Africa. In this study, multiple message design elements are shown, and their potential contributions discussed. This provides ways green advertisers could design their messages to reinforce the green message.

Increasing green communications may strengthen South African green consumer knowledge and thus, provide the intervention that South African consumers need to engage in green behaviour.

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# APPENDICES

## Appendix A: Ethical Clearance Approval Letter



08 November 2018

Mr Sibusiso David Ndlovu (212505626)  
School of Management, IT & Governance  
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Dear Mr Ndlovu,

**Protocol reference number: HSS/2015/018M**

**Project title:** The extent and nature of green advertising in magazines in South Africa: A content analysis

**Full Approval – No Risk / Exempt Application**

In response to your application received on 02 November 2018, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully



.....  
Professor Shenuka Singh (Chair)

## Appendix B: List of Magazines in South Africa

AA Traveller	Elle Decoration	Hype
Africa Geographic	Elle Magazine	Hello Cape Town
Africa South	Engineering News	Hello Joburg
African Expedition Magazine	Entrepreneur Magazine	Ideas/Ideels
African Pilot	Essentials	Intiem
Amakhosi	FA News	Institutional Strategy Insights
Amandla	Fair Lady	InStyle
Animaltalk	Fame Africa TV	IWeek
Architect & Specificator	Farmer's Weekly	Jewish Life
Auto Trader	Farmlink	JOY Magazine
Baba & Kleuter	Femina	JSE
Bicycling	FHM	Kagenna Magazine
Bike SA Magazine	Financial Mail	Kick Off
Black Business Quarterly	Finesse	Kuier
Bona	Finweek	Landbouweekblad
Brainstorm	Food & Home Entertaining	Leadership
Brand	Forbes Africa	Lééf Met Hart & Siel (Live With Heart & Soul)
Business Brief	Fresh Living (Pick 'n Pay)	Luisure wheels
Bulk Handling Today	Fund Invetor Insight	LiG
CAR	G Tribe	Lightstand
Caravan & Outdoor Life	The Gardener Magazine	Live Mag SA
CEO	Gateway	LIVEOUTLOUD Magazine
Cirque Magazine	GINJA Food & Lifestyle Magazine	Living & Loving
CLASSICFEEL	Girlz Magazine	Longevity
Compleat Golfer	Glamour	LoslyfLoslyf
The Complete Fly Fisher	Goeie Huishouding	Mahala
House & Gurden (South Africa)	Golf Digest	Mamas & Papas
Corporate Finance Africa Magazine	Good Housekeeping	Manwees
Cosmopolitan	Good Taste	Marie Claire
CSA (Cricket SA)	GQ SA	Marketing Mix
SA Cricket	Grace	Maxim
Debate Journal	Grace	Men's Health
Dekat	Grazia SA	Mense
Destiny	Habitat	Mining Weekly
Destiny Man	Heat	Modern Athlete
Digital Life	Home	Modern Cyclist
Dive style	House & Leisure	Most Influential Women in Business and Government

<b>DO IT NOW Magazine</b>	HQ (House Quarterly)	Move!
<b>Drive Out</b>	Huisgenoot	Mshana
<b>Drum</b>	Hustler (S.A. edition)	Metros Magazine, South Africa
<b>Pageant Magazine SA</b>	SA Country Life	Mum's Mail
<b>PCFormat</b>	SA Flyer	My Loopbaan
<b>People</b>	SA Garden & Home	National Geographic
<b>Personal Finance</b>	SA Golf Trader	Newsweek
<b>PM Africa Magazine</b>	SA Home Owner	Naked Motoring
<b>Popular Mechanics</b>	SA Hunter/Jagter	O, The Oprah Magazine
<b>Prestige Bulletin</b>	SA India	Odyssey Magazine
<b>Radio ZS</b>	SA Rugby Magazine	ON POINT Magazine
<b>Reader's Digest SA</b>	Safe Travel Magazine	On TheBlock
<b>Real</b>	Saltwater Girl	Old Africa Magazine
<b>Reality by Sanlam</b>	SA Mechanical Engineer	Something Wicked
<b>Ride</b>	Sandton	Soul
<b>Rooi Rose</b>	Sarie	Speed & Sound
<b>Runner's World</b>	Sarie Kos	StockFarm
<b>SA 4x4</b>	Savage Magazine	Student Mag
<b>SA Career Focus</b>	Seventeen	Stuff
<b>SA Cricket</b>	SL Magazine	Style
<b>Stywe Lyne (Time Lines)</b>	The Township Trade Journal	Woema
<b>Submerge Magazine</b>	Travel Ideas	Woman & Home
<b>Succeed Magazine</b>	True Love	Women's Health
<b>Taste Magazine (Woolworths)</b>	Die Tuinier Tydskrif	Wrapped
<b>Tectonic Magazine</b>	Tuis	YOU
<b>Teen Zone</b>	Veeplaas	Your Baby
<b>Time</b>	Vrouekeur	Your Business
<b>Titans Building Nations</b>	Weg! / Go!	Your Family
<b>Top Billing</b>	WegRy	Your Pregnancy
<b>Top Car</b>	WegSleep	Zigzag Surf Magazine
<b>Top Gear</b>	Wesley Guild Magazine	
<b>Tourism Tattler Trade Journal</b>	Wild	

(Magazines.co.za 2018; Manson 2018)

## Appendix C: Magazine Sample

<b>Magazine Name</b>	<b>Issue/Date</b>	<b>Magazine Genre</b>
Men's Fitness	Jan-Feb 2019	Men's Fitness/Health
South African Country Life	Feb-19	Country Life
GQ South Africa	Feb-19	Men's Lifestyle
FINWEEK	Jan-Feb 2019	Investment & Finance
HOME	Feb-19	Home Interior Décor
Bicycling	Feb-19	Bicycling
Fitness	Feb-19	Fitness
Men's Health	Feb-19	Men's Health
Go!	Feb-19	Adventure & Outdoor
JOY	Feb-19	Faith
SA Cricket	Feb-19	Sports
Women's Health	Jan-Feb 2019	Women's Health
Muscle & Fitness Hers	Jan-Feb 2019	Women's Health
Woman & Home	Feb-19	Fashion & Beauty
CAR	Feb-19	Car/Motoring
GO! Platteland	Summer 2018/2019	Rural Lifestyle & Entrepreneurship
Kruger Magazine	Summer 2018/2019	Wildlife
The Economist	Jan-Feb 2019	News
Living & Loving	Feb-19	Pregnancy & Motherhood
Fairlady	Feb-19	Female Reads
Your Family	Feb-19	Family and Home
People	Feb-19	Celebrity news
SA 4X4	Feb-19	Overland Adventure
LOSE IT!	Jan-19	Healthy Eating
The Vegan Life	Jan-Feb 2019	Vegan Lifestyle
Financial Mail	Feb-March 2019	Business
Wild	Summer 2018/2019	Wildlife
Amandla	Dec-18	News
Drum	Feb-19	Family
Move	Feb-19	Family
Habitat	Jan-Feb 2019	Architecture/Interior Design
The Gardener	Feb-March 2019	Gardening and Landscaping
Cosmopolitan	Jan-19	Fashion
Farmer's Weekly	Feb-19	Farming
Entrepreneur	Jan-19	Entrepreneurship
Essentials	Jan-19	Lifestyle
Objekt South Africa	Jan-19	High-end Lifestyle
Travel Africa	Jan-March 2019	Travel

<b>Super Bike South Africa</b>	Jan-19	Motor Bikes
<b>Longevity</b>	Feb-March 2019	Health, Beauty and Wellbeing
<b>Woolworths TASTE</b>	Jan-Feb 2019	Lifestyle
<b>Trail South Africa</b>	Jan/Feb/March 2019	Athletics
<b>Conde Nast House &amp; Garden</b>	Feb-19	Décor & Gardening
<b>Runner's World</b>	Feb-19	Athletics
<b>Travel Ideas</b>	Dec 2018-Jan 2019	Travel
<b>Forbes Africa</b>	Feb-19	Business
<b>African Pilot</b>	Jan-19	Aviation
<b>nOmad Africa</b>	Nov/Dec/Jan 2019	Business/Lifestyle/Tourism
<b>Caravan &amp; Outdoor Life</b>	Feb-19	Adventure/Outdoor/Lifestyle
<b>Stuff</b>	Jan-Feb 2019	Technology/Gadgets
<b>Garden &amp; Home</b>	Feb-19	Décor & Gardening
<b>Popular Mechanics</b>	Jan-Feb 2019	Science & Technology
<b>African Review</b>	Feb-19	Business & Technology
<b>Leisure Wheels</b>	Feb-19	Adventure Motoring
<b>Ideas</b>	Jan-Feb 2019	Lifestyle/Modern Living
<b>House and Leisure</b>	Feb-19	Lifestyle
<b>GO! Drive &amp; Camp</b>	Feb-19	Adventure & Outdoor
<b>You</b>	Feb-19	Family
<b>BBC Top Gear</b>	Feb-19	Car/Motoring
<b>FHM</b>	Jan-19	Men's Lifestyle
<b>Glamour South Africa</b>	Feb-19	Women's Lifestyle
<b>True Love</b>	Feb-19	Fashion/Beauty/Lifestyle
<b>Naked Motoring</b>	Feb-19	Motoring
<b>Forbes Woman Africa</b>	Dec 2018 - Feb 2019	Business
<b>Getaway</b>	Feb-19	Travel and Outdoor Lifestyle
<b>Good Housekeeping</b>	Jan-Feb 2019	Lifestyle

## Appendix D: Adventure Lifestyle Show Advertisement in Home Magazine



**Adventure Lifestyle Show**

**5 - 7 APRIL 2019**  
Meerendal Wine Estate | Durbanville | Cape Town

**MAKE ADVENTURE YOUR LIFESTYLE**

Adventure Lifestyle Show is an interactive event bringing like-minded outdoor, travel, adventure and sport enthusiasts together, with a big focus on a healthy, active and environmentally friendly lifestyle for the whole family.

Feel, touch and experience adventure for three days.

- Adventure destinations and sports
- Outdoor gear and gadgets
- Vehicles, 4x4 and off-road accessories

Contact us for more information: [SALES@ADVENTURELIFESTYLESHOW.CO.ZA](mailto:SALES@ADVENTURELIFESTYLESHOW.CO.ZA)

**[WWW.ADVENTURELIFESTYLESHOW.CO.ZA](http://WWW.ADVENTURELIFESTYLESHOW.CO.ZA)**

## Appendix E: Adventure Lifestyle Show Advertisement in Women's Health Magazine



**Adventure Lifestyle Show**

**5 - 7 APRIL 2019**  
Meerendal Wine Estate | Durbanville | Cape Town

Adventure Lifestyle Show is an interactive event bringing like-minded outdoor, travel, adventure and sport enthusiasts together, with a big focus on a healthy, active and environmentally friendly lifestyle for the whole family.

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[WWW.ADVENTURELIFESTYLESHOW.CO.ZA](http://WWW.ADVENTURELIFESTYLESHOW.CO.ZA)

**Appendix F: BP Advertisement Using Process Environmental Claim**



That keeps the lights shining bright.

We see possibilities everywhere.

From renewable energy and cleaner-burning natural gas to advanced fuels and new low carbon businesses, BP is working to make energy cleaner and better.

keep advancing

bp

Natural gas burns 50% cleaner than coal in power generation.

Appendix G: Betadine Advertisement Using Process Environmental Claim



**Yourselves,**  
*naturally*

**New**

**BETADINE**  
PREBIOTICS

**Daily** CARE  
FRESHNESS  
CONFIDENCE

**For all the woman you are.**  
Introducing the Betadine™ Intimate Care range, a unique Tri-Care+™ formulation combined with prebiotics bringing balance and care that matters.

- Natural ingredients
- Hypoallergenic
- Gynaecologically tested
- No parabens or colourants

**BETADINE™**  
INTIMATE CARE

**myoPharma**

betadine.co.za

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© 2015 MyoPharma (Pty) Ltd. All rights reserved.

Appendix H: Biogen Advertisement Using Process Environmental Claim

**BIOGEN**  
FOR THE RESULTS YOU WANT

SINCE 2004

BEETROOT & PUMPKIN  
NO ADDED SUGAR

**BIOGEN**  
FOR THE RESULTS YOU WANT

**ENERGY GEL**  
MADE WITH REAL VEGETABLES  
INSTANT ENERGY

36g

**BIOGEN ENERGY GEL**  
**MORE NATURAL ENERGY**  
**WHEN YOU NEED IT MOST**  
// Made with Real Vegetables.

**A Veggie gel with RedNite®!**

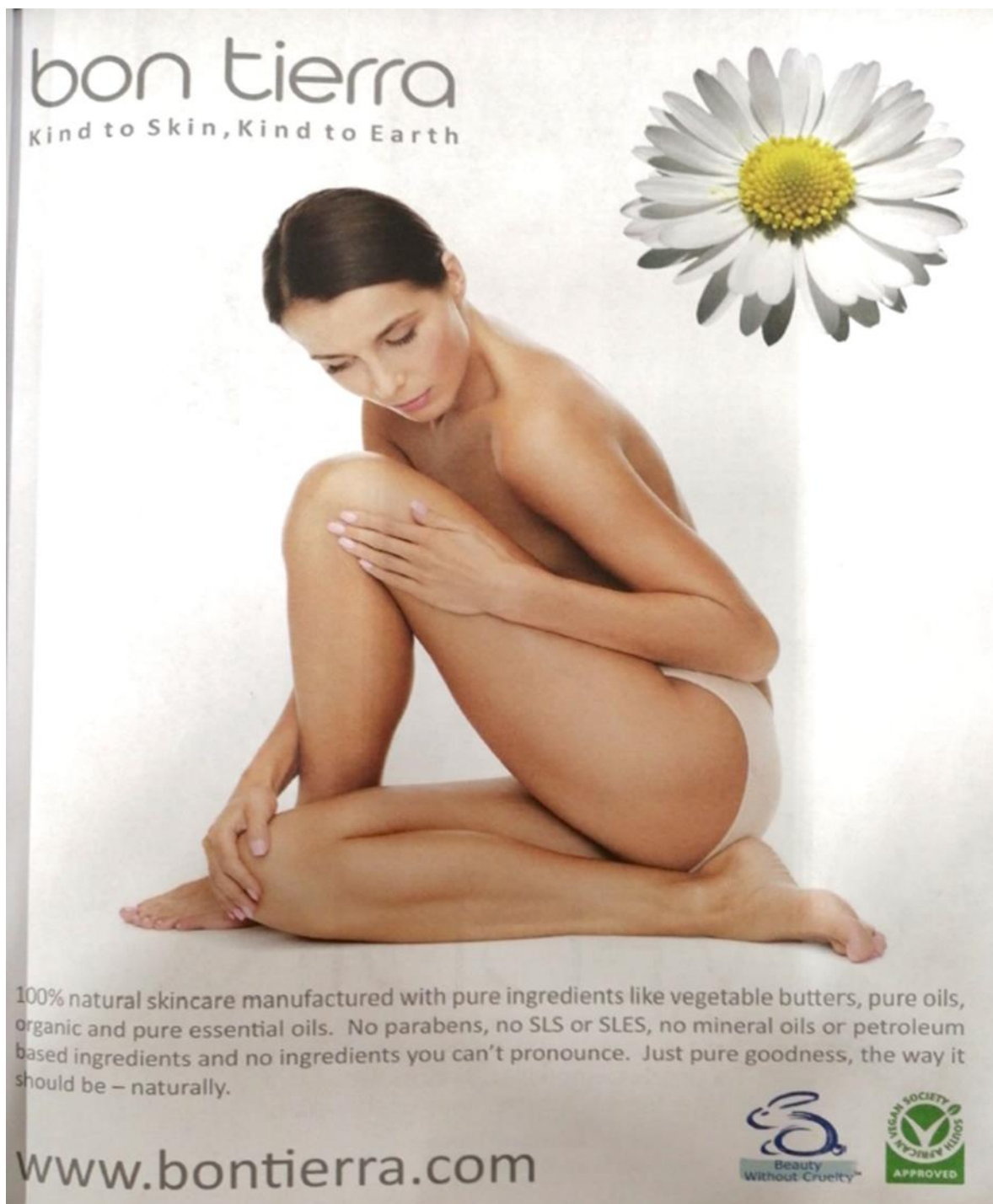
Biogen is proud to bring you our first Vegetable Energy Gel with RedNite®, a registered trademark vegetable with clinical data to prove nitrogen benefits in human studies, with a lower sodium. RedNite® is the world's first proven low-sodium standardized vegetable. Research has proven to be a more stable source of dietary nitrate compared to other vegetables and this more natural solution is designed to support replenishment of glycogen and reduce exercise-related cramps in a healthier way!

BiogenSA

Exclusively available at

...best with right attitude

Appendix I: BonTierra Advertisement Positively Framed Message



bon tierra  
Kind to Skin, Kind to Earth

100% natural skincare manufactured with pure ingredients like vegetable butters, pure oils, organic and pure essential oils. No parabens, no SLS or SLES, no mineral oils or petroleum based ingredients and no ingredients you can't pronounce. Just pure goodness, the way it should be – naturally.

[www.bontierra.com](http://www.bontierra.com)

Beauty Without Cruelty™

VEGAN SOCIETY OF SOUTH AFRICA APPROVED

## Appendix J: Deductive Content Analysis Template

The deductive content analysis template is large and may not be displayed in this appendix as it is in Excel. However, the content of this template shows the columns that were informed by the green advertising literature as well as the inclusion criteria discussed in the defining green advertisement section. Thus, these columns reflect themes and subthemes used to capture, record, descriptively code and categorise the advertisement data.

Ad Identifier								
Sample Number	Ad Sample Number	Magazine Name	Issue	Total Number of Ads	Magazine Genre			
<b>Advertising Company</b>								
Page	Ad Genre	Company Name	Industry/sector					
<b>Appeal Type</b>								
Ad size	Threat/Fear	Imagery	Rational/Benefit	Guilt	Individualistic	Collectivistic	Hope	Motherhood
<b>Appeal Type</b>								
Tick: indicate use of appeal type in the advertisement			The representation of mothers in green advertisements. Identifying of mother in					
<b>Message Framing</b>								
Positive	Negative	Framing is the manner in which the information is represented such that it causes different interpretations in the						
<b>Environmental Claims</b>								
Code 1: Indicate use of used message framing type in the advertisement			Product Oriented	Process Oriented	Image Oriented			
<b>Environmental Claims</b>								
Image Oriented	Environmental Facts	Code 1: Indicate use of an environmental claim in the advertisement		Environmental claims refers to ho				
<b>Message Explicitness</b>								
The explicitness in green advertisements refers to how direct or indire			Explicit	Subtle	Code 1: Indicate used message explicit technique			

<b>Inclusion of Eco-label</b>	Code 1: Indicate inclusion of eco-label	Water Quality	Water Scarcity	Animal Protection/welfare	

<b>Green Problems</b>					
Air Pollution	Land Pollution	Water/Sea Pollution	Deforestation	Declining Oil Reserves	Global Warming

<b>Green Solutions</b>						
Recycling	Waste Minimisation	Green Packaging	Organic Food	Reduction in Energy Use	Green Products/services	Pollution Reduction

Resource Conservation	Planet Preservation	Healthy Living	Deconsumption	Green Supply Chain	Green Information Technology	

Green Retailing	Eco-labels	Re-using	Company-supported initiatives	Consumer-supported initiatives	Veganism	Upcycling

	<b>COMMENT</b>					
Eco-fashion						