



**ASSESSING BRAND GROWTH OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN
STUDENTS CONGRESS MEMBERSHIP AT THE UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL**

By

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DECLARATION

I Sithembiso Mbambo declare that:

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Signed: S. Mbambo

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Firstly, I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my mother, Thenjiswa Margret Mbambo. If children had to choose their parents, I would choose you to infinity. You are a pillar of strength, a rose that was able to grow out of concrete ground. Your name shall be immortal amongst the stars and in the annals of history. Ndithi kuwe Bayede Ndlovukazi

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Bayethe!

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study investigated the influence of branding on the South African Student Congress' (SASCO's) growth in membership at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), Westville Campus. Branding is an important topic and it is evident that the benefits of branding have been discovered by various organisations in the last few decades. Branding impacts on both product and service sectors. SASCO is one of the four main clubs at UKZN. SASCO pursues the agenda of providing free education to students and it is thus one of the leading and most popular clubs at UKZN.

In dealing with the topic under investigation, it is significant to note that branding has allowed organisations to gain profits and membership, and the concept is applicable to both the product and service industries. This study investigated how branding influences the membership growth of one the main clubs at UKZN, namely SASCO. There are often issues related to club growth and, so it became a significant matter to investigate how a club of this calibre experiences the influence of branding as they sustain and increase their growth in membership.

This study employed a qualitative research design and the sample consisted of twenty members of SASCO. Ten of the participants were officials of the club and the other ten were members of SASCO. In-depth interviews were conducted with the participants in the study. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data collected in the interviews and this analysis yielded a number of noteworthy findings. It was discovered that SASCO uses branding in growing the club's membership but that there are also challenges faced that likely delay progress in terms of the club's growth. Among the recommendations advanced in this study is the need for SASCO to survey the growth strategies of other university clubs, as well as to continue with existing strategies to attract prospective members through branding, with the view to sustain the achievements of their previous growth. The literature reviewed in this study is likely to aid in expanding the understanding of the issue of branding for those who want to grow the membership of clubs. The theoretical concepts employed in the study may also be valuable in furthering an understanding in future studies of how to increase and sustain a club's membership.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Branding is a topic that has received a great deal of attention as it has crucial effects on the services and products offered by organisations. Keller (2013) highlights the fact that brands have led consumers to assign great responsibility to manufacturers in terms of their product development and quality deliverables. The decision of whether to belong to a particular association or to refrain from joining can be dependent on the known brand of that particular organisation. Therefore, this study seeks to understand how branding influences the growth in membership for the South African Students Congress (SASCO), at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), Westville Campus.

The South African Student Congress which also known as (SASCO), is a student organization that pursues the interests and wellbeing of students at every tertiary institution in South Africa (SASCO 2017). One of the main task that the organization does is ensuring that all tertiary institutions create a conducive learning environment for the entire student community. Nevertheless, a brief background of the organization is intimately outlined in chapter two of this study.

Depending on the brand, assumptions can be made regarding the manufacturer and, as such, there can be direct interaction with manufacturer (Keller 2013). It can be argued that the decision to follow a certain product or service is based on the way in which the brand has been marketed. There is thus a possibility that brand influence is involved in a person's decision to join a club or be affiliated with an organisation. For this reason, this study investigates how branding influences growth in membership for SASCO. This type of study has not previously been conducted within SASCO and the study can therefore be deemed to be explorative. The first chapter of the study will provide an overview of brand influence, as well as a brief background to the topic to be dealt with in the thesis. Thereafter, the problem statement, objectives and research questions addressed in the study are presented. Finally, the significance of the study is discussed, and the chapter concludes by outlining the structure of the chapters that follow in the thesis.

1.2 Brand Influence

Clubs have often been classified under the extracurricular activities of institutions. Therefore, in assessing the influence of branding in clubs such as SASCO it is important to understand the value associated with extracurricular activities. Extracurricular activities have been shown to have several benefits to students who happen to belong to such clubs, specifically in terms of student development. A positive link has been identified between student development and participation in extracurricular activities (Chen & Lu 2009; Kort-Butler & Hagwen 2011). That is to say, students benefit in terms of their overall development through their involvement in extracurricular activities.

The above findings are augmented by Ream and Rumberger (2008) who concluded in a longitudinal study conducted in the United States of America that there was a reduction of school dropout rates in relation to students' participation in extra-curricular activities. Leadership skills and social activism are also developed as a result of involvement in extra-curricular activities (Darling & Terenzini 2005). However, other studies have indicated that there may be negative effects of extracurricular activities, which include these activities being less influential than otherwise presumed (Mcree 2009; Pascarella & Terenzini 2005).

Despite the somewhat negative findings of the studies listed above, many studies have indicated that there is a relationship between employability and extracurricular activities. Employers have been known to link non-market activities with the benefits of employees' involvement in these to the workplace (Harvey, Lock & Morey 2002; Rynes, Lawson & Alies 2003; Vermeulen & Schmidt 2008). There is a need for further understanding of the findings of the studies identified above and for this reason Acosta and Hsu (2014) have suggested that extracurricular activities and skills development have not been given due consideration and have not been subject to thorough investigation.

The leadership role in the art of attracting and sustaining new members is also significant. It is important to note that leaders have the role of managing the logistics of the club as well as attracting new members. It is in terms of attracting new members that branding plays an important role in trade circles. Communication and information technologies are some of the tools used in order to increase and develop club members (Activity 2017). The use of Facebook, social media and emails in the endeavour of growing a club is often significant, especially in current times, and alongside it comes the need to develop the branding required. This study

thus investigates how branding has influenced the membership of SASCO at UKZN, Westville Campus.

The branding of products, sometimes going back many years or decades, has been used to differentiate the goods manufacture by various producers. Branding, according to the American Marketing Association, can be recognised in symbols, signs, names or designs, or at times a combination of these elements may be used to distinguish a product from those offered by competitors (Keller 2013). It must be understood that brands are normally built and established over the long run; an extended period of time may be required for a brand to become well-established.

Brands cannot therefore be reduced to merely a product, a symbol, or a graphic design (Kapferer 2012). A brand serves as a signature of a process that is constantly renewed and creative, and which may yield various products. Whereas products disappear, brands are known for their endurance. Batey (2015) proposes that it is the creative action and consistency which gives a brand its character, content and meaning. The creation of a brand requires identity and time and it has been established that a brand's power is derived from name recognition and goodwill over a long period of time. This then tends to translate into higher volume sales as well as profits in comparison to the competitors. The subjective and intangible assessment of the customer of the brand is referred to as brand equity (Leone 2006).

Corporate brands represent a fascinating phenomenon in the 21st century as they have been venerated, adored and liked by both organisations as well as customers (Balmer 2001; Balmer & Greyser 2003). The irrefutability of brands and their importance has been noted as central to society (Sherry 1995).

It is during the last ten years that corporations have realised the impact of an effective brand and efforts have now been directed at the inside decisions being created synergistically and at representing messages that are clear (Mitchell 1997). Corporate branding has been known to draw on the branding product traditions, especially in sharing a similar objective dealing with the creation of preference and differentiation. Nonetheless, managers have rendered this activity as more complex in the process of conducting these practises at an organisational level, instead of conducting them at an individual, product level or service level, and at the same time interacting with a multiplicity of stakeholders.

Research has also highlighted the differences between product brand and corporate brand (King 1991). Audiences often go beyond the primary focus on the customers but also include other stakeholders. It should be noted that there is a diversity in terms of the fact that there is a complexity in stakeholder audiences' discriminators. This extends further than merely products and services and ultimately includes intangibles, which are policies and people.

Brand associations are entities that have a link to a brand (Aaker 1991). Associations are used to reflect lifestyles that are expressed by products, yet at the same time associations also reflect professional roles and social positions. In other cases, associations reflect the type of people using the product, the product applications, stores bearing the product, salespeople handling the product, or the country of origin (Aaker 1991). Keller (1998) considers associations to be informational nodes that are linked to memory brand node containing the meaning of the brand for consumers.

The associations include the perceptions of brand quality, and the customer's attitudes towards the brand. The two authors, Keller and Aaker, have hypothesised the multidimensional perceptions of the consumer towards the brand and have found that there is similarity in the identities they highlight. It is the image rather than the characteristics of a service or a good and how it is positioned that matters more in the consumer's mind. Low and Lamb (2000) also identify the nine brand associations that convey the concept of a product and how its meaning satisfies the customer need namely they are Price, Image, Communication, Perceived Quality, Accessibility, Performance, User Benefits, Familiarity and Credibility.

1.3 Study Background

According to SASCO's club records at UKZN, the club has experienced tremendous growth. This is notable considering that the membership roll at 2015 records the total members to be at 69. Nevertheless by 2017 they had grown to 102 members, which is a very large increase in membership that shows a 48 % growth (SASCO 2015, 2017). Club growth is an important aspect and there is a need in this case to understand how SASCO's growth is influenced by branding, as this constitutes an important area of study. Normally loyalty developed by consumers to a product is important in the ability to persuade others to enjoy the product, and this is also applicable to service organisations like clubs.

Branding is known to differentiate one organisation from another. At UKZN Westville campus there are four prominent clubs. The first is SASCO, which is associated to the African National Congress and with the Youth League of the African National Congress. The next two are the South African Democratic Student Movement, which has an association with the Inkatha Freedom Party, and the Student United Christian Action.

The development of student clubs has been associated with student activism in South Africa for a broader transformation process (Cebukhulu, Mantazaris & Nhlapo 2006). The need to constantly exercise consciousness is significant in understanding the relationships that people find themselves in. SASCO has been in existence for a long period of time and is active in the area of advocating for students' freedom to access and to succeed at their education.

1.4 Problem Statement

In the need to strengthen clubs, a challenge that is faced is that of growing the membership base. A number of student clubs at UKZN face this challenge. This challenge may be related to the fact that clubs do not fully utilise their branding strategy in growing the club's membership. This study will therefore assess the branding influence of membership growth at SASCO at the Westville Campus of UKZN.

For the past three consecutive years, SASCO has won the local student representative elections on the Westville campus (UKZNSRC 2017). This study seeks to investigate how the influence of branding has ensured the growth of the organisation. Various strategies have been employed by clubs in reaching potential club members. Such strategies include posters, social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter, as well as online marketing. In growing the membership base, clubs reposition themselves through branding. Branding has developed over a long period of time; however, the theories of branding are said to have developed in the midst of the 20th century through the development of commercials within the mass media (Farquhar 1994).

Previous research has found that the loyalty of customers can be developed through branding up to 90% of the time, even in relation to buying domiciliary products (Pappu & Quester 2016; Severi & Ling 2013). Clubs offer services and in the process of service provision there are comparisons that can be made with businesses and their attempts at keeping their customers,

as clubs also seek to satisfy those that they serve. It is for this reason that this study investigates the influence of branding in membership for SASCO.

1.5 Research Objectives

The research objectives underpinning this study are to:

- Investigate current strategies used to increase membership growth within SASCO.
- Analyse the influence of branding activities in membership growth within SASCO.
- Establish the branding challenges of SASCO as a student organisation.
- Propose recommendations for how branding can be improved to increase SASCO's membership.

1.6 Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

- What are the current strategies used by SASCO to grow the club's membership?
- How does branding influence SASCO's growth?
- What are the branding challenges that SASCO faces?
- What recommendations are feasible to improve branding and increase SASCO's membership?

1.7 Study Justification

The role of branding, according to the aforementioned literature, has been made clear and there is therefore a significant need to understand its impact, in this study, in the case of a university club. Failure to conduct a study of this kind for a club, in this instance SASCO, may lead to failure to understand the benefits that have been received through branding.

The club may therefore in the future experience weaknesses in terms of membership that could have been avoided by emphasising and implementing the branding strategies that have to date been successful in attracting membership and that should be continued in future.

1.8 Delimitations of the Study

This study is benchmarked on the role of branding in club's growth and due to this overview, the study has the following delimitations relating to the choice of objectives used. It was important that this study confirmed through an empirical investigation the role of branding in club establishment. Moreover, the club under study is known for its phenomenal growth as records support it.

Besides proposing recommendations, the study's objectives investigated the strategies, challenges as well as the influence branding had on the club's growth. Noted as a challenge in clubs is their growth and therefore this study investigated this using the given approach as pointed out by the study objectives.

In as far as the objectives are concerned, the view of understanding the growth strategies of a renowned club like Sasco is significant as it gives guidance to those who may be interested in understanding the mechanisms involved in club growth. It is also important to understand the how branding which is pointed out in literature aids in club growth. This then brings forth the need to understand whether there are challenges a club of this kind faces. This is done before proposing any recommendations to the challenges encountered in the club.

It is for this reason that the following research questions were advanced in the study to enable deeper understanding of the phenomenon. The questions investigate the strategies in use in the club and how branding which is noted as one of the effective tools in gaining club growth influences the club growth. Further questions investigate the challenges that are therefore encountered in branding as such before seeking the recommendations to the study. The research questions explained above are stipulated below.

The research questions were aligned to achieve the understanding of the strategies used by the club, as well as the influence branding had along with challenges before investigating what recommendations could be advanced.

The Study Site

The study is conducted in the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal with a club that has deep historical attachments to the University as one of the earlier clubs of the University and can have its findings generalised for study to other clubs in upcoming universities close the university of Kwa-Zulu Natal. Such Universities include the Mangosuthu University of Technology, The

Durban University of technology and the University of Zululand. The Westville campus was chosen because it has the club headquarters and has a large student population. The fact that it has the club's headquarters made it easy to get hold of the respondents for the study especially the club's officials. To undertake a deeper study, it became significant that a notable club of this calibre was investigated.

Respondents' selection

The sample selected for the study was 20 respondents out of a membership of 100. This was a qualitative study and the need to conduct a thorough investigation was necessary. The number selected was a mixture of both executive members and non-executive members of the club. This provided an opportunity for non-executive members' opinions to be collected in the process.

Type of research

The study was conducted in the qualitative research to enable a thorough investigation of the phenomenon. This would not have been possible if the quantitative research were done since it would not give respondents freedom to express their views on strategy perceptions. For this reason, therefore the qualitative played an important role in allowing members to air their opinions for the interview.

1.9 Research Methodology Summary

The research methodology applied for this study was the qualitative study. This study happened to be the first of its kind in the club and since the qualitative study permits a deeper exploration of the phenomenon, it became a preferred method to the quantitative approach in this investigation. The population used is specifically the club's own membership and therefore the study is easily contextualised in its findings.

The executives of the club were used in the empirical study due to the fact that they are fully aware of the club's activities and how the club's growth has ended up where it is. By using an interview schedule, it gave room for the respondents to freely express themselves without limitation if a quantitative study was used. Out of a population of about 100, twenty respondents were chosen and since it was an in-depth interview it is expected that the responses are likely to be generalised for the group.

The reliability and validity of the study was well achieved given the type of selection that was conducted for on the sample.

According to Creswell (2009) this validity and reliability is often achieved through the nature of the sample chosen. The sample chosen involved both the executive as well as the non-executive members of club. Half of the respondents in the sample were non-executives and the other half were executives.

The choice of this mixture helped to check on the truthfulness expressed by the sample. If there was any difference between the responses, then it would involve a deeper analysis as to the cause of the difference. Fortunately, in this study there was no difference noted in the two groups as such.

1.10 Chapter Outline

This dissertation is divided into the following chapters:

Chapter 1: This chapter introduces the dissertation, presents an overview of brand influence, and outlines the problem statement as well as the research objectives and questions, and the justification for the study.

Chapter 2: This chapter presents a review of the literature related to the theories of branding, as well as the challenges experienced by organisations in relation to branding.

Chapter 3: This chapter deals with the qualitative research design and case strategy that was used in the study. The chapter also provides details of the target population, the selection of the sample, the in-depth interview research instrument used in the study, as well as the study site and the ethical considerations addressed in this study.

Chapter 4: This chapter offers a presentation and analysis of the results of the study. Tables are used to present the data obtained from the empirical findings obtained during the interviews conducted during the course of the study.

Chapter 5: This final chapter concludes the study by appraising the objectives and discussing the empirical findings obtained in the interviews conducted with club members in relation to

the literature reviewed. Recommendations for how SASCO can improve its branding put forth, as well as recommendations for future research into the topic of branding.

1.9 Conclusion

The introductory chapter laid the foundations of the concept of branding through a brief review of relevant literature related to the key aspects investigated in the study. A background to the study was provided to establish why research into the issue of branding in all sectors of society, but especially at university clubs, such as SASCO, is becoming increasingly pertinent. Thereafter, the problem statement was outlined, and the research aims and objectives, as well as the justification for the study were presented. Chapter One concluded with a brief summary of the chapters to follow. The next chapter presents a more extensive review of the literature related to the topic of branding.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, a review of the literature regarding the concept of branding, as well as attendant theories will be presented. The chapter begins with providing a brief background of SASCO and the three student clubs at the University of KwaZulu-Natal Westville Campus. The next section of the chapter covers the overview of the concept of branding and further provides a discussion of the importance of brands to the success of organisations, cities and nations. The challenges faced in the process of branding a product, place or service and creating brand awareness will then be considered. Subsequently, the chapter outlines the online products and services branding and the strategies that can be employed to increase brand strength. Brand equity and service branding are also briefly explained. Furthermore, a thorough examination of the brand management process is articulated. Finally, the brand theories employed to underpin the study, namely the brand resonance model by Keller (2013), the brand equity model Aaker (1996) and the brand asset valuator model will be explored in some depth developed by Young and Rubicam (2011).

2.1.1 SASCO Background

The historical legacy of the South African education system prior to the fall of the apartheid regime was defined by race and class segregation in terms of giving quality education to the South African populace (Cebekhulu 2006). As result of this inequality the South African Student Congress (SASCO) was formed to advance and lobby all tertiary institutions in South Africa to provide a conducive learning environment for all students regardless of race or class (South African History 2011).

Electronic archives from SASCOS's website record that the organisation was formally established in 1991 at the Rhodes University, this formation was attended by student's representatives from all tertiary institutions of that time (SASCO 2017). This event enabled the organisation to develop a program of action that spoke to the different needs that students faced in their respective institution.

SASCO went on to open its first offices in 1993 at the University of Durban Westville which is now known as the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal Westville Campus (University Archives 2017). The organization continued to fight for the rights of students to learn in conducive

environment, the militancy in their resolve even led them to wage campus protests in solidarity with the plight of students especially those who came from working class households. Ndlovu (2009) states that one of the reasons that makes the organization very popular is the fact that it is able to confront the core issues that affect students on campus.

Since then the organization has continuously been active on the Westville campus recruiting students to join its ranks. Throughout these years the organisation has enjoyed great popularity in the students' community. This is further proven by the fact that in the past three consecutive students' elections SASCO has won these elections as the majority organisation in the student representative council (UKZNSRC 2017)

2.1.2 Students Clubs Brief Background

As it has been previously mentioned in this study there are three other prominent student clubs that are active on the Westville campus. However, it is important to highlight the fact that this study could not find sufficient information on these clubs due to the limited information coverage they possess both on academic scholarship and on-line internet presence. The first club is the South African Democratic Student Movement (SADESMO), according to their online press records the student club is a youth affiliate of the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP 2007).

SADESMO was launched on the Westville campus in 2005 and they managed to win two seats on the student representative council in the same year of their inception (UKZNSRC 2009). Most issues that the club champions appear to be similar to those of SASCO, what perhaps distinguishes them is the fact that the organisation prides itself with its affiliation to the political party.

However, in the most recent elections that was held in 2017 for the student representative council the club did not win any seat to be represented on the council, nevertheless even with that setback the club continues to remain active on student issues and matters. (UKZNSRC 2017).

The second club is the Student United Christian Action also known as (SUCA), as the name suggests this is a religious student organisation which promotes Christian values and morals. The organization was established on the Westville campus in 1999, and proved to also be

popular amongst students as it was able to win seats on the student representative council in that year with six seats allocation. (SUCA 2001).

The organization prides itself with the fact that it non-political affiliated and when it takes up student issues it is not limited to political party influence. This is further attested by Smith (2013) who states that student's clubs who have political party affiliation tend to alienate students who do not follow nor believe in the political party that the student club is associated with. SACU has also continued to enjoy the student support as to date the organization in the last elections managed to get three seats on the student council (UKZNSRC 2017)

The last club is the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL). The ANCYL is affiliated to the national ruling political party in South Africa which is the African National Congress. (Mandela 2009).

What is of great significance is the fact that even though the ANCYL was established in 1944(ANCYL 2017), it only launched their branch at the Westville campus in 2000, (UKZNSRC 2011). The organization does not contest the local student representative council elections it states that it is an alliance member to SASCO as it professes to share the same vision for the student community (ANCYL 2017).

2.2 Branding

Branding is a subject that is not only available for organisations but exists in higher education institutions and is becoming increasingly common (Stensaker 2007). It is through branding that academic institutions have become more informed of what their characteristics and values are, as well as what the client's perception is in terms of the institution's reputation (Wæraas & Solbakk 2009). In branding, organisations are profiled through characteristics and values. This trend is best exemplified using statements that reflect on the organisation's core values and vision. The organisation often distinguishes itself from others as a matter of importance (Antorini & Schultz 2005). This is applicable to clubs such as SASCO at UKZN. The clubs at a university are different in their operation in terms of their values and characteristics and branding must therefore be used to highlight these differences and to attract new membership.

In order to be an effective brand, there is a need to establish a competitive advantage through an identity that is well-differentiated from others. To this end, Aaker (2003, p.83) states that "differentiation is the engine of the brand train". It is therefore of importance that institutions

of higher education express clarity in visibility and distinction from other institutions, in order to compete for staff, resources and students. Higher education institutions experience a highly competitive atmosphere with other similar institutions, which has led to excellence creation (Aula & Tienari 2011).

Institutions of higher education have been known to play an important role, even in branding a state. Internationally, the higher education sector has played an important role in the entrenchment of cultural and educational beliefs in the postwar period, which can be argued to have prevented Western countries from engaging in conflict (Angell 2015). Institutions of higher learning are at times known to promote the branding of the nation through the acquisition of foreign students and employees, as well as other stakeholders (Sataoen 2015).

Branding has been defined as a term, a name, a symbol, a design or any feature identifying one seller's service or good distinctively from others (Suomi, Lemmetyinen & Go 2013). By implication there is a linear and clear relationship between the seller and the consumer. Others have understood branding as a power struggle characterised by the dynamics of stakeholders.

This is in contrast to the traditional view, where branding means consumers are the passive recipients of a one-way supply of images from the producers or marketers (Aspara, Aula, Tienari & Tikkanen 2014). The brand's core happens to be the identity in the conceptualisation of culture and vision, postulates Suomi (2014). In support of the identity scenario, Waeraas and Brykjesflot (2012) consider the management process of the brand to be focused on the organisation's ability to unite the various elements and communication types into a singular identity in the expression of one 'body', thus leading to a reputation that is corporate, or as such, branding.

The word 'corporate' involves some complexity when referring to the public sector, especially with reference to higher education (Jevons 2006). In spite of this limitation, it has been pointed out that the principles of traditional branding are also applicable to higher education institutions as they are to other organisations (Chapleo 2008). For this reason, the university-specific features such as satisfying students' needs, the university's ability to deliver certain types of skills, and the ability of those that recruit to make decisions, as opposed to other institutions, can make an institution a brand of note (Bennet & Ali-Choudhury 2009).

The central aspects of branding in higher education can best be featured in areas such as culture, vision and values in the sector. It has also been pointed out that there are areas which are

unexplored in terms of the higher education needs related to differentiation and similarity pressures, which demands a branding theory (Deephouse 1999; Waeraas 2015). The need to exhibit differentiation and similarities, though considered paradoxical, often calls for distinctive behaviours to be expressed by the organisation (Waeraas 2015).

It should be noted that nations do brand themselves as well. In certain occasions nations have been known to spend some reasonably large amounts in the branding exercise. Norway and Denmark spent up to 13 million Euros on the branding of the nation (Angell & Mordhorst 2014).

There have been various terms used in regard to nation branding and some of these terms have included: nation marketing (Kotler 1997); competitive identity (Anholt 2007); national image reputation (Fan 2010); cultural diplomacy (Wang 2006) and public diplomacy (Nye 2004). These concepts deal with the image of the nation and the same principle is applicable to clubs in a university. In the case of UKZN there are four main clubs that are available alongside SASCO and the branding of the clubs is therefore significant in the club's ability attract new membership and to sustain membership in the longer term.

2.3 Importance of Brands

Brands play an important role to the manufacturer or producer, as well as to the consumer or client of the service. Brands identify the maker and so allow the consumer or the client to apportion responsibility to the particular producer or distributor of the product or service. Brands are well-known for the role they play in reducing the choices that consumers need to undertake in order to satisfy their needs (Ambler 1997). This becomes possible as they become well-informed of a particular brand, which makes it easier to decide what to buy within a specified time. Based on the characteristics known about the brand, such as quality, the clients or consumers are well-guided and therefore save time, as well as search costs associated with finding a product. There is also a brand type of bond developed with a consumer in regard to the consistency in the pricing and the product's performance, promotion and distribution agenda. In certain instances, brands have been known to replace some religious practices and reinforce self-worth (Fournier 1997).

The associated attributes of products have been classified into three categories as: search goods, experience goods and credence goods (Leahy 2005). An explanation about the nature of these

goods is first provided before some associated risks that consumers avoid as a result of knowing a particular brand are explained. Search goods have often received a special consideration from customers regarding the colour, the weight, the design as well as inspecting the composition of the ingredients. In certain cases, the durability, the service quality, safety or ease of handling cannot be noticed through inspection and actual trial of the product is necessary (Ezrachi & Stucke 2015).

This is particularly related to experience goods such as vehicles. In certain cases, it may even be difficult for a consumer to become familiar with the product's attributes, such as in the case of insurance, which is known as a credence good. The product attributes are at times difficult to ascertain and as such brand knowledge becomes the best option available to the customer (Nagler, Kronenberg, Kennelly & Jiang 2011). This could be applicable to clubs since there may be no direct, tangible attributes by which members can make an informed decision regarding whether to join a club or not.

Brands are known to help consumers avoid risk. There are various risks that consumers face in the process of purchasing a product, for example, functional risk. In functional risk, the main issue of concern is whether the product will work according to the expectations of the consumer. Another risk is physical risk, in which case the product may pose a threat to the well-being of the user or others in the process of using the product (Fischhoff, Brewer & Downs 2011). A further risk is financial risk. This is related to the fact that the product may not be worth the price paid for it. In addition, there is also social risk, which refers to the threat of embarrassment faced by the consumer from the social networks that they may utilise. Psychological risk relates to the product affecting the mental capacity of the user. Finally, time risk refers to the opportunity cost of finding a substitute product should the initial product not satisfy the customer's needs. It is due to the experience of having used certain products that consumers are able to depend on the brand experience of known products (Keller 2013).

To manufacturers, brands play a number of roles. Brands are a means of identification that assist in handling or tracing the products of the manufacturer. Through branding the unique features of the product are legally protected, which is advantageous for the manufacturing firm (Khota & Stern 2005). The brand acts as a signal of quality to customers who are satisfied with the attributes of the product. Goods or products are endowed with specific associations as a result of customer satisfaction with the quality of the product. This then acts as a source of a competitive advantage for the manufacturer whose brand is considered to be of good quality

and meets customers' needs. In turn, this becomes a source of financial returns on the investment of the stakeholders in the manufacturing firm or company.

There are instances where branding has led to increased tourist attraction to a city or country. This eventually becomes an activity that leads to economic benefits, which shows the importance of branding even to the economies of countries. Many countries, states or provinces, as well as cities have branded their images in order to attract tourists. This is well exemplified with the branding used in the state of Virginia in the United States of America, in the slogan 'Virginia for lovers' (Keller 2013). A slogan used in the city of Santa Rosa in the United States as another example of place branding is 'Place of plenty' (Keller 2013). Many cities and countries are known to have been successful in their branding attempts. One such city is Las Vegas, with the slogan of 'What happens here, stays here', while the country of Costa Rica has the slogan 'No artificial ingredients'.

Countries have also been ranked according to the type of branding used in their respective brand campaigns. This ranking was conducted in 2010 by a research and brand consultancy company called Future Brand. In their findings, the top five countries were Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the United States and Switzerland (Keller 2013). Movement of persons leads to the importance of marketing a place well.

Through the use of various communication tools, advertising and direct email, the images of places can be enhanced. Businesses as well as individuals can make temporary or permanent moves to an area as a result of attractive branding and the resulting enhanced image. It is important to highlight that over and above places, anything, including ideas and symbols, can be branded (Aaker 2012). Brands have evolved over time and some have changed a great deal from the branding used in the original product.

2.4 Branding Challenges

Argenti and Druckemiller (2004) highlight a number of challenges that companies face in terms of branding. Consumers have become more demanding as a result of the knowledge they have of marketing practices and they are also more aware of the branding of products and services. More complex brand families have emerged with various portfolios, which makes selection of products an issue of concern for the customer as well as the producer. Different services offered in an institution of higher learning can be branded. This is also applicable to

clubs in universities as each one projects a service that they are offering to the student body. This is well exemplified in the case of UKZN where students have the option of joining four main clubs that are available, each of which offers different services.

The markets for products and services have been maturing and as a result the branding position has to make necessary adjustments to suit the maturity of markets. This presents a challenge in understanding what best captures market interests. In the case of services, such as those generally offered by university clubs, an understanding of the challenges facing society that have emanated from historical injustices is well known to a great number of students in South Africa. There is therefore a need for university clubs to offer solutions to address these challenges in order to attract membership.

Competition has also become more sophisticated amongst market players (Kirzner 1997). Although this is true in the area of physical products, it is also applicable in the area of services, which generally categorise university clubs. Competition arises due to various clubs seeking student membership. One of these challenges faced by clubs in the university setting concerns the need to differentiate the various services that are offered.

This also becomes a challenge for the students that must make the choice of which club to belong to, in terms of deciding which club offers the services that they prefer. A further challenge faced is decreasing brand loyalty in many categories (Keller 2016). This is a possibility in clubs that deal with services and requires further study in order to determine the level of commitment by the members in each case. This current study does not however deal with this aspect, but this could be an area of special interest in other studies.

An additional challenge faced with regard to branding is the growth of private labels. The growth of these labels can add a competitive aspect in the marketing industry and as such can reduce the commitment of members or customers from staying loyal to one particular known brand (Kim, Jung & Park 2015). In terms of university clubs, it is possible that club membership can be reduced due to the independence and free will of individuals who feel that they need to belong any of the clubs and as such branding may be considered a waste of time.

In terms of branding, companies and organisations also face challenges presented by globalisation. In the process of expanding to new markets and revenues, companies are faced with the trials of opening themselves up to new competitors, which may threaten existing revenue sources (McDonald & Eisenhardt 2014). Competitors who are more competitively

priced may be encountered; these competitors may penetrate the market through the supply of generic products. There are many cases where retailers have entered the market with brands through the use of low prices and national brands, thus dictating what occurs in the retail practices within stores.

Brand extensions tend to present a challenge as organisations take similar brands and launch them into new areas, thus creating a strong opposition to market leaders in such areas. In addition to the abovementioned issues, deregulation has also been noted as a challenge as most industries have become deregulated. Among the deregulated industries are healthcare and financial services (Lown, Osler, Strahan & Sufi 2000).

There are thus several challenges faced by companies in terms of branding. As space is opened up to various extracurricular activities, clubs are equally subject to competition by the freedom that the university accords to these clubs. Fragmented media coverage has also been considered as a challenge to brand builders. This is linked to the nature of the news coverage experienced regarding the brand in particular. For university clubs the aspect of whether they receive regular media coverage is of importance to the club in terms of showcasing their activities and growing their club membership.

Also of importance to the branding of a product or service are the emerging media communication platforms that are in existence, such as social media which involves the use of applications such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter and so forth. These applications have replaced the normal means of communicating with students via a notice board as a means of transmitting information to them. University clubs therefore encounter a challenge related to changing their means of regular communication via these social media and communication platforms in order to convey their messages to the intended targeted audiences.

Increasing promotional expenditures is a further challenge that brand builders face, as highlighted by Keller (2013). A club or organisation in a university has only a certain amount of funds to spend, which may not be sufficient to procure a wider means of promotional advertising for the club. This is very much connected to the decreasing advertising expenditures that clubs have available to spend. It is therefore a matter of concern that this decrease in funding could affect brand builders, not only of products but of services as well, such as university clubs. Among the various challenges faced by companies is the increasing cost of product introduction and support, as discussed by Keller (2013).

This is substantiated by the fact that prices for other aspects of ensuring the operation of a company may have been increasing. Therefore, introducing a service or a product is something that adds to the available costs of the organisation or club, which is the case for the university club, SASCO, considered in this study. Short-term performance orientation is also a challenge to brand builders and this may be applied in the university setting to university clubs where particular services that the club stands for cannot be fully explained with evidence until the end of the club's activities. For example, members may not be completely convinced that the club will live up to its ideals, which may cause prospective members to hesitate in becoming members of the club.

A final challenge considered in this study is that sometimes brands fail. Of the 100 brands from around the world considered in a study by Mitra, Irwin and Golder (2011), only 23 of the brands remained market leaders by 1997 and 28 percent of these had failed by the end of 1997. In the clothing and fashion sector, the failure rate was even higher, as evidenced by the 67% failure rate of leading brands. Other brands in other sectors have performed marginally better, such as the food and beverage industry with a 21% failure rate (Mitra, Irwin & Golder 2011).

Besides the challenge of brand failure, there are other factors that can present difficulties in the process of successfully marketing and selling a brand. This is well noted in a company such as Underwood, a typewriter company, whose failure to innovate led to its demise. In the 1950-60's there was a change in market conditions as lower priced typewriters reached the market, as well as the introduction of computers. Manual typewriters like the Underwood were outcompeted since the company did not invest in research to improve the design of the typewriters sold (Mitra, Irwin & Golder 2011). Brand failure is thus an important issue for companies and organisations to bear in mind, and to ensure that strategies are implemented in order to minimise the risk of brand failure.

2.5 Brand Awareness

Brand awareness consists of brand recall performance as well as brand recognition (Kim, Kim & An 2003). Brand recall information refers to a customer's ability to use their memory to retrieve the brand from memory. This is exemplified by the recall of a cereal such as Kelloggs as a breakfast snack. This may be done at the store at the time of purchasing items or simply at home, however, the recalling of the cereal is of great importance. This could also be applicable when considering clubs and related needs in terms of the functions they perform. SASCO, for

example, could be associated with a situation related to unease that students may be facing in regard to their challenges with management. Students are acutely aware of these challenges and may therefore be more likely to join a club such as SASCO which may claim that these challenges will be taken up with management at UKZN.

Brand recognition, on the other hand, refers to the ability of the client to confirm their prior exposure to the brand. In the process of visiting a store, it is evident that customers can recall what they have previously been exposed to. Therefore, the exposure that students get to clubs at UKZN will be necessary in their decision-making process when determining whether to become a member of a club or not. There are advantages of creating high-level awareness of a given brand. In the section below, the three advantages are discussed in relation to the role of creating awareness of the brand.

The first of these advantages is the learning advantage, which refers to the information related to the associations developed that are useful in understanding brands (Keller 2003). The make-up of the brand's image is influenced as a result of the knowledge available to the customer in the process of understanding the brand. The building of the elements of the brand in the minds of the consumer is significant in that it helps the consumer to become familiar with the brand.

A second advantage of creating high-level awareness of a given brand is the consideration advantage (Keller 2003). Whenever customers buy products there is a consideration of what to purchase. Brand awareness therefore leads to a set of considerations that consumers take into account when making the decision to purchase a product or service. Consumers normally consider a regular set of brands for regular purchases. This is the case when they have particular brands that they have already considered that they have set aside for regular purchasing. Normally a particular handful of brands receive serious consideration for purchase by customers.

The third advantage is choice advantage associated with brand awareness. This is specifically in reference to brand awareness available to customers in terms of a specific set of brands that are well known to customers (Keller 2013). Customers are known to buy brands that they are familiar with, and even a minimal level of brand awareness is sometimes responsible for brand choice among customers. The lack of differences between different brands may at times leave customers unmotivated regarding the type they choose to purchase at the end of shopping.

The consumer's purchase ability is based on awareness of the brand they are familiar with rather than on the technical expertise they may be used to. Repeating the exposure is necessary in creating brand awareness, according to Keller (2013). The more the customer keeps hearing, seeing or talking about a brand the more they are likely to recall it. Familiarity is thus increased through promotions and publicity (Keller 2013). The name, the logo, the symbol as well as the character are some of the elements that can keep creating awareness of a brand for customers (Keller 2001). The ability to recognise a brand is often increased by repetition. The process of repetition therefore helps in building a brand's image for the customer.

2.6 The Online Products and Services Branding

Keller (2013) notes that product and service brands have been realised from online interfacing and interaction. Such examples include, among others, Twitter, Google and Facebook. This is not a usual case as it has been noted that some marketers may oversimplify the brand of their services or products.

It is in the process of developing more flashy advertisements and, at times, unusual advertising that mistakes are made in terms of the actual branding that needs to be put in place. Keller (2013) suggests that as much as advertisements catch the customers' attention, there may nevertheless be problems encountered in that an accurate representation of services or products may not be appropriately conveyed to customers. What the brand means to customers or what value the brand signifies may become unclear in the process of simply producing a flashy advertisement. The unique aspects of the brand need to be brought to the fore for the customer. Such aspects would include pricing, and aspects related to variety and convenience.

The brand should also perform well in other areas such as personality, credibility and the customer service areas (Lau & Lee 1999). The unmet needs of customers need to be met through the provided online brands. The offering of unique features and services to clients would replace the extensive advertising as publicity and word of mouth would become the means through which the markets can be captivated.

Customers have also been known to demand higher levels of service during and after website visits (Santos 2003). The use of online branding is a tool that has been employed by the SASCO club at UKZN, which seems to have impacted the club's growth as the club appeals to both prospective and existing members. The club advertises the value of the services that they currently offer, which captivates students and encourages them to join the club.

2.7 Brand Strength

In considering the aspect of brand strength, it is important to recount historical brands that have been in existence. There are brands with “amazing staying power”, that have been in existence for decades as market leaders (Keller 2013, p.48). One study noted that twenty of the leading brands in 1923 were still leading even after 80 years, where five of their counterparts had lost their hold. This means that the strength of a brand may differ depending on various conditions.

The strength of a brand is subject to vulnerability at some point or another. Some brands in Britain have managed to maintain their strength or staying power since 1933 (Kathman 2002). Such brands include Kellogg’s Corn Flakes, Hovi’s bread, Brooke Bond tea, Colgate toothpaste, Stork margarine, Gillette razors and other popular brands. Many of these brands have however evolved over the years and may have no resemblance to the original products that were made decades ago. Market conditions have changed, which has required a change in branding. If the organisations continued to operate as they usually did decades ago then the brand would likely fail. This is because the reaction of the brand can at times be inadequate or inappropriate to changing market conditions. There are various challenges that occur which could lead to ‘brand recession’. There is a need, however, to implement strategies to enhance brand strength. For example, during periods of recession it is necessary for companies and organisations to explore the upside of increasing investment. There are organisations that cut back on investment during recession, while others have been known to make fortunes in spite of the challenges they may face during recession.

There is a need for companies to get closer to the customer, and there are also times when recession makes customers develop different attitudes which may dictate their purchase abilities. Much of a brand’s profitability has been linked to understanding how customers feel in periods of recession (Vermat & Kumar 2017). In difficult moments customers are known to change what they want to purchase and can afford. It is therefore beneficial to understand the various changes that have an impact on consumers. It is also important to rethink how an organisation spends its funds, especially in areas such as advertising.

Although there may be certain areas that may benefit a company in marketing a brand, there could also be other changes that are required which are not related to marketing. The possibility exists that cutting some expenditures in certain areas could lead to an increase in profitability for a company. Putting forth the value proposition of a brand is significant during times of

recession, as opposed to cutting prices without considering the impact of such action (Kapferer 2012).

It is through value emphasis that customers understand the significance of the brand in the face of competition. Product brands being that are offered to customers must be fine-tuned in order to outcompete rival brands. This can be done by taking note of the correct locations and times for products to be sold to customers. Since brands appeal to different social strata, it is important to underscore the specifics of particular brands and who they appeal to. Brands that have diminished prospects may need to be pruned from a company's repertoire

2.8 The Concept of Brand Equity

Brand equity refers to how different outcomes are attributed to different branded products, as opposed to if they were not branded (Keller 2013). Firstly, there are differences that lead to a variety of outcomes after the 'added value' to the brand during marketing activities. There are a variety of methods through which value can be created for the brand. Secondly, brand equity provides a common denominator that can be used to interpret the strategies for marketing, and can also help to assess the value of the brand (Keller 2013). Thirdly, brand value can be used in many different ways to benefit the firm. This can be attained through lower costs or greater proceeds or, at times, both. The SASCO club at UKZN, in particular, details its uniqueness by showing the ideals it stands for in social media, thus giving it an edge in attracting members to the club.

2.9 Service Branding

Service branding is pervasive and has accelerated in the past decades (Keller 2013). The fact that services are less tangible and can vary in quality results in a challenge in the ability of companies to market these services. At times, services are associated with the people offering the service (Storey & Easingwood 1998). The variability in terms of problems and intangibility can best be addressed through branding. Brand symbols are important in that they enable abstract services to be clearly identified.

2.10 The Brand Management Process

Designing and managing a marketing implementation plan in the management and measurement of brand equity indeed forms a strategic process in brand management. There are four steps involved in this process (Franzen & Moriarty 2009; Kapferer 2005; Loken, Ahluwalia & Houston 2010). These steps are:

- **Identifying and developing brand plans** - In the area of identification of the brand there is a need to consider the elements that constitute the brand. One such choice is in regard to the brand's name. In consideration of this, the use of brand logo, character, symbol, as well as slogan must be considered. What consumers think about the brand can be related to the brand name, or a particular element or associated logo. Various elements have different advantages and hence marketing managers tend to use a range of elements and sometimes also a mixture of elements.
- **Designing and implementing brand marketing plans** - The marketing activities related to the brand are of significance and may be well advanced towards attaining the overall objective. The marketing deliberations may help in building a brand's equity.
- **Measuring and interpreting brand performance** - Brand performance is of equal importance to brand and marketing plans and, as such, it is necessary to measure as well as interpret this aspect.
- **Growing and sustaining brand equity** - Growing the brand has its advantages and may be of value as the brand gains prominence in the market.

These four steps are elucidated in the following section of this work.

2.10.1 Identify and develop brand plans

What the brand represents and how it is positioned in respect to competitors matters as a brand management strategic process (Taylor & Nicols 2010). The interlocking models, as described by Keller (2013), are:

- **The brand positioning model:** This model takes into consideration the aspects related to how to integrate marketing to maximise the advantages of competition.
- **The brand resonance model:** This model deals with the creation of intense customer loyalty relationships.

- **The brand value chain:** This model deals with value creation and development of brands in regard to understanding the impacts of, for instance, the financial issues of overheads and investments of brand marketing. There is therefore a need to identify and develop the brand, which becomes the focus within an organisation.

2.10.2 Design and implement brand marketing plans

In the design and implementation of a brand's marketing plans, there is a need to build brand equity. This requires a brand to be placed firmly in the minds of the consumers. There are three factors identified by Keller (2003) through which this process can be achieved, as stipulated below:

- The first factor relates to the brand elements' preliminary alternatives in mixture and matching to enhance the make-up of the brand. These choices are exercised by the brand makers in preparing the brand for the market.
- The second factor is integration. It is important to note the integration of marketing activities and programmes.
- The third factor is transferability. This refers particularly to the transferring of other indirect associations to an entity. This is very noticeable when such an entity is a country, a company or at times a distribution channel or a different brand altogether.

The above factors are very well supported by the following due considerations (Aggarwal 2008):

- **The brand element choice:** Among the usual brand elements are the names of the brand, as well as the logos, the URLs, packaging, characters and slogans associated with the brand. It has been established that different brand names, for example, have different advantages. The customers are therefore well informed by the use of a given brand name.
- **The use of marketing activities and programmes for the brand:** Brand equity is by no means supported by the elements of the brand. Nonetheless, the use of activities involved in the marketing programme is essential. This is related to the pricing strategy, product strategy, the channel strategy and the communications strategy involved in promoting a brand.
- **The secondary associations leveraging:** The establishment of brand equity involves the leveraging of associations. The secondary association results from the fact that the firm may develop an association with entities that are already in an association. These

associations could be related to company, geographical location, or distribution channel. At times associations are developed through endorsements from spokespersons or through the sponsorship of cultural or sports events. They can also be developed through awards or reviews from third parties. The identification of a brand with an entity leads to consumers identifying with the other entity and finally associating themselves with the brand in the course of this process.

2.10.3 Measure and interpret brand performance

The need to measure and interpret brand performance is necessary to enable managers to acquire an understanding of the profitability involved in the process. The measurement system of brand equity details the procedures of research in providing accurate and timely information that can be actioned by the marketers for decision-making in the long run. Keller (2013) stipulates that the implementation of this system involves three main steps which are: brand auditing; brand tracking studies; and the management system of the brand's equity.

A brand audit entails an exhaustive investigation of a brand in assessing its health in order to unveil its equity sources and promote or improve such leverages. Both an understanding of the company and the client are required in assessing a good audit of the brand in order to track the brand. The management system of brand equity deals with the organisational procedure in improving the conception and use of the concept of brand equity in the organisation. In its implementation, the three main steps required are: the creation of brand equity charters; the assembly of brand equity reports; and the definition of brand equity accountabilities (Hankinson 2007).

2.10.4 Grow and sustain brand equity

The maintenance and growth of brand equity has been deemed as challenging (Keller 2013). The diversity of perspectives is applicable when dealing with the management activities of brand equity. There is a need to comprehend how branding strategies reflect on the corporate mission of a company, to conduct necessary adjustments over time, and to apply geographical demarcation in a multiplicity of market segments.

While considering the issues regarding the growth and sustenance of brand equity, there is also a need to define the brand architecture. In the definition of brand architecture, the important issues are brand portfolios as well as hierarchy (Kapferer 2012). Brand portfolios refer to the various sets of brands that are offered to the market in a particular organisation. The distinctive and common brands, as well as their numbers offered in the market, are referred to as the brand hierarchy.

Another aspect related to dealing with the growth and sustainability of brands is the management of brand equity over time (Kapferer 2012). Taking a longstanding view of markets is a necessary component in the growth perspective. The supporting marketing programme may eventually impact on consumer behaviour. There may be enhanced programmes implemented over time on the customer-based brands.

There is also a need to manage brands over market segments, cultures and geographic boundaries (Keller 1998). It is important that different consumers are understood over the different segments in relation to brand development, as well as for various programmes to be understood in terms of marketing. There are certain experiences in global markets that need to be understood by marketing managers to enhance marketing for specific sectors.

2.11 Branding Theories

With regards to branding theories, there is a need to capture the best-known branding models, such as the brand equity model developed by Keller (1993). Aaker (1991) stipulated that brand equity considers the advantages as well as the disadvantages driving the value of the service or product offered, according to the customer.

Keller (1993) draws from Aaker (1991) regarding the understanding of brand equity, and considers factors such as the issue of customer knowledge as a pivotal issue when it comes to brand equity.

The brand equity model comprises brand image and awareness, as developed by Keller (1993), and this model is still widely in use. There is a need for customers to recall the brand as well as to remember the brand. Brand awareness is considered as a strategic step in the building of brand association, which is linked to node in brand memory. The measurement of brand associations through the three elements of uniqueness, favourability and strength has been suggested by Coric and Jelic (2015).

This study shall focus on brand awareness rather than brand image, since brand awareness deals with aspects that relate to the role of brand influence on club development. Keller's (1993) brand equity model provides more details in relation to understanding the role that branding plays in membership development.

The understanding of the model permits controls to be exercised by management of the clubs in a sense of developing the brand awareness of the club. Keller's (1993) brand equity model has been widely used, even in sports teams, as denoted by Gladden and Funk (2001).

In order for brand awareness to be established at club level, clubs have used social media, in particular, and have therefore developed an association with brand awareness of the club, thus allowing or permitting membership growth to not only be sustained but to be improved.

The ability of social media to create awareness of a club also makes it easier for the management of the club to tailor-make their offerings in order to sustain and expand their growth potential.

While contemplating Keller's (1993) theory, it is important to consider the brand resonance model. This model is grounded on a four-step sequence and each step is contingent upon the achievement of the previous step in the model. The following are the steps encompassed by this model (Coric & Jelic 2015).

- Ensuring brand association and identification with the consumer's mind regarding the needs of the customer, the benefits of the product, and the class of the product;
- Firmly establishing the brand, meaning totality in the customer's minds through strategic linkage with a host of intangible and tangible associations of the brand;
- Eliciting the customer's proper brand responses;
- The creation of brand resonance, the brand responses have to be converted into the former, as well as effective loyalty and an intense affiliation between the brand and the consumers.

There are fundamental questions that are reflected from the above by customers as stated below (Coric & Jelic 2015):

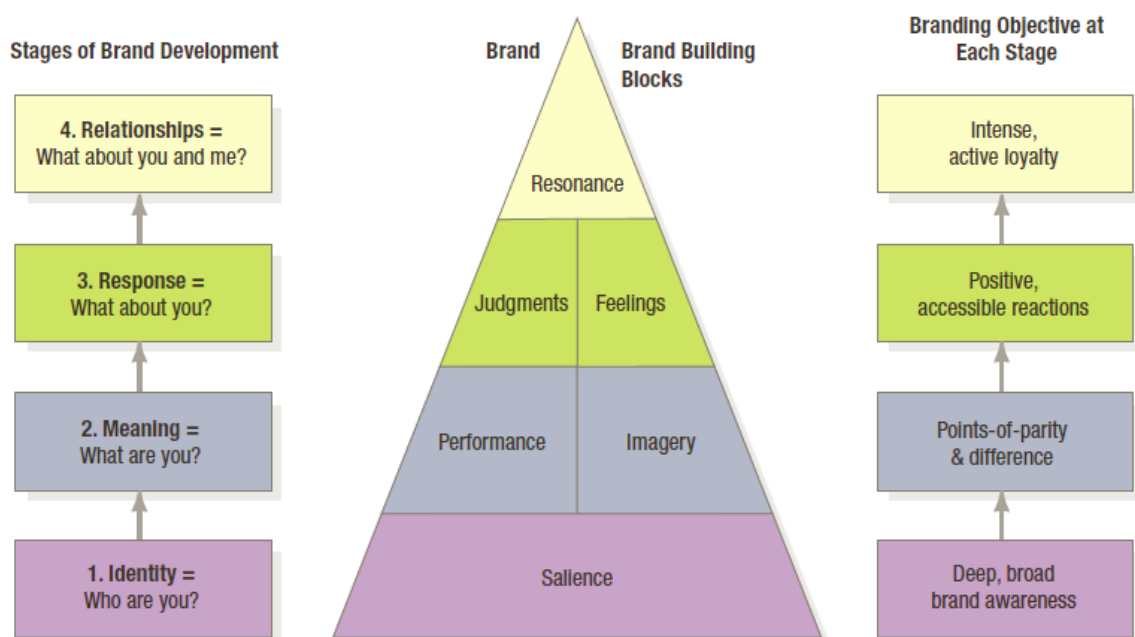
- Who you are? (the identity of the brand)
- What you are? (the meaning of the brand)

- What do I think or feel about you? (the responses to the brand)
- What likely connection or relationship should I have with you? (the relationships with the brand).

The steps in the branding process are: identity, meaning, responses and, finally, relationships. From this understanding it can be determined that identity precedes responses before meaning is established; neither identity nor meaning can establish relationships unless relevant responses have been obtained.

The model has a pyramidal structure and the building blocks on the left side represent a rational side to brand building, whereas the right side signifies the emotional side of the brand. It is often found that most brands are built by both sides of the building blocks, that is, the left and the right sides of Keller's (1993) model.

Figure 2.1: Brand Resonance Pyramid



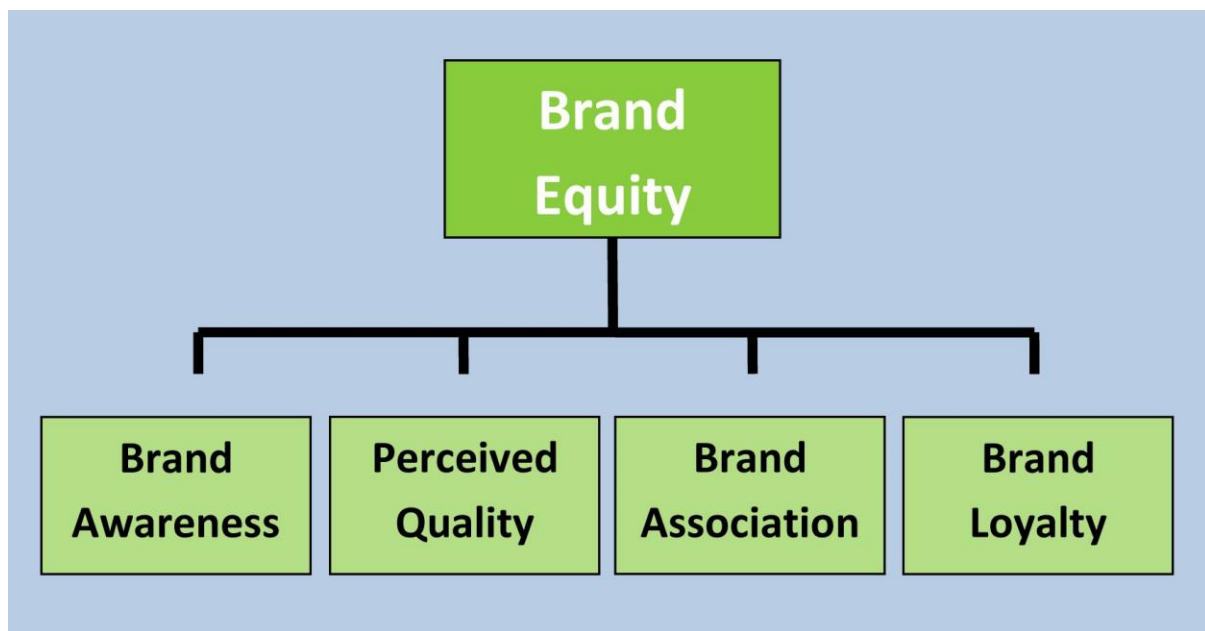
(Source: Keller 2013, p.107)

The above model, termed the brand resonance model, is classified in accordance with the bottom-up arrangement. As such, it can be interpreted as follows (Keller 2013):

- Firstly, the brand gets identified by the consumers or customers and thereafter they associate it with a particular need or product class. This is the first item in the structure, namely, to identify a brand;
- Secondly, brand meaning is established as customer's minds develop a strategic linking to a host of intangible and tangible associations;
- Thirdly, the customers' responses are elicited through brand judgement and feelings;
- Finally, the customer's brand responses get converted into, ideally, a relationship that is loyal to the brand.

Keller's model can be compared to Aaker's model of brand equity. Aaker's (1996) model suggests that customers develop an understanding of a brand through awareness, thereafter through perceived quality, and only then does association and loyalty fall into place. These then constitute brand equity, as represented in Figure 2.2

Figure 2.2: Brand Equity Model



(Source: Aaker 1996, p.42)

The above illustrated model, comprises brand awareness, perceived quality, loyalty and association. It is what increases or decreases the value of a brand that the concept of brand

equity deals with. Hence brand equity refers to both brand assets as well as brand liabilities (Ford 2017). Reduction of costs in marketing may be achieved by retaining the customers that are loyal, instead of attracting new ones. The present customers of the business could be of value in the presence of threatening competitors, as they could be helpful in a company's ability to attract new customers by spreading the word about the usefulness or competitive advantage of a brand.

Brand awareness can be gained as the association to the brand is established in the minds of customers. Whenever customers approve of and become familiar with a brand, support of and awareness of the brand is also established. When a brand comes up during the purchasing of an item, it leads to an understanding of brand commitment (Ford 2017).

The quality of the brand is a considerable factor that comes to view in the face of competition and, as such, it can be of great importance. As the brand becomes available through different channels, the quality of the brand is also likely to be differently perceived by the customers.

It is equally important to realise the significance of how the name of the brand retrieves associations in the brain of the customer (Aaker 1996).

This can be associated with what the brand ultimately achieves for the customer, for example, it may improve their life or may improve the level at which a service is performed, which may not have previously been the case. This further adds to the understanding of customers in relation to the value of the brand in question.

The brand asset valuator model was developed after Kotler (1997) conducted extensive research with nearly 20,000 customers in 40 countries while providing measures that were comparative to brand equity. There are four principles that guide the brand asset valuator model, and these are:

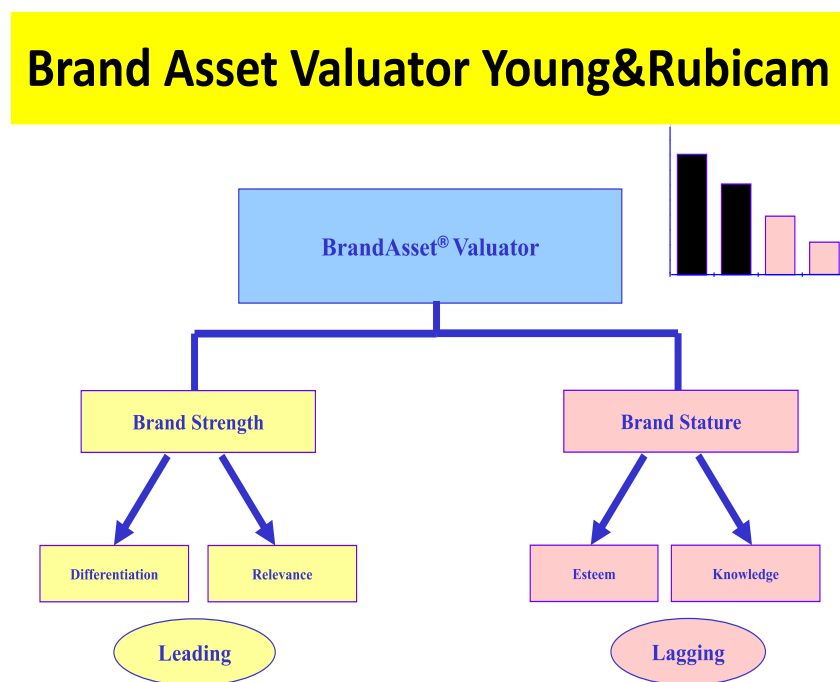
- **Differentiation:** This determines the measurement of the degree to which the brand's uniqueness is distinguishable from others.
- **Relevance:** This measures the brand's appeal.
- **Esteem:** This deals with the brand's respect and regard. Esteem refers to how well the brand is respected and regarded.

- **Knowledge:** This refers to how familiar the brand is to consumers and how familiar consumers are with the brand

A brand's strength is thus determined by the differentiation and relevance of the brand to consumers. Other than considering the past, these two pillars, differentiation and relevance, account for the future strength of a brand.

Therefore, the performance of the brand is thus created by the use of esteem and knowledge. Figure 2.3 shows the brand asset valuator model depicting the areas discussed in this section.

Figure 2.3: Brand Asset Valuator Model



(Source: Young & Rubicam, 2011, p.26)

2.12 Conclusion

The role of branding is significant, as has been noted in this chapter, and has been guided by well-established theories. This chapter has provided a discussion of the concept of branding as well as its importance, brand awareness and the advantages of branding, as well as the challenges that brands face. In addition, the concept of brand equity was also discussed. Brand equity has been deliberated on in light of various theories, and brand process management was also elucidated. It is important to underscore the significance of branding in the growth of a club that has prospects of competition in its setting, such as the SASCO club at UKZN. The next chapter provides an overview, or the research methodology employed in this study.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter of this study deals with the research methods that were applied in order for the study objectives to be achieved. The research design and paradigm employed in the study, and the philosophical worldview adopted by the researcher are first discussed. The research paradigm is addressed in order to highlight the importance of choosing a qualitative research paradigm for this study, as the research deals with the growth in membership of one of the most significant clubs at UKZN. Thereafter, the constructivist approach and the choice to use a case strategy is expanded on. The sample size, location of the study, the data collection techniques, as well as the ethical clearance issues are also addressed in this chapter. The limitations encountered by the researcher are also addressed. For purposes of re-emphasis the research objectives will be brought to view, as well as the research questions.

3.2 The Research Design

The research design is interpreted as the “blue print” of a study, in attending to questions to be considered, the relevant data to be collected, as well as the methods of analysing the results (Philliber, Schwab & Samloss 1980, cited in Yin 2009). In a similar vein, Creswell (2009, p. 3) refers to research design as a “procedure and plan that researchers base their decisions on in designing a study”. Using a variety of postulations, the detailed methods for collecting as well as analysing data are arrived at (Creswell 2009). Therefore, through this understanding, the data collection and analysis methods were determined in order to achieve the objectives regarding the branding of SASCO to increase membership at UKZN, Westville Campus. This study employed a qualitative research design using an interview schedule tool for collecting data from the participants in the study.

The research strategy used in the study took into account the sample selection, the data collection methods, as well as the data analysis techniques in the appropriate context. In terms of the selection of the participants in the study, the chairman of SASCO was approached in order to obtain the respective details of the participants of SASCO’s executive committee members, as well as additional non-executive members of the club. It is important to state that the position of the participants was taken into account, hence the executive members of SASCO were mainly chosen for the interview exercise. The entire executive was selected as the sample

in this instance, because their work experience was considered as a valuable source of data to achieve the purposes of the study.

Qualitative methods were used in this study. This study did not require the use of numbers as it explores the phenomenon of SASCO's growth and membership and it was therefore fitting to make use of a qualitative research design to determine the participants' understandings of these issues (Creswell 2009)

This study examined the issues that relate to the growth of clubs at universities. Therefore, the executive committee members and non-executive members of SASCO were selected for the study. It is also important to note that a relevant sample should be approached for this kind of study; in this case there could not be a more appropriate sample than the executive of the club. Since the executive members of SASCO are the ones responsible for running the organization and ensuring that it grows. Their input and understanding of the concept of branding will bring an important insight in responding to what the study seeks to address. The aim of this study was based on the objectives guiding the study, as well as the study questions, as put forth in Chapter One, and thereafter thematic analysis was applied to interpret the findings obtained from the interviews conducted. The research objectives and questions are reiterated below.

Research objectives:

- Investigate current strategies used to increase membership growth within SASCO.
- Analyse the influence of branding activities in membership growth within SASCO.
- Establish the branding challenges of SASCO as a student organisation.
- Propose recommendations for how branding can be improved to increase SASCO's membership.

Research questions:

- What are the current strategies used by SASCO to grow the club's membership?
- How does branding influence SASCO's growth?
- What are the branding challenges that SASCO faces?
- What recommendations are feasible to improve branding and increase SASCO's membership?

3.3 The Philosophical World View

The researcher was guided by the social constructivist philosophical world view. This was related to the research design, the research objectives, as well as the research questions adopted for the study. Creswell (2009) describes social constructivism as the individual's ability to understand the lived-in environment and, in addition, this approach also refers to a researcher's ability to understand how phenomena occur in certain contexts. Social constructivists adopt an understanding that persons or individuals often seek meaning from the world in which they work or live. These meanings are therefore subjective to the objects or issues under consideration. It is for this reason that a researcher cannot afford to narrow the observation to a single set of events, but instead takes note of the complexity in analysing the multiple and diverse ideologies made available through interaction (Creswell 2009). It is therefore the participants' views that are relied upon in understanding the phenomenon under observation and this, incidentally, is also developed as the participants interact with other people as they interpret the world they are either working or living in.

Social constructivism is thus embedded in the understanding that there is individual interaction, which supports the view that individuals construct their own meaning out of interactions in their daily lives (Andrews 2012). Culturally and historically there are events that have occurred in individuals' lives, hence social constructivism is displayed in how these events are understood by the participants in the study. The SASCO club has experienced a growth rate of 48% and it is through a study such as the current one that the executive members who normally experience this growth are interacted with. The branding of the club and its attempts to attract new membership will thus be interpreted by the researcher and can then be linked to relevant theory.

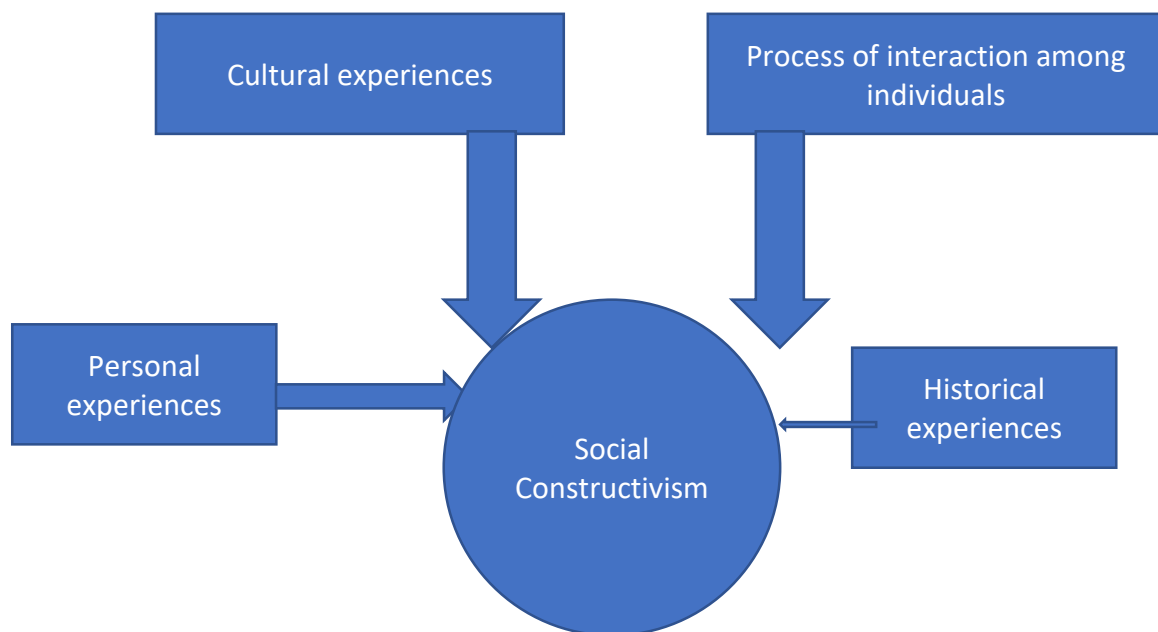
The following assumptions have been held in considering a study which employs social constructivism (Crotty 1998):

- In the process of interacting with the intended world, meaning is derived by those interpreting the world. It is for this reason that qualitative researchers employ questions that are open-ended, which enables participants to freely share their views.
- Based on the historical and social outlook of the person conducting the study, meanings are developed regarding the phenomenon under investigation. It is for this reason that qualitative researchers visit the location of the participants being studied in order to

gather additional contextual information. The researcher then interprets what is found based on their familiarities and experience in the context in which the participants live or work.

- Meaning is often termed as social since it arises from interaction with other humans and can therefore be thought of as social. The qualitative research process is generally inductive as the seeker of information generates such meaning from the data itself.

Figure 3.1: Social Constructivism Elements



(Source: Creswell, 2009, p.81)

The understanding depicted in Figure 3.1 above is applicable to this study in that it represents the world view employed in constructivist approaches, as pointed out by Creswell (2009). Individuals' experiences do lead to the development of the subjective meanings and interpretation of the world (Creswell 2009). In this study, the participants were permitted to voice their understanding in regard to SASCO's growth. Consequently, there was a convergence as well as a divergence of reactions from the participants. The various viewpoints expressed allowed the researcher to interpret the multiple interpretations of participants from a constructivist position or paradigm (Anaes & Sandin 2009). In this study, the researcher relied on the participants' viewpoints, as participants were given ample opportunity to air their views regarding SASCO's growth.

3.4 Case Study Research Strategy

A case study is a research strategy which allows a research to focusing on an individual phenomenon, and the findings are therefore not necessarily able to be generalised to other cases (Thomas 2011). This study followed the approach of a case study strategy of research. This is the same understanding shared by Girden and Kabacoff (2010), indicating that a case study encompasses individuals in a unit, or a single individual in a study, and is an extensive research technique. A case study therefore involves a project, a programme or a process in a unit of analysis (Girden & Kabacoff 2010). The unit of analysis for this study is the executive membership, as well as some members of SASCO's non-executive membership at UKZN. This sample was selected in order for the researcher to understand the club's growth, which has been quite phenomenal in recent years. This study sought to understand, among other things, the branding influence in club growth. The study aimed to obtain rich data through the use of in-depth interviews, which aided the researcher in developing an understanding of the phenomenon of the club's branding and its membership growth in a university setting.

3.5 Participant, Site and Case Selection

Participants who were able to provide relevant data in relation to understanding the phenomenon of the use of branding in increasing club growth, as well as the particular site that was deemed relevant, were required for this study. This study employed a case study research strategy and focused on SASCO at the Westville Campus of UKZN.

3.5.1 Selection of the case

It is advocated that selection of a particular case should be based on a rationale that has strong foundations. It is important that there are predetermined criteria for the inclusion of participants, as well as for the data to be screened properly. When dealing with the selection of a case, it must be done in line with the 'primitive task' of the researcher of the case study (Seawright & Gerring 2008). The role of the individual conducting the research is to set an agenda to study such a case (Seawright & Gerring 2008). In this study, therefore, the researcher explored the participants' understanding of the growth of one of the significant university clubs at UKZN, namely SASCO.

3.5.2 Selection of the site

The site for the study was chosen as the Westville Campus of UKZN since it houses the headquarters of SASCO for the entire university. The chairman of SASCO and the rest of the executive members, as well as the non-executive members were easily available for participation in the study at the Westville Campus of UKZN. The environment of the campus is welcoming and there was a good relationship in dealing with the executive members of the club at UKZN, Westville Campus.

3.5.3 Selection of the participants

Qualitative research has been termed as purposeful, and it is therefore important that the participants selected in a qualitative study are able to understand the research questions, as well as to have the ability of enriching the conception of the phenomenon under investigation by providing the researcher with relevant data. The consideration in the selection of the participants in a study is determined by the evidence that informs the study, the theoretical perspectives chosen to underpin the study, as well as the research questions that are used to guide the study (Sargeant 2012).

3.5.4 Target population and the sample

The target population in a study has been described as the entirety of persons from which a sample is drawn (Robinson 2014). This therefore refers to those that have knowledge in relation to the topic addressed in study and are thus termed as the target population. In this case, the members of the SASCO club are the target population of the study.

The sampling method applied in this study was purposive and a non-probability technique of sampling was used in this exercise. Since the researcher had an assumption regarding the given topic on account of the theoretical orientation of the study, the purposive sampling strategy was therefore used (Robinson 2014). The possible knowledge that the participants hold regarding the phenomenon of the branding of the SASCO club made room for them to be selected to participate in the interview exercise. A total of twenty participants were selected for the study. Ten were executive members of the club and the remaining ten were regular members of SASCO.

3.6 Methods of Data Collection

In the collection of data, the primary data was obtained through in-depth interviews and other secondary data was collected through a review of pertinent literature and documents. The questions that were used for interviewing the participants were developed in line with the theoretical framework employed, alongside the research questions of the study. This data is presented in the next chapter of this submission.

In the investigation of realities, attitudes, perspectives as well as feelings of study subjects, interviews are considered as a method of determining the available reality of research participants (Talmy 2010). Interviews were conducted by the researcher in October and November 2017 with all twenty of the participants that formed the sample of the study. It is important to note that interviews are a method of data collection used when a researcher adopts a social constructivist world view, in order for the researcher to gain insight into how participants understand the issues investigated in the study. The interview schedule used in this study was divided into 4 sections. Section A comprised questions relating to the demographic details of the participants, Section B dealt with membership growth of SASCO, Section C dealt with aspects of branding of the club and Section D dealt with the challenges faced in attracting new members to join SASCO. Appendix B provides a copy of the interview schedule used for collecting the data in this study. All the interviews were conducted in English since this was a language used and understood by all the participants. The total number of participants that were interviewed was 20, comprising 10 executive committee members and 10 more general members of the club. Open-ended questions were used in the interviews with the participants to allow them to express their viewpoints freely regarding the matters addressed.

3.7 Data Analysis

It is important that the collected data is analysed appropriately in order for the researcher to gain the necessary understanding that was intended from the study. Yin (2009) states that data analysis requires the researcher to examine, tabulate and categorise the data available from the sources that have been sought. This is necessary in order for the researcher to establish inclusive findings of the study. Sargeant (2012) further explains the role of analysis in the interpretation of qualitative data. The researcher's role demands the interpretation of the themes that emerge in order to understand the phenomenon that is being investigated. Data collection and categorisation in this study was performed simultaneously as any corrections

were performed at the appropriate time. This understanding of how to interpret the data is supported by Vanderstoep and Johnston (2009).

An interval diary was used to record the interviews between breaks and moments of exhaustion. This brought about the benefit of rechecking necessary areas to confirm what the context was for a given participant. This was also useful in analysing the themes, as suggested by Clark and Braun (2013). Data was then categorised according to the positions of the participants in the club. The researcher performed a coding of data in terms of developing labels that were pithy for the significant data features relevant to the research questions and objectives. This also enabled the researcher to organise the data according to each group that was focused upon. There were two groups focused on in this study: executive committee members of SASCO; and non-committee members of the club.

The themes were further analysed after using matrices to reduce the data to a size that could be easily managed. Upon inspection of themes, the matching themes were then categorically aligned with the objectives of the study. In the need to compare the responses from the participants, the matrices were diagrammatically drawn in order to demonstrate the relationship of the categories observed, as advised by Smith and Albaum (2010). After coding the data from the transcripts, the categories that were developed were then transferred to the matrices for comparing and contrasting participants' responses accordingly. There were narratives developed for each matrix that were linked to the literature in understanding the synergy, if any, between previously conducted research and the findings of the current study.

Thematic analysis was performed to interpret the findings of this study. Thematic analysis has been described by Clarke and Braun (2013) as a method that helps a researcher to identify and analyse the patterns in qualitative data. Other authors such as Smith and Firth (2011) define thematic analysis as a process that is interpretive, and which involves a process of examining data in order to recognise patterns and provide features that are significant to the phenomenon under investigation. Liamputtong (2009) considers the main steps of thematic analysis as the process of making sense of the data by reading each transcript and thereafter scrutinising what all the participants have said as a group. In this study, the transcribing of the data gave rise to a deep understanding by the researcher regarding the phenomenon under examination. The findings of the study were thus attained as the process of interpretation of the data by the researcher gave rise to meanings that was gradual and based on the procedures described above.

3.8 Trustworthiness

In the promotion of the quality and rigour of qualitative research, there is a need to observe the aspect of confirming the dependability as well as trustworthiness in the analysis of the data (Sargeant 2012). The collection of data from different sets of groups, namely the executive and non-executive members of SASCO, provided some trustworthiness of the data as there was a varied source of data gathered regarding the club's branding and growth. The transcripts were also provided to the researcher's supervisor for closer scrutiny and input, thereby adding to credibility in the interpretation of the data.

3.8.1 Reliability and validity

The notion of consistency is often tested in quantitative research in ascertaining the reliability of the instrument. This concentrates on the research findings and instrument used (Lewis 2009). Creswell (2009) asserts that validity in qualitative research refers to the accuracy of the researcher in assessing the outcomes and truthfulness of a study, whereas reliability refers to the researcher's tactic being constant throughout various research studies and projects, which may differ from each other. Lewis (2009) further suggests that researchers employing qualitative methodology should enrich their studies through a process of guaranteeing the reliability of the participants. In addition, the researcher should pay careful attention to the observation of variations and the use of several techniques of collecting data, as in the case of a test and retest method and the split half method.

Yin (2009) also points out that the findings of a study should be the same if another researcher conducted a similar study following the same procedures used by the earlier researcher. In this study, the interviews conducted were further strengthened as there were two sets of groups being investigated, the executive and non-executive members of SASCO, and they were questioned regarding the same aspects under investigation in the study. This permitted the researcher an opportunity to understand the consistency of the phenomenon under study, namely the branding of SASCO at UKZN.

3.8.2 Transferability and credibility

Credibility refers to the truth of the findings as far as the collected data is concerned. This is in relation to the participants' views as well as the researcher's interpretation and exhibition of

such findings (Polit & Beck 2012). Credibility is normally realised in qualitative research if the descriptions of human experience are easily understood by people who share similar experiences. It is within the researcher's understanding that the data collection procedure and interpretation of the findings will be familiar to people of similar understanding should they attempt to interpret the study's findings.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Issues related to the researcher's ability to identify and address the ethical considerations that arise in a study have to be dealt with during the process of data collection from the participants (Creswell 2009). Ethical aspects of research are significant in any study. It is for this reason that Creswell (2009) recommends that institutional review boards should review and thoroughly evaluate research proposals put forth by researchers. The researcher in this study ensured that all the necessary protocols were followed, as discussed in the following sections of this work.

3.9.1 Human dignity

Respect for human dignity is enshrined in the clauses of the South African Constitution. The South African Constitution [108 of 1996], Section 10, makes provision for the respect of dignity as well as its protection (Republic of South Africa 1996). It should further be noted that the White Paper dealing with public service transformation indicates how services are to be administered to the people of South Africa. In the same manner, the eight Batho Pele principles also demand that the treatment of people should be conducted with dignity and respect. In this study, human dignity was observed by the researcher in dealing with the participants that were involved in the study.

3.9.2 Permission for the study

Before the study could begin, it was necessary for the researcher to obtain permission to commence the research. This was made possible through the acquisition of a gatekeeper's letter. The gatekeeper's letter was made available after the Research Ethics Committee of UKZN approved permission for the researcher to proceed with the study. The ethical clearance letter is attached as Appendix A of this study.

3.9.3 Informed consent

In the process of obtaining the informed consent of participants, it is important to note that the goal of the study as well as the procedures, in addition to the researcher's credibility, is of great importance to the participants (Seidman 2013). The participants in this study were briefed in great depth about the objectives of the study, as well as the methods intended for data collection, and as such the participants were aware about their role in the process. The participants were further provided the freedom to ask questions before the study began, as well as throughout the time of data collection. They were also informed that they were free to withdraw from the study at any point in time.

3.9.4 Anonymity

The researcher assured the participants in the study that their identity would be kept anonymous, during both the data collection process as well as in the write up of the dissertation presenting the research. As such they were assigned numbers to indicate their presence in the study and in order for the researcher to report the findings obtained from each of them. There were no photos taken of the participants and so there is no pictorial information which could be used to identify them. This is in line with the recommendations provided by Vanderstoep and Johnston (2009). After the interviews with participants were conducted and audio recorded, the recordings were then transcribed by the researcher, which is in line with the recommendations by Clark and Braun (2013) in terms of the recording and transcribing of data.

3.9.5 Confidentiality

Creswell (2009) notes that at times names that are fictitious are used in research in order to protect the identity of the subjects of the study. In Chapter Four of this study, numbers have been used to refer to the participants due to the need to protect their identity and confidentiality in the process of data presentation. Silverman (2011) states that confidentiality is an obligation of the researcher in terms of protecting the participants, and where their placement is in terms of location at home or in the workplace. In this study, the participants were informed that no unauthorised individual would be given access to their names or their identities. The researcher in this study has honoured the proposition to ensure the confidentiality of the subjects under investigation.

3.10 Conclusion

This research methodology chapter has dealt with the process of conducting the research as well as the activities engaged in, in the exercise of the qualitative research undertaken by the researcher regarding the branding and membership of the UKZN student club of SASCO. The chapter addressed the qualitative research design and the reasons for its use, the social constructivist world view employed by the researcher, the selection of the study site and the participants chosen in the study, the procedures involved in the thematic method of data analysis, as well as the pertinent ethical issues that were observed and addressed in the study. The next chapter, Chapter Four, presents the raw data that was obtained from the participants of the study in the interviews conducted by the researcher.

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the data obtained in the study and offers an analysis of this data. It is after data collection that data interpretation becomes essential in the process of conducting research. In order to make sense of the collected data, researchers employ diverse methods (Smith & Firth 2011). Qualitative studies generally require meaningful data configuration, thus enabling the clarity of voices of the participants to be retained. The applicable data analysis techniques, as outlined by Smith and Firth (2011), are the focus on theory development, the socio-linguistic methods, as well as content and thematic analysis involved in methods which describe and interpret participants' perceptions. In this study, the latter method was adopted in analysing the results of the study. This chapter begins with a presentation of the data obtained in the study, ranging from the biographical details of the participants to a description of the study site involved. The responses to the remaining three sections that constituted the interview are then presented and the chapter ends with a summary of the data obtained during the course of the study. The three latter sections of the interviews conducted in this study examined the growth of SASCO, the branding activities employed by the club, as well as the challenges experienced by SASCO in terms of gaining membership.

The following research questions guided the study and it is worth highlighting them once again:

- What are the current strategies used by SASCO to grow the club's membership?
- How does branding influence SASCO's growth?
- What are the branding challenges that SASCO faces?
- What recommendations are feasible to improve branding and increase SASCO's membership?

And the research objectives were to:

- Investigate current strategies used to increase membership growth within SASCO.
- Analyse the influence of branding activities in membership growth within SASCO.
- Establish the branding challenges of SASCO as a student organisation.
- Propose recommendations for how branding can be improved to increase SASCO's membership.

Before the presentation of the primary data of the study it is important to state some information regarding the study site as will be explained below.

4.2 Study Site

The study was conducted at the Westville Campus of UKZN where the headquarters of SASCO is based. UKZN has a number of campuses. Other campus locations are Pietermaritzburg, Howard and Edgewood Campuses, as well as the Medical School at Umbilo. The Westville Campus was chosen since it houses the official headquarters of SASCO, hence it was easy for the researcher to gain access to the respective members of the executive as well as the other club members.

4.3 Response Rate

In this study, the response rate was effectively realised at 100 % since all the participants approached to be part of the sample participated in the process.

Table 4.1: Biographical Details of the Participants

Participants	Age	Position	Gender	Race
Participant 1	24	Chairperson	Male	African
Participant 2	24	Deputy chairperson	Male	African
Participant 3	21	Secretary	Male	African
Participant 4	20	Deputy Secretary	Female	African
Participant 5	22	Treasury	Male	African
Participant 6	23	Media and Publicity	Male	African
Participant 7	21	Projects and Campaigns	Male	African
Participant 8	19	Gender Officer	Female	African
Participant 9	19	Education and Transformation	Female	African
Participant 10	21	Political Commissar	Female	African

Participant 11	27	Member	Male	African
Participant 12	22	Member	Female	African
Participant 13	20	Member	Female	Coloured
Participant 14	21	Member	Female	Coloured
Participant 15	24	Member	Male	African
Participant 16	24	Member	Female	Coloured
Participant 17	19	Member	Male	African
Participant 18	19	Member	Male	African
Participant 19	21	Member	Male	African
Participant 20	20	Member	Female	African

Table 4.1 above indicates the biographical details of the participants of the study. The lowest age among the participants in the study is 19 and the highest age is 27. A number of the participants are of African origin whereas three participants identify themselves as coloureds. Ten of the participants are executive members of the club whereas the other ten are non-executive members of SASCO. There are 9 females and 11 males in terms of the breakdown of the gender of participants, meaning that in terms of gender representation, there is nearly an equal balance between males and females.

4.4 Data Presentation

The interview schedule was subdivided into three sections, in addition to the initial section which dealt the biographical details of the participants, and each section had a different aspect to query in accordance with the objectives of the study.

4.4.1 Section A: Membership Growth

How long have you been with SASCO?

Most of the participants had been with SASCO for more than 2 years. Participants 13 and 18 had the following to say in response to this question:

“I have been with this club for slightly for more than two years and it has been home to us.”

Is there a specific official position that you hold with the organisation?

The responses to this question were received as follows:

“I do hold the position of the chairman of the club”, said Participant 1.

Participant 2 replied:

“I have been tasked with the role of being the deputy chairperson of this club”

Participant 3 in turn answered that:

“I have the role of being the deputy secretary of the club.”

Participant 5 in response to this question replied that:

“My official role in the club is being the treasurer of the club.”

Participant 6 replied that they dealt with publicity and the media position of the club.

Participant 8 said that they dealt with *“gender issues in the club.”*

Participant 9 indicated that they dealt with education and transformation and Participant 10 said they worked as a political commissar. The rest of the participants said they were members of the club.

Are you actively involved in the organisation?

Most of the participants responded affirmatively to this question and claimed that they were often involved in SASCO’s activities and considered themselves as actively involved in the club’s affairs. Participant 20 however said that at times they were not as involved in the club’s activities.

Can I please get your understanding of how SASCO grows its membership?

Participant 1 replied to this question saying:

“SASCO grows through media advertisement and mainly the branding that goes along with it. The club is considered as an admirable club by many students”

This sentiment was shared by a number of participants. Participant 17 indicated that the club's growth was at times due to word of mouth by fellow members. All participants indicated that the club had experienced growth in the past few years. Both the executive and non-executive members were in agreement regarding the nature of the club's growth and the experience in terms of this growth. Participant 20, however, suggested that the club needs to improve its branding to avoid being overtaken by other clubs at UKZN.

Table 4.2: SASCO's Growth

Participant No.	Responses / Emerging Themes	Participant No.	Responses / Emerging Themes
1	Media advertisement and mainly branding	11	Club's active advertising
2	Media advertisement	12	Club's ability to attract
3	Campaigns	13	Good leadership
4	Canvassing	14	Good branding
5	Continuous campaigns	15	Good liaison with students
6	Advertising	16	Student continuous engagement
7	Active club policy of campaigns	17	Good advertising
8	Activities meant to attract members	18	Media advertisement
9	Active student engagement	19	Good campaigns
10	Knows how to befriend students	20	Good events

Table 4.2 indicates that a number of participants in this study proposed that the role of media in SASCO's growth is significant. However, it was not directly stated by participants that there is a brand element related to advertising, which in turn is related to media advertisements.

4.4.2 Section B: Branding Activities

What is your understanding of the concept of branding?

Participants did have similar understandings of the concept of branding, especially among the executive members, and there was also a similarity of understanding among the other members of SASCO regarding certain issues in terms of the concept of branding. Participant 1 replied to this question by saying:

“Branding is the concept that you enable others, especially students, to have towards the value of the club. In a way it is a marketing that you develop regarding the club.”

Participants 4, 6, 8 and 10 shared the same view. Participants 2, 3 and 7, however, unanimously recalled branding as a means by which a club is sold out to the prospective club members.

SASCO club members’ views differed slightly from the executive in that they considered branding as a means to aid marketing of the club. This understanding by regular club members is slightly different from that held by the executive in that they consider branding as a tool, as opposed to a concept that is well understood by the executive. Tabulation of responses for the executive and regular members is presented below in Table 4.3 for purposes of simplicity and to illustrate understanding of the branding concept amongst the executive and other members of SASCO:

Table 4.3: Branding Concept 1

Participants	Executives	Members
1,4,6,8,10	A concept enabling others towards the club.	
2,3,7	A means by which the club is sold out to prospective members	
11,12,13,14,15,16,17,18,19,20		It is a tool for marketing the club

There is a similarity of perception between the executive, as one section refers to branding as a concept and the other refers to it as a means of attracting membership. The non-executive members of SASCO, as opposed to the executive members, consider branding to be a tool rather than a concept or a means used to attract new members. The variation of understanding could be due to the fact that those in the executive are well-informed of issues surrounding the

topic of branding, while new members may not be. Below is a further detailed overview of the whole sample and their responses to the questions posed in the interviews.

Table 4.4: Branding Outlook

Participant No.	Responses / Emerging Themes	Participant No.	Responses / Emerging Themes
1	A concept	11	An active marketing tool
2	An idea	12	Specially devised tool in marketing for expansion
3	A tool in use in getting others on board.	13	An instrument for growth
4	An enabling concept for growth	14	Considered as active tool in marketing
5	An element that guides growth	15	Permissible tool in marketing the club
6	A simple instrument in use.	16	A feasible tool in the marketing domain
7	A marketing instrument for the growth	17	Available synergy for growth
8	A real idea at work in growth	18	A new concept of marketing
9	A tool or a concept that is good enough	19	Specific devised tool for growth
10	A marketing for club development	20	An ideal idea for growth

Table 4.3 provides further details regarding the perceptions of the participants and there is a general understanding that branding is seen as a tool, or an idea. It is evident that most members of SASCO see branding as something that provides the club an opportunity for growth.

What are the current branding activities that SASCO is engaging in?

The majority of participants agreed that the main branding activities of SASCO involved depicting the club's logo on the website and other social media sites. The participants also

identified activities such as campaigns that were aimed at increasing the awareness of the members regarding the value of the club and its roles, as well as club meetings that were scheduled as often as possible. The executive members said that they held meetings that were meant only for the executive members of the club, while other meetings were held that were meant for the entire club's membership.

It is important to note that these activities are the type that can spark club cohesion. It is these activities that are necessary to allow members to develop a common understanding of SASCO, as well as to build the unity needed for the club's progress. Some of the members of SASCO, however, suggested that there is a need to increase the present activities of the club to include camping as a means of ensuring that members are refreshed, as well as a time to recuperate from the academic exercises at campus. This was however strongly opposed by the executive of SASCO. Nonetheless, this may call for sensitisation of members of SASCO as regards the club's policy in respect of the additional activities sought out by some members. Table 4.5 below presents the details of the responses provided by the participants as per the interview schedule and the question that addressed this topic.

Table 4.5: SASCO Activities

Participant No.	Responses / Emerging Themes	Participant No.	Responses / Emerging Themes
1	The use of logo	11	Constant meetings with executive and members
2	Main use of the media	12	Consultations with old and new members.
3	Campaign adverts	13	Regular consultation
4	Meetings	14	Internal development of members
5	Visitations of non-members	15	Fund seeking activities
6	Consultation with prospective members	16	Media usage
7	Constant communication with new members	17	Club marketing

8	Regular consultations with new members.	18	Reprioritising the club commitment of existence
9	Regular campaigns	19	New structuring of club's affairs
10	Constant advertising	20	Visiting of new members

Among the activities agreed upon by the participants that SASCO could employ in order to gain new membership is consultation with new members, which is a method of building the developed brand. Table 4.5 provides details of the suggestions that members offered regarding this question.

This can also point to the fact that most members of the organization that were interviewed had been with the club for more than 2 years. The knowledge and response that they gave as stipulated in the table above further demonstrate a membership that is actively involved with its organization.

The above findings also show how the organization is becoming increasingly reliant on advertising and media in order to interact with its membership and implement its activities.

Are these branding activities (campaigning) fulfilling the organisation's objectives membership growth?

The response to this question was affirmative from both the executive members as well as the non-executive members of SASCO. This happens to be one of the cases where there was total unanimity between executive members and non-executive members of the club. All participants answered "Yes" to the above question and this therefore indicates that SASCO is towing the line required in terms of the objectives of increasing the membership of the club. This is a good sign for the development of the club, and may further strengthen the club in its future progression. The challenge of keeping all activities engaged in, in line with the objectives stipulated by a club can be a hindrance. However, at the same time, for a club to be considered successful in achieving its objectives indicates that the elected officials are competent in aligning themselves with the club's objectives and highlights their motivation to meet the club's ambitions.

4.4.3 Section C: Branding challenges

In this section of the interview a number of questions were posed to the participants. Responses will be provided according to the order in which the questions were posed.

What are the challenges that the SASCO brand is facing?

This question was answered by the executive members of SASCO and their responses were slightly different to those obtained from other members of the club. The executives argued that among the challenges faced by the brand were possible threats of other clubs stealing the limelight that SASCO presently finds itself in. This was also identified as a challenge of repositioning the club to increase its marketability. This was observed as a determining factor in the sustained growth of the club. The club's significance is also subject to possible challenges by rival groups that seek to recruit students from the campus.

One executive member of SASCO, in particular, said:

“When we talk of challenges to the SASCO brand, we refer to the need to reposition the club to be above all other clubs at the campus. Today we are so far but who knows how it will be tomorrow? If another club raises a high standard, then it becomes difficult for the club to be at the height of the game.”

This understanding was supported by the majority of the executive members of the club. One member of SASCO, however, said that the challenges that the club faces could be more internal than external, as in the case of sustaining the members that are already in the club, as opposed to attracting new membership. This indeed highlights the issue of sustainability. It can be argued that SASCO needs to identify the internal and external challenges faced in attracting and retaining membership. In this way SASCO at UKZN can develop strategies for combatting such challenges. This must however be appropriately communicated to the executive of SASCO so that they may task themselves with the necessary requisites in understanding the internal challenges of the club.

Table 4.6: Challenges faced by SASCO at UKZN

Participant No.	Responses / Emerging Themes	Participant No.	Responses / Emerging Themes
1	Raising the level of success	11	Growing the club using latest technology techniques
2	Ability to develop new techniques	12	Low level of resources
3	Funding of new activities	13	Poor connection to external supporters
4	Getting new levels of growth	14	Widening the club's operations
5	Developing strategies for expansion	15	Increasing success
6	The repositioning challenge	16	Creating new strategies
7	Improving the present image	17	Funding sources
8	Resources such as funding	18	Continuous encouragement from university offices
9	Lack of support from outside	19	Low support financially from student base
10	Additional incentives for new members	20	Incentives for old members that have contributed towards the club

According to the responses of SASCO's membership presented in Table 4.6, the challenges that were identified as affecting the club include financial matters, as well as the need to increase the club's growth. This was highlighted alongside the need to develop strategies for continued club expansion.

What are the challenges SASCO is facing in promoting its brand?

All participants answered this question differently. For example, Participant 1 said:

“SASCO has been facing challenges of competition from other clubs that need members and so there is a constant competition every time the club goes out to draw membership of students.”

Participant 2 said:

“There are minor challenges that SASCO faces such as slow responses from the students.”

Participant 4 commented that there are not many challenges that a club like SASCO faces as the club is well known, but in the future, there may be some challenges which they could not be certain of.

Other participants, for example Participants 15-20 agreed with what Participant 1 said. Participants 3, 5-10 as well as Participants 11-14 said that:

“The present challenges are hardly noticeable since we have been enjoying success and therefore we can't say that we really have challenges, but it is a real task to get members to join the club. Resources become a challenge as such and the other issues that can be regarded as challenges relate to the ability of the club to be able to conduct regular campaigns.”

It is important to realise that there are various answers that seem to come from different groups in the membership of SASCO. A number of issues were raised in addressing this question, one of which regards the response rate of students to campaigns, while the other was related to the clubs at UKZN competing for membership. In addition, the availability of resources was also mentioned as one of the challenges that SASCO faces. This calls for different approaches to address these challenges faced by SASCO at UKZN. It can be concluded that there are a multiplicity of challenges and that the remedy to these challenges has to be diversified. Recommendations to address these issues shall be addressed in the next chapter.

Do you feel that branding activities are affecting the membership?

Participant 1 said:

“Yes I believe so, since it has an impact on the growth of the club.”

This opinion was agreed with by the rest of the club's executives regarding the effect of branding and SASCO's growth. This was further reiterated by Participants 11, 13 and 17. Participant 13 commented that:

“Branding has had a meaningful impact in a sense that it makes the growth of the club to be realised. This has been noted too well in that most of the clubs that do not use branding do not experience the growth that we are experiencing.”

Six participants expressed similar sentiments in regard to the branding activities. One of these participants mentioned that:

“Branding activities are well known for their ability not only to gain membership but also to sustain the present members in the club. The image of the club in the hearts and minds of our members is very pivotal for their continued loyalty to the club that has been revealed to be worth serving at the campus.”

These are some of the statements that the members of SASCO expressed. It should be noted that these statements are in harmony with what the literature reviewed in this study indicates, as revealed in the next chapter of this dissertation. Branding activities can have impacts that a club can experience in the process of improving its branding. This is important to consider as it may be a source of motivation to increase such activities or to improve certain areas of weakness in terms of these activities. Branding activities have been known to create an impact on customers in organisations in the service sector and since there is a relationship in service sectors, it is no wonder that there is similarity in the findings of studies conducted in these sectors.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter presented the data obtained as the empirical findings of the study. The chapter provided a brief description of the site selected in this study, as well as a summary of the responses provided by the participants. The participants were interviewed and asked to provide responses in terms of three areas of interest, which included the growth of SASCO, the influence of branding on the club, as well as the challenges experienced in SASCO's growth. The participants reported that SASCO's growth is based on media publicity and the branding that has been created for the club. Among the challenges faced is competition from other clubs and the lack of funding as a resource. The next chapter shall deliberate on the conclusions and will provide the recommendations that can be made in terms of the findings of this study.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter concludes the presentation of the findings of this study. The chapter shall deal with a discussion of the empirical findings of the study in light of a review of literature related to the objectives of the study. The chapter begins with a recap of the main relevant findings of previous studies that have been conducted on the topic of branding and club growth. Thereafter, the primary empirical findings of the study will be evaluated in terms of the literature reviewed. The overall conclusion to the study as well as recommendations for SASCO to improve their branding and thereby increase membership shall be presented. Finally, recommendations for future suggested research shall also be addressed in this section.

5.2 Literature Review Findings

Membership growth is an important matter that can lead to the progress and persistence of a club. Sometimes the geographical location of a club may influence a certain type of growth. In this manner Wodon (2014) assert that the fears of competition and failure of a club's growth can be avoided by simply having the correct location for the club. This understanding is very well connected to the issues raised in the first objective of this study which deals with matters regarding club growth. In the growth of club membership, a club may decide to activate some incentives to encourage people to join. Such positions of acting enable the club to achieve its growth aims.

If the club conducted a meeting, the new members may not necessarily be asked to pay, but the existing members paid for the meals provided. In fundraising drives, a club may decide that the organisation must pay for certain costs and the club may contribute more, for example, in the sale of tickets to ordinary members of the club. This is another way in which a club can maintain its trustworthiness towards members.

The club may also change the venue at which meetings are held to different venues for the convenience of members in order to encourage them to attend the meeting. In this way, clubs may also attract certain sections of the society to their club and this therefore needs to be addressed in the strategy developed to attract new membership. The club may decide to use networking connections as well as weekly meetings, fellowship and service project events amongst the strategies used to increase club membership. Clubs may also use different

approaches, for example, some clubs may choose to meet for lunch whereas others may choose to meet for breakfast as the main scheduled meeting times.

Some university clubs may encourage their members to wear professional attire in order to attract new membership to the club. Another way of encouraging club growth is through the invitation of notable speakers to address members. Clubs have been known to invite prestigious guests to address the audience. Sometimes ambassadors of other states have also been invited to speak to members of SASCO at UKZN.

Branding has significance towards both customers as well as sellers of products. It has been noted that there is often a brand type of bond developed with the consumer in regard to pricing, promotion, product performance as well as the agenda of distribution. Brands have been known to inspire some individuals in terms of reinforcing their self-worth and, in some instances, have also been known to replace some religious exercises (Fournier 1997). The fact that such strong devotion is developed towards a brand also indicates the nature of affecting the growth of the club and thereby influencing various processes. This then serves to reinforce one of the main objectives of this study, in terms of investigating the branding influence in the growth of SASCO's membership.

Keller (2013) highlighted one of the elements that can influence the customer, and which may therefore result in an increase of a club's membership. Consumers could try to avoid a product's functional risk. In the uncertainty of the product not working according to the expectations of the customer, a risk therefore arises, but a brand may still ensure confidence of the usefulness of the product. In the service industry, such as in a university club, the assurance that the club performs according to what it is expected permits members' freedom and rest, instead of them having to search for other clubs that they may not be sure of. In addition to the above, Keller (2013) states that social risk can be avoided in relation to being embarrassed as a result of using a particular product or service. In the case of clubs such as a university club, the 'belongingness' developed as a result of belonging to a well-known or well-branded club gives members of the club pride and therefore provides more incentive for people to join the club.

There are however challenges faced in terms of branding, according to the literature reviewed in this study. Even as organisations try to service customers, there are tendencies for customers to be so caught up with the reputation and branding of an enterprise to the extent that they may

become more demanding. This is applicable to clubs as well as organisations that produce goods directly (Keller 2013). As a result of greater knowledge of customers due to marketing, the demand for quality service provision increases. The knowledge gained by potential members may prove challenging to increasing the membership of the SASCO club. This is mostly faced when students demand more due to existing competition as a result of the existence of many service providers. Keller (2013) also points out the issues of decreasing brand loyalty. This is an important area as commitment may decline from given clubs. As to whether SASCO is likely to face this scenario is arguable in terms of the scope of this research.

The emergence of various media communication platforms has also been noted as a challenge according to Keller (2013). Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter have become so available that competitors are making use of these tools in the process of gaining ground and increasing membership numbers. Another challenge is related to the promotional expenditures faced by clubs. These expenditures are a burden to a student club given that they may want to promote the club. A club may want to present a certain image, but as a result of a shortage of funds, this may not be possible.

5.3 Primary Data Findings

The data collected from this study has served the purpose of addressing the objectives of the study. Twenty participants from the SASCO club at UKZN participated in this study. Most of the participants have been members of the club for more than two years. This indicates that most of the participants have adequate knowledge of the club. A majority of the members claimed to be involved with the activities of the club. This therefore indicates that the correct sample was chosen for the study.

One of the themes that was denoted in the study was Sasco's growth. Though the club reported growth on account of active advertising, and campaigns and events among others, literature has some worthy comments on the subject. Literature indicates additional factors that were not indicated in the study. This is supported by literature such as the findings of a study conducted by Wodon, Wodon, and Wodon (2014). As a strategy to draw new members into the club some incentives are advanced to new members. The club considered in the study by Wodon et al (2014) offered to pay the additional cost that is meant for registration of new members. When the participants were asked how the club increases its membership, the majority of members noted that the club's membership was improved through the use of social media. Other members of SASCO pointed out that good leadership as well as positive relationships that have

been developed with prospective members of the club assist in increasing the club's membership. This therefore informs the study's findings in terms of understanding the club's growth strategies. This also indicates that SASCO is branded well and has therefore been able to achieve phenomenal growth through the branding exercise.

Another theme indicated in the findings is Sasco's activities in which the members pointed out the constant meetings, consultations conducted with members, adverts and others in growing the club. There are other activities that literature points out that were not noticed in the club's activities. A majority of the members in the study agreed that branding activities are helpful in meeting the objectives of the club. This shows that members are well informed of the objectives of the organisation.

One of the themes pointed out in the findings is the branding outlook which members indicated as an idea or a tool providing club growth opportunity. The majority of the participants in this study indicated that they have an understanding of branding as a concept or a tool that can bring about a benefit to the club. Whereas the executives referred to branding as a means or a concept for marketing the club, the non-executive members that participated in this study considered branding to simply be used as a marketing tool. This is interesting in that there is not much difference between the two categories of participants regarding the branding concept. This may also indicate that members who are knowledgeable about marketing and branding strategies are currently members of the club.

More than 75 % of the participants also indicated that SASCO is presently involved in the use of the club's logo and club symbols. This indicates that the club is using these signs to their best potential in order to brand the club more effectively. The use of signs is a tool that is positive when building the image of a brand in the minds of consumers. The use of club meetings, as well as continued awareness programs, does SASCO good service. This is a positive development which needs to be sustained.

The participants in this study pointed out the challenges that the club faces in terms of its development. They suggested that competitors are a threat to the club and that SASCO therefore faces the challenge of repositioning itself for marketability. The theme indicated in the findings pinpointed the challenges faced by the SASCO club where respondents indicated among others financial inadequacies as well the required club growth. These are therefore some

serious challenges that the club faces in the midst of sudden growth in membership that they have experienced (Wodon et. al 2014)

5.4 Study Limitations

In this section, the limitations of the study and the challenges faced by the researcher in conducting the study shall be addressed. During the process of conducting this study there were some delays experienced in getting hold of and gaining access to the main participants, especially the executive members of SASCO, who were committed to other engagements. However, they did eventually avail themselves for consultation and for participation in the interview exercise once they had been approached and had fulfilled their other obligations. The researcher was working with one of the organisations at UKZN and sometimes the workload proved to be challenging and took up a great deal of the participants' time, which caused a strain in terms of gaining access to the participants sought for this study. Nonetheless, in spite of these challenges, the interviews were eventually able to be conducted by the researcher once the participants had time available and had granted permission to be interviewed.

One of the main limitations of this study is that it dealt specifically with one particular case and therefore it may not be generalised to other university clubs in South Africa or abroad. However, this is the nature of qualitative research in that case studies apply to the particular case under investigation and generalisability is not necessarily intended in studies of this nature (Creswell 2009). Different studies may need to be conducted in other institutions of higher learning before a conclusive finding can be determined.

The case study in this research dealt with one university with world university ranking status and did not delve into private institutions to explore any variations. Nevertheless, in spite of these limitations, the study was able to underscore the nature of the phenomenon in this particular setting, namely the branding of SASCO at UKZN, and the impact of this branding in attracting membership to the club.

5.5 Overall Conclusion

This study has been able to underscore the importance of the topic of branding from the literature perspective to the empirical positioning of the subject under discussion, namely the branding of SASCO at UKZN. The literature reviewed has indicated that branding increases club growth and the primary data collected in the study has confirmed this. The study further confirmed that the activities that SASCO involves themselves with are capable of strengthening the resolve of branding the club in the minds of students. This principle is also applicable to organisations that produce goods and therefore the principle is wide-ranging in nature. Among the challenges noted both in literature as well as in the findings of this study is the existence of competitors that are a cause of concern for any club. It was also noted by the participants in the study that there is a challenge for developing strategies for growth. However, in terms of the activities that the club is involved with are the use of meetings and participants also agreed that the club is operating in accordance to the club's objectives.

5.6 Recommendations

The following recommendations are proposed based on the findings in this study:

- SASCO should develop strategies to sustain their growth patterns. Such strategies can best be determined by taking a short survey of understanding regarding what the needs of the club's members are, which can be addressed by the club.
- SASCO needs to develop networks to increase the resources that could be used for promoting the club's activities. The club needs to partner with other organisations or clubs that operate at UKZN to enable them to promote further marketing of their brand. These activities can lend support to the initiatives that the club initiates over the course of time.
- There is also a need for SASCO to survey the tools used by other clubs in growing their membership. Such tools can be modified and be used in sustaining the club's growth.
- Other social activities can be sought out and arranged. Such activities could include socialising with members and securing sponsors for events.
- There is a need for SASCO at UKZN to invite notable speakers from within the university as well as from wider society, in order to attract new membership to the club.

The notable speakers can include members of parliament as well as those who hold important positions in different sectors.

5.7 Recommended Research

It is recommended that a study be conducted regarding how clubs perform in public and private universities and what challenges are faced and strategies employed in each sector in terms of growing club membership. Moreover, there needs to be investigation to establish why SASCO has been unable to exist in the higher education private sector.

Further studies could entail an investigation of how social events impact on the growth of a club. This should be done both in public and private institutions and a comparative study may also be helpful in identifying the remedies to challenges faced in these public and private institutions.

5.8 Conclusion

This study investigated the role of branding in club membership growth, particularly the case of SASCO at UKZN. In this process, objectives were developed which allowed the researcher to investigate the concept of the growth of membership of the club, as well as the influences of branding of the club. The study undertook a qualitative research approach and directed its efforts to a university club that is significant in nature. This concluding chapter examined the findings of the study in relation to the literature reviewed. The empirical findings have shown the relationship between branding and the growth of SASCO's membership. The chapter concluded by proposing some recommendations for SASCO to increase their membership, as well as proposing future research in the field of branding.

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APPENDIX A : INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

In-depth Interview Number			
Participant's Demographic Information	1	Age	
	2	Position	
	3	Race	
	4	Gender	
Date of In-depth Interview			
Time Allocation			

INTRODUCTIONS

1. Membership Growth

- How long have been with the SASCO?
- Is there a specific official position that you hold with the organisation?
- Are you actively involved in the organisation?
- I would like to get your understanding of how SASCO grows its membership?

2. Branding Activities

- What is your understanding of the concept of branding?
- What are the current branding activities SASCO engaging?
- Are these branding activities (campaign) fulfilling the organisation objective i.e membership growth

3. Branding Challenges

- What are the challenges is "SASCO" brand facing?
- What are the challenges SASCO is facing in promoting its brand?
- Do you feel that branding activities are affecting the membership?

Research Title: Assessing Brand Growth of the South African Students Congress Membership at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

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Ethical Clearance number: HSS/1895/017

APPEDIX B: ETHICAL CLEARANCE



17 May 2018

Mr Sithembiso Mbambo (204511512)
School of Management, IT & Governance
Westville Campus

Dear Mr Mbambo,

Protocol reference number: HSS/1895/017M

New Project Title: Assessing Brand Growth of the South African Students Congress Membership at the University of KwaZulu-Natal

Approval notification – Amendment Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application for an amendment dated 10 May 2018 has now been granted Full Approval as follows:

- Change in Title

Any alterations to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study must be reviewed and approved through an 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.

Best wishes for the successful completion of your research protocol.

Yours faithfully

Professor U Bob
University Dean of Research

/pm

Cc Supervisor: Dr Andrisha Beharry
Cc Academic Leader Research: Professor Isabel Martins
Cc School Administrator: Ms Angela Pearce

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