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THE DETERMINANTS OF MARKET MAVEN TENDENCIES: PRELIMINARY RESULTS FROM A COHORT OF FEMALE CONSUMERS OF BEAUTY PRODUCTS

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—Abstract —
A trajectory in the use of beauty products is envisaged, owing to the impalpable benefits conveyed to consumers such as status and physical attractiveness, among other psychological and symbolic dispositions. This upsurge is attributed to the role of market mavens who are in principle, valuable for filling the omitted information gaps existing within the market. This study is in response to calls for unremitting replications on the nomological variables that are antecedent to the market mavenism construct, albeit within the context of female consumers in the southern Gauteng region of South Africa. In this preliminary test, a self-administered survey technique using a conveniently selected sample of female consumers was applied, yielding 158 usable responses. The results of the descriptive statistics revealed a mean score ranking above 4.0, thereby signalling agreeability among the respondents. Initial exploratory factor analysis steered the extraction of two personal factors (consumer innovativeness and physical vanity) and two social context factors (subjective norms and social self-image) that are salient towards calibrating the efficacy of the female market maven. Cronbach's alpha coefficient values greater than 0.70 ascertained data quality, whereas the positive correlation coefficient values, significant at $p<0.05$, depicted linearity of relationships among the variables. These maiden findings suggest that it is possible to anchor the construct of market mavenism within a broader behavioural science theory. Therefore, it is recommended that marketing managers capitalise on the contribution of market mavens as auxiliary dispensers of new product information.

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1. INTRODUCTION

According to a special report on cosmetics and beauty products (Beauty Economic Outlook, 2018), the global cosmetics and personal care market accounted for US$445 billion sales and US$39 168 million in revenue during the 2017-2018 trading period. In South Africa alone, the total cosmetics sector accounts for a 0.7 percent contribution to the entire retail level sales (ZAR20 016 million sales), after food and beverages (Statistics South Africa, 2017). While this value seems infinitesimal, it is noteworthy that South African women continue to use cosmetic and beauty products as they convey both tangible and intangible benefits that include the accentuation of physical beauty, healthy skin and self-confidence (Korai, 2017). Nonetheless, the beauty market is considerably enriched with changes triggered by the rapid development of new products, implying that competition is inevitable; whereas, as the competition for markets intensifies, coupled with the ever-increasing costs of advertising, the need for interpersonal communication becomes ubiquitous (Verlegh & Moldovan, 2008). Specifically, marketers are predisposed to rely on word-of-mouth (WOM) and buzz marketing, among other available free communication tools. In light of this, the flow of information is obstructed by numerous intermediaries, termed 'special influences' owing to their affinity to access mass media communication earlier than the rest of the consumers within a market. Thus, by invoking the role of special influences such as market mavens in WOM dissemination, minimal costs are inferred to marketers.

The concept of market mavenism was coined by Feick and Price (1987:85), who singled out market mavens as "individuals who possess information about places to shop, many kinds of products and other facets of the markets, initiate discussions with other consumers and respond to requests from consumers for market information". Likewise, Fitzmaurice (2011:72) defines market mavens as "individuals who are abreast with the marketplace and who proactively engage with other consumers in disseminating knowledge about different products and the marketplace". These definitions uphold the dual role of mavens in finding product and market-related information as well as disseminating the same to other consumers. In support, contemporary practitioners describe market mavens as

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"individuals who act as hubs, gatherers and disseminators of general market information, who have a perceived high level of credibility and expertise" (Coussement, 2018:2). Principally, the credibility of market mavens is derived from their vast knowledge of products and the various elements of the marketing mix, in general. At the secondary level, the credibility of market mavens is evoked at their level of product involvement and actual experience with products (Goldsmith, Flynn & Clark, 2012), which distinguishes them from other special influences such as opinion leaders. As such, market mavens are renowned as fundamental agents of change, owing to their ability to sway other consumers at an interpersonal level.

2. RESEARCH GAPS

Marketers target market mavens as promotional agents to convey and leverage product information to the broader consumer network. Moreover, the potential reach and social interpersonal influence of market mavens renders them a valuable mechanism for marketing beauty products and thus, worthy of consideration. On the other hand, Abratt, Nel and Nezer (1995) point to the need for continued replication of the work started by Feick and Price (1987) within emerging countries such as South Africa. Despite such calls, scant research has been conducted in recent years (Deon, 2011) on the role of South African mavens in retail success. While this is so, no research has heeded the call by Goldsmith et al. (2012:392) "for more empirical research to formulate different versions of the network of nomological variables that are antecedents and consequences of market maven tendencies". In light of this, the present study sought to adapt a behavioural science theory upon understanding the idiosyncrasies of market mavens.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Stimulus organism response (SOR) theory

The SOR theory aims to integrate individual responses to different marketing scenarios, as framed within a threefold set of iterative elements, namely the stimulus, organism and response. The stimulus depicts the antecedents, which are a pre-cursor to the actual behaviour of consumers in a particular purchase scenario

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(Wu & Li, 2018). Within the consumer behaviour domain, Schiffman et al. (2014) state that consumer psychology and buying decisions are best explained within two frames of inputs. First, consumers are constrained by socio-cultural forces that are external and uncontrollable. Therefore, marketers easily target the desired markets by manipulating external factors such as reference groups and commercial marketing stimuli (Lantos, 2010). On the other hand, consumer buying behaviour could be influenced by internal, state-of-mind variables that comprise psychological factors, perceptions and personality traits.

Interceding between environmental stimuli and consumers' behavioural responses, the organism element represents how consumers translate and process the stimuli and decide whether or not and how to act on those cues presented by the market or environment (Wu & Li, 2018; Lantos, 2010). Upon assessing the six-item measure that was put forward by Feick and Price (1987), the organismic state replicates a person's tendency to be a general provider of many types of market-related information on an informal basis. Upon validating the scale, the scholars obtained high reliability values (Cronbach's alpha =0.82), implying high internal consistency, which contests possible replicability of the measure in other contexts such as South Africa. Thus, the market maven tendency is considered an abstract and global trait in this study that is universally affected by a plethora of lower-order stimuli. Finally, the response element within the SOR theory relates to the output (Schiffman et al., 2014), suggesting all aspects comprising decisions about products, brands, stores and purchases. While this is so, consumer responses span from negative reactions, termed avoidance behaviours, to positive reactions, labelled approach behaviours. Nevertheless, to uphold brevity, whereas this paper comprises only a primer to a broader study, the response element, namely trial probability was deliberately omitted from the discussion.

In seeking to enumerate the overarching factors that influence the tendency to 'search for' and 'disseminate' market information as a market maven would, the individual's state of mind as well as the social context wherein the buying situation occurs are considered. Primarily, the psychographic factors comprise consumer innovativeness and perceptions of vanity, thereby alluding to the personality and perceptions inherent to a market maven. Secondarily, subjective norms influence and social self-image alludes to the influence of the broader social context. These factors are explained next.

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3.2 Consumer innovativeness

The term innovativeness refers to the degree to which a consumer adopts new ideas, relatively earlier than other members do, of the social system (Workman & Lee, 2017). While appraising the literature, numerous scholars define consumer innovativeness as a general trait and/or characteristic that represents an individual's tendency to adopt innovations that are introduced in the market earlier than others do (Schiffman et al., 2014). Consumer innovativeness can be delineated from a dual perspective. First, domain-specific consumer innovativeness reflects the tendency to lead in terms of being innovative in a specific product category and not in other product categories (Steenkamp & Maydeu-Olivares, 2015). On the other hand, innate consumer innovativeness, which is a general personality trait, characterises the overall inclination to adopt new products faster. Goldsmith, Clark & Goldsmith (2006) proved that general consumer innovativeness is positively associated with market maven tendencies. In other words, the personality of consumer innovators tends to have a significant influence on information dissemination tendencies among individuals. This latter classification plays a significant role in depicting the psychological tendencies of market mavens and is thus, applied in this research.

3.3 Vanity

The notion of vanity functions as a multifaceted component that pertains to the physical appearance and achievement of one's personal goals. Drawing from the comprehensive definitions of vanity coined by Netemeyer, Burton and Lichtenstein (1995:612), vanity refers to an "excessive concern for and/or a positive and perhaps inflated view of one's physical appearance", whereas achievement vanity refers to an "excessive concern for and/or a positive and perhaps inflated view of one's personal achievements". According to Jackson (1992), as well as Wang and Waller (2006), physical vanity is more relevant among women, since women are more concerned about their physical appearance than men are. Specifically, Wang and Waller (2006) found that females who viewed physical appearance highly attested to using a greater variety and spent more money on grooming products. Moreover, they read more beauty and fashion magazines and recalled more names of fashion models than their male counterparts did. Thus, in the research by Workman and Lee (2017), women scored higher on vanity physical concern, vanity achievement concern, vanity achievement view, whereas fashion change agents such as mavens and opinion

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leaders scored higher on vanity physical concern and vanity physical view. Therefore, since materialism is related to market maven tendencies, this study predicts that there could also be a direct effect between vanity and market maven tendencies among female consumers.

3.4 Subjective norms

Consumers operate in accordance with the expectations and accustomed rules that govern the broader society wherein they live. Subjective norms refer to the belief that an individual or group of people approve and/or support a particular behaviour (Schiffman et al., 2014). Such approval and expectation pressures emanate from the immediate reference groups. These groups comprise a series of individuals with whom consumers compare themselves. In other words, they form an influential force that drives social norms. While considering the notion that market mavens have an innate desire to find and share product-related information, such altruistic behaviour (Fitzmaurice, 2011) lends them to be pre-disposed towards finding information that is likely to be of interest to their peers and the broader social circle. In other words, market mavens represent an attractive target segment to advertisers and other marketers since they introduce new ideas and norms to other consumers, thereby swaying their product beliefs in their favour. This is evident in a study by Yang (2013) who found a significant causal relationship between subjective norms and market mavenism in online public markets in both the United States of America (USA) and Chinese markets.

3.5 Social self-image

Since self-image presumes that part of how we see ourselves comes from our perception of how others see us, Schiffman et al. (2014) attest that social self-image within the consumer behaviour literature reflects how consumers feel they are viewed by others. This yields elements of social comparison, whereby one compares his/her social status with that of others in order to enhance some aspects of the self. The scholars allude that consumers enhance their social self-image by selecting products or brands with images that reflect the norms espoused by their immediate reference groups. Similarly, Sudbury-Riley (2016) emphasise that market maven tendencies significantly enable one to express his/her self-concept and identity within a group. Put simply, social self-image is an outcome of the social environment where consumers create and adopt ‘the self’ through product usage. Therefore, social self-image may be a particularly significant variable within collectivist cultures such as is prevailing in South Africa.

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4. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of selected factors on the market maven tendencies of female consumers. Specifically, the study relates to market mavens who are renowned consumers that demonstrate the affinity to collect and distribute product-related information, among which beauty products are a part.

5. METHODOLOGY

A quantitative research approach orientated towards a positivist paradigm was applied in this work, whereby theories are tested deductively to explain social phenomena (Field, 2013). In this preliminary test, data were collected only once from a singular sample (single cross-sectional, descriptive design).

5.1 Sampling and measures

The unit for analysis for this research were female consumers between the ages of 18 and 65 years, across all ethnic groups and residing in the southern Gauteng region of South Africa, at the time of the survey. Commencing with the researchers' immediate acquaintances, the sample elements were drawn using a referral-chain method, termed snowball sampling, owing to the unavailability of a complete list wherewithal to frame specific market mavens. A self-administered, paper and pencil-based survey was piloted between 1 January 2018 and 30 March 2018. Specifically, data were collected using a structured questionnaire comprising demographic questions as well as 33 items depicting the study variables.

All scale items were operationalised from previously established scales; they were anchored on a seven-point Likert scale, affixed to a strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7) continuum. Consumer innovativeness was adapted from Kim, Fiore, Niehm, and Jeong (2010), while vanity was measured using Netemeyer et al. (1995) consumer vanity scale. Subjective norms influence was measured by the Steenkamp and Maydeu-Olivares (2015) scale, whereas social self-image scale was adapted from a study by Kim and Hyun (2013). Moreover, the six-item market maven scale developed in the seminal work of Feick and Price (1987) was used to identify the market maven tendencies of female consumers. Modifications

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were made to the validated scales to fit the context of seeking out and disseminating information about beauty products. Notably, of the 160 participants that were interviewed, only two reported a low score on the maven scale (below 19) and were, therefore, excluded from the study, as there was no adequate evidence of their market maven tendencies, yielding 158 usable responses (98 percent response rate).

6. RESULTS

Data were statistically analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS Version 25.0).

6.1 Sample profile

After considering the six-item market maven scale anchored on seven points, a trichotomisation of summated scores was calculated in the order of low maven tendencies (score of 19-30) comprising 31 percent respondents (n=49) and high maven tendencies (score of 31-42) comprising 69 percent of the respondents (n=109). The majority of these self-reported female mavens held a Grade 12/Matric as the highest qualification (34%; n=54), with incomes ranging between ZAR5 000 and ZAR15 000, whereas the black African (90%; n=142) mavens were highly represented in the sample owing to the survey location. The median age in the study was 29 to 40 years old. In terms of preference for beauty products, Mac™ (33%; n=52) and Revlon™ (29%; n=46) were considered the leading brands in the market, despite their international status.

6.2 Exploratory factor analysis (EFA)

The EFA procedure was applied in view of summarising the data into meaningful components. Specifically, Principal component analysis was deemed as an appropriate method for extracting factors owing to its objective gesture, which is to determine the minimum number of factors that would account for maximum variance in the data (Pallant, 2013). The component matrix was rotated using an orthogonal rotation method at right angles (Varimax rotation) with Kaiser normalisation, converging in five iterations to produce a clear and easy-to-interpret factor solution. Upon interpreting the EFA output, the inter-item correlation matrix was observed, whereby all the variables were highly correlated.

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Subsequently, factorability of the data was established by observing the Kaiser-Meyer Olkin measure of sampling adequacy (KMO=0.645), which was greater than 0.50 as well as the large Bartlett's test of sphericity (chi=828.610; df=351), which was significant at the 5 percent level of significance (p<0.01).

Factor analysis results are evaluated against the complete rotated component matrix. In doing so, there are fundamental thresholds to be observed. Hair, Celsi, Ortinau and Bush (2013) state that factors should be omitted if the Eigen values are negative and/or less than 1.0. Secondly, for the EFA procedure to be meaningful, the cumulative percentage of variance should be in excess of 60 percent, across all extracted components. Whereas no restriction was placed on the number of factors to be extracted, five components were extracted. The five-factor structure yielded components with Eigen values ranging from 2.359 to 7.254, comprising a cumulative percentage of variance of 64.3 percent of the overall variance.

At the level of individual scale items, four item-statistics criteria were observed in accordance with Hair et al. (2013). First, an item should be deleted if its factor loading is less than 0.50 or if it cross-loads onto another factor unexpectedly. Secondly, items that depict item-to-total correlation values below 0.40 should be eliminated since they fail to exist cohesively with other similar items on the same factor. Thirdly, items with communality values below 0.50 should be rejected as they miss the mark in terms of demonstrating a strong association with other items on the measurement scale (Field, 2013). Finally, an item should be retained in a study if an inspection of the values in the 'Cronbach's alpha if item is deleted' column suggests an improvement in the Cronbach's alpha value for that scale. The results for the EFA are presented in the rotated component matrix on Table 5.1.

Table 1: Rotated component matrix

Measurement scale item	Components							
	1	2	3	4	5	Communalities	Corrected item to total correlations	Cronbach's alpha if item is deleted
Consumer innovativeness scale: (α=0.815; Average inter-item correlation =0.489)								
C1: Seek out new beauty products information					0.716	0.551	0.516	0.797
C2: Seek out new beauty products situations					0.661	0.528	0.599	0.781
C3: Go to new beauty products information centres					0.526	0.505	0.404	0.796
C4: Connect with media on new beauty products					0.533	0.512	0.486	0.801
C5: Continuously looking for new local beauty products					0.827	0.724	0.672	0.762
C6: Continuously looking for new global beauty products					0.559	0.496	0.490	0.814
C7: Continuously seeking new experiences					0.666	0.553	0.639	0.770
C8: Learning opportunities about new beauty products					0.601	0.520	0.550	0.790
Vanity scale: (α=0.836; Average inter-item correlation =0.502)								
C9: The way I look is extremely important to me		0.727				0.676	0.500	0.824
C10: Looking my best is worth the effort		0.777				0.682	0.692	0.777
C11: People are envious of my good looks		0.727				0.552	0.679	0.784
C12: People notice how attractive I am		0.575				0.564	0.522	0.816
C13: My looks are very appealing to others		0.695				0.682	0.740	0.766
C14: Want others to look up to me because of my accomplishments		0.584				**0.453**	0.564	0.839*
C15: I am more concerned with professional success than most people I know		**0.339**				**0.445**	0.399	0.843*
C16: I am a very accomplished person		**0.412**				**0.404**	0.404	0.837*
C17: My achievements are highly regarded by others		**0.448**				**0.453**	0.486	0.836*
Subjective norms scale: (α=0.845; Average inter-item correlation =0.514)								
C18: Others like the beauty products I buy			0.834			0.706	0.663	0.797
C19: Identify with others			0.600			0.562	0.554	0.811
C20: Sense of belonging			0.619			0.682	0.628	0.799
C21: Only try beauty products			0.752			0.570	0.629	0.798

my friends approve of								
C22: Try out beauty products that make a good impression			0.820			0.712	0.621	0.824
Social self-image scale: (α=0.832; Average inter-item correlation =0.498)								
C23: Similar to how I am seen by others				0.660		0.492	0.611	0.827
C24: Popular with how I am seen by others				0.737		0.574	0.623	0.819
C25: Gets along with how I am seen by others				0.802		0.705	0.689	0.807
C26: More identifiable with myself, as seen by others				0.740		0.691	0.670	0.812
C27: Image is consistent with how I am seen by others				0.775		0.674	0.706	0.802
Market maven scale: α=0.826; Average inter-item correlation =0.461								
C28: Like introducing many kinds of products to others	0.608					0.815	0.455	0.825
C29: Give information about various beauty products	0.897					0.802	0.816	0.749
C30: Give specific information about brands	0.695					0.831	0.541	0.810
C31: Give information about places to shop	0.779					0.636	0.646	0.787
C32: Give information about best buy	0.701					0.746	0.560	0.805
C33: Considered a good source of information	0.707					0.648	0.567	0.804
Eigen values	7.254	3.255	3.250	2.704	2.359			
% of variance explained	27.841	11.469	10.109	8.667	6.208			
Cumulative % of variance	27.841	39.310	49.419	58.086	64.294			
Extraction method: Principal component analysis *Rotation method: Varimax with Kaiser normalisation converged in 5 iterations* **Item deleted from further analysis (C14, C15, C16 and C17)*								

Generally, most of the items aligned as expected with their respective factors (components), whereas the EFA statistical output provided justification for the deletion of four scale items. Item C14 was deleted based on weak communalities (0.453), which were below the acceptable threshold of 0.50 (Hair et al., 2013). The item statistics further reflected that the Cronbach alpha value would increase if C14 were deleted. In addition, items C15 (0.339), C16 (0.412) and C17 (0.448) reflected weak and insignificant factor loadings. Furthermore, the communalities along these three items fell below 0.50, suggesting that the items did not converge well with similar items on the consumer vanity scale, while closer inspection indicated that they measured achievement concern and perception, implying the incoherence of the achievement vanity scale with this research. Subsequently, the four items were omitted from further analysis.

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Whilst the communality values for C6 (0.496) and C23 (0.492) were slightly below 0.50, both items were retained in the study based on their acceptable factor loadings and communality values. On the other hand, a de-brief session with a statistician revealed that their omission would yield an altered conceptualisation of the consumer innovativeness and social self-image scales. Thereafter, it was decided to retain the scale items in this study. The factors were labelled market maven tendency, physical vanity, subjective norms, social self-image and consumer innovativeness, respectively.

6.3 Reliability and validity of the study

The study was subjected to reliability and validity testing in lieu of establishing the quality of the measurement. Initially, a Cronbach's alpha test was applied, wherein values ranging between 0.815 and 0.845 were reported, which is above the 0.70 benchmark for acceptable reliability (Pallant, 2013), thus inferring internal consistency among the scales. Conversely, content, convergent and discriminant validity were assessed. Content validity was evaluated through consultation sessions with two disciplinary experts, who helped to improve the language and phrasing of statements on the instrument. Secondly, the EFA procedure served to capture the convergent validity by assessing the amount of variance captured by the measurement scale. In addition, the high communalities (between 0.492 and 0.831) and average inter-item correlation values (between 0.461 and 0.514) were within the acceptable thresholds. Thirdly, the theoretical uniqueness of each component in the study was ascertained by the bivariate correlation matrix, depicting values below 0.60 (Field, 2013), thereby surmising discriminant validity of this work.

6.4 Correlations analysis

In view of assessing the strength and direction of relationships among the identified factors, a bivariate correlation analysis procedure was conducted, where the size of Pearson's correlation coefficient as well as the significance level, were reviewed. Table 5.2 depicts the correlation analysis results.

Table 2: Correlations analysis results

Dimension	MMT	PV	SN	SSI	CI
Market maven tendency	1				
Physical vanity	0.313*	1			
Subjective norms	0.170	0.197	1		
Social self-image	0.431**	0.335*	0.179	1	
Consumer innovativeness	0.537**	0.422**	0.295*	0.278*	1
Mean	**5.094**	**4.940**	**3.676**	**5.377**	**4.145**
Standard deviation	**1.196**	**1.425**	**1.466**	**1.192**	**1.289**

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed);**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)
CI=Consumer innovativeness; PV=Physical vanity; SN=Subjective norms; SSI=Social self-image; MMT=Market maven tendency

While following the rule of thumb put forward by Hair et al. (2013), weak to moderate linear relationships were observed among the variables ranging between +0.278 and +0.537 at both the $p<0.05$ and $p<0.01$ levels of significance. Moreover, in view of countering non-normality of data where multivariate statistics are applied, descriptive statistics were computed where the mean values in this work were larger than 4.0 (except for SN) while the standard deviation values were spread narrowly around the population variance, thereby signalling the level of agreeability among the respondents. In addition, the skewness and kurtosis statistics were within the recommended range of ±2, as suggested by Field (2013).

7. DISCUSSION

Drawing from the results of this study, Factor 1 was labelled **market maven tendency**; comprising six items (C28- C33), which represented a 27.8 percent of variance with an extracted eigen value of 7.254. The loadings along this factor ranged from 0.608 to 0.707, depicting satisfactory convergence of the scale items along the respective constructs. Furthermore, the factor depicted a large arithmetic mean ($\bar{x}$ =5.094; SD=1.196), whereas the variable also correlated positively with physical vanity (r=0.313; $p<0.05$), social self-image at (r=0.431; $p<0.01$) and consumer innovativeness (r=0.537; $p<0.01$). These results paint a clear-cut picture of the positive impact market maven tendencies have as the outcome variable anchoring the identified stimulus. The second factor was labelled **physical vanity** (items C9-C13), explaining 11.5 percent variance with an Eigen value of 3.255 at

extraction. The loadings along this factor ranged from 0.575 to 0.777, whereas the mean value above 4.0 ($\bar{x}$ =4.940; SD=1.425) reflects the level of agreeability among the consumers regarding the salience of physical vanity perceptions and concern in the information dissemination appetite of female mavens. These results are in keeping with Workman and Lee (2017), who found that female consumers place more emphasis on physical appearance. Therefore, the relationship between vanity and beauty products concern is revealed in the expectation of being noticed for one's looks. In addition, the factor correlates positively with consumer innovativeness (r=0.422; p<0.01) on the inter-factor correlation matrix.

Factor 3 was named **subjective norms** (items C18-C22), with factor loadings ranging between 0.600 and 0.834, while yielding a 10.1 percent of variance with an Eigen value of 3.250 at extraction. However, a moderate, linear relationship was identified between this factor and consumer innovativeness only (r=0.295; p<0.01), whereas the mean value ($\bar{x}$ =3.676; SD=1.466) was slightly below the arithmetic mean. These results are in agreement with a study by Yang (2013) that consumers expose themselves in situations where they will be inclined to find information that would be of interest to their broader social circle. Factor 4 was labelled **social self-image**, depicting five items (C23-C27), which explained 8.7 variance with an Eigen value of 2.704 at extraction. The five items that loaded satisfactorily on this factor depicted loading values ranging between 0.660 and 0.802, with the largest mean value ($\bar{x}$ =5.377; SD=1.192) being reported along this factor. Whether it is done intentionally or unintentionally, the penchant to compare oneself with others is but a pervasive social phenomenon. On the other hand, the factor reported moderate relational strength with consumer innovativeness (r=0.278; p<0.05) and physical vanity (r=0.335; p<0.05) implying that to keep up with an appealing image, consumers should constantly be on the look-out for new beauty products in the market.

The scale items C1 to C8 loading on factor 5 were labelled **consumer innovativeness**, contributing 6.2 percent percentage variance on the component matrix, whereas the Eigen value at extraction was 2.359. Interestingly, this factor demonstrated large mean values ($\bar{x}$ =4.145; SD=1.289) and yet the factor was positively correlated with all identified factors in this study, albeit at the p<0.01 and p<0.05 levels. These results are in keeping with previous scholars who found a positive relationship between consumer innovativeness and market maven tendency (Steenkamp & Maydeu-Olivares, 2015; Goldsmith et al., 2006). While

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this is so, it is established in this work that the general inclination to be innovative increases correspondingly with an increase in physical vanity perceptions and social self-image perceptions of female market mavens.

8. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTION

This study extends the body of knowledge by focusing on market mavens as they form universal targets that transmit new beauty product information within a social system. As such, the behaviour of market mavens is largely susceptible to external social forces (referent groups) in order to have a stronger presence among their social groups (subjective norms) or simply improve their social status (social self-image). Conversely, female mavens hold the personal view and conviction that consuming beauty products will deliver both status, physical and psychological value. This infers that consumers place more emphasis on accentuating their concerns and/or perceptions of physical vanity through testing new beauty products. As a result, marketers take advantage of fabricating beauty products with top-notch aesthetics in order to create favourable images in the minds of the consumer. Nonetheless, the existence of other factors beyond those identified in this study cannot be ruled out.

The EFA procedure was conducted based on preliminary results comprising 58 female mavens only, which limits the generalisability of these findings since we did not perform rigorous statistical analysis on the results. In this vein, we urgently call upon researchers interested in this severely neglected section of the literature on South African market mavens to go beyond a mere identification of factors influencing this prevalent and somewhat bewildering consumer behaviour. Future research utilising larger sample sizes should examine the trichotomisation categories of market mavens (low, medium and high) in order to detect the significant differences among the members in these control groups. Further, scholarly submissions of a rigorous fashion are needed to investigate the role of the male maven and other categories of mavenship such as e-mavenism, thrift mavenisn and price mavenism. Therefore, a future broader study by the scholars intends to contribute by developing theoretical frameworks and models of this nature.

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