

## I shop, therefore I am.



The theory of self-verification suggests that individuals have a continuous drive towards defining themselves and have been seen to purchase brands as a tool to express their self-concepts. Individuals who are developing their connection to the brand (self-brand connection), are often exposed to some form of brand experience. This brand experience is comprised of four dimensions, namely affective, sensory, cognitive and behavioural brand experience. Thereafter, individuals may also wish to share their self-concepts and brand experiences with others through the use of word-of-mouth (WOM).

A research study was conducted by Christelda Naidoo, a [Master's](#) student in the [Department of Marketing Management](#), to discover whether a relationship exists between individuals' self-brand connection, brand experience and word-of-mouth when purchasing luxury brands. The study was conducted amongst 289 respondents, through the use of an electronic self-administered questionnaire.

The results of this study indicate a positive relationship between self-brand connection and brand experience. Sensory, behavioural and cognitive brand experience dimensions were found to have a medium strength relationship with self-brand connection. Whilst the affective brand experience dimension, was seen to have a strong relationship with self-brand connection. The findings also suggest that there is a positive relationship between self-brand connection and WOM.

This study also confirmed that a relationship between brand experience and WOM exists, but indicates that individuals are more likely to spread positive WOM if they have a favourable sensory or affective brand experience. When both self-brand connection and the brand experience dimensions are considered in the same analysis, only sensory brand experience was found to significantly predict WOM. This finding suggests that managers should focus on enticing all five of the customer's senses during a shopping experience.

*This research was conducted as part of the fulfilment of the [Master's degree](#) in Marketing Management in 2016 with the [Department of Marketing Management](#) by Christelda Naidoo under the supervision of [Dr Liezl-Marié Kruger](#).*