A VISUAL SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF THE HIDDEN MEANINGS, MYTHS AND IDEOLOGIES IN OLD MUTUAL SOUTH AFRICA’S CSR 2.0 CORPORATE ADVERTISING

by

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A visual semiotic analysis of the hidden meanings, myths and ideologies in Old Mutual South Africa's CSR 2.0 corporate advertising

I declare that the above dissertation is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

[Signature]

24 May 2017
DATE
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation is dedicated to my late father, Joseph Hendrik Eiman, who always encouraged me to fear nothing, be more, learn more and question more.

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this exploratory study was to investigate the underlying meanings of Old Mutual South Africa’s (OMSA’s) CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements. It specifically examined the underlying myths and ideologies conveyed through the texts. This qualitative study was conducted by means of a visual semiotic analysis (Machin 2012) on eight CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements, which were purposively selected. A theoretical framework to measure visual CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements was developed, which aided in the sampling, data analysis and interpretation processes.

The findings of the study indicated that by positioning its CSR 2.0 positively in terms of change and transformation, progress and equal opportunities for all citizens, OMSA is fostering stakeholder-organisation relationships. In addition, it was also found that OMSA adopts established representational tropes of CSR 2.0 and use them repetitively that firmly entrenches the intended/encoded message to the viewer.

Key terms: CSR 2.0; CSR 1.0; visual semiotic analysis; iconography; denotation; connotation; carriers of connotation; iconographic symbolism; myth; ideology; contextualisation; representation; corporate identity; corporate advertising; interpretivist; realism.
OPSOMMING

Die doel van hierdie verkennende studie was om die onderliggende betekenis van CSR 2.0 korporatiewe advertensies in Ou Mutual Suid-Afrika te ondersoek. Dit is spesifiek gemoeid met die onderliggende mites en ideologieë wat deur middel van die tekste oorgedra word. Die kwalitatiewe studie is uitgevoer deur middel van 'n visuele semiotiese ontleiding (Machin 2012) op agt CSR 2.0 korporatiewe advertensies, wat doelbewus gekies is. 'n Teoretiese raamwerk, om visuele CSR 2.0 korporatiewe advertensies te meet, is ontwikkel, dit het bygedra tot die steekproefneming, data-analise en interpretasie prosesse.

Die bevindinge van die studie dui daarop dat deur CSR 2.0 positief in terme van verandering en transformasie, vooruitgang, en gelyke geleentheid vir alle burgers te posisioneer, OMSA verhoudings met belanghebbendes kan bevorder. Daarbenewens is ook gevind dat OMSA gevestigde temas van CSR 2.0 implementeer en hulle herhaaldelik gebruik wat juist die beoogde / gekodeerde boodskap stewig aan die kyker bevestig.

**Sleutelwoorde:** CSR 2.0; CSR 1.0; visuele semiotiese ontleiding; ikonografie; denotasie; konnotasie; draers van konnotasie; ikonografiese simboliek; mites; ideologie; kontekstualisering; verteenwoordiging; korporatiewe identiteit; korporatiewe advertensies; interpretivistiese; realisme.
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B-BBEE</td>
<td>Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEE</td>
<td>Black Economic Empowerment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSI</td>
<td>Corporate Social Investment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSR / CSR 1.0</td>
<td>Corporate Social Responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSR 2.0</td>
<td>Corporate Sustainability and Responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSR2</td>
<td>Corporate Social Responsiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSR3</td>
<td>Corporate Social Rectitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESG</td>
<td>Environmental, Social, Governance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPR</td>
<td>Marketing Public Relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NBI</td>
<td>National Business Initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OMF</td>
<td>Old Mutual Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OMSA</td>
<td>Old Mutual South Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PR</td>
<td>Public Relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAIBE</td>
<td>South African Institute of Business ethics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAICA</td>
<td>South African Institute of Chartered Accountants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SASIX</td>
<td>South African Social Investment Exchange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SED</td>
<td>Social Economic Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRI</td>
<td>Social Responsibility Index</td>
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<tr>
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Organisations’ actions should be grounded in CSR 2.0 and not merely an act of philanthropy or a fad (Manoiu, Gadiuta & Arslan 2016:377).

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this exploratory study is to investigate the underlying meanings of Old Mutual South Africa’s (OMSA’s) CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements, and specifically, the underlying myths and ideologies conveyed through the texts. In the context of this study, CSR 2.0 refers to a new transformational approach to CSR, which is entrenched in the philosophy (DNA) of responsible business (Visser 2012a; 2012b). This concept is expanded on in section 2.4. This qualitative study is conducted by means of a visual semiotic analysis (Machin 2012) on eight CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements, which were purposively selected. A theoretical framework to measure visual CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements was developed, which aided in the sampling, data analysis and interpretation processes. This study endeavoured to address the research gap in the area of CSR 2.0 marketing communication. Regardless of extensive research in advertising and CSR 1.0 in general, CSR 2.0 marketing communication specifically is still under-researched. To this end, chapter 1 provides the theoretical and conceptual background for the study.

This chapter serves as an introduction to the overall study and details the context by presenting the background and an outline of the relevance to the communication discipline, and discussing other relevant research in the field. The purpose and objectives of the study are explained, followed by a discussion of the theoretical conceptualisation of the key constructs. Thereafter, the formulation of the research problem, together with the interrelated research questions, are discussed. The research paradigm, design, the anticipated findings and their contributions to the communication discipline are also addressed. The ethical considerations are explained, followed by the chapter outline.
1.2 CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

Communication, and specifically advertising, are dominated by images (Kress & Van Leeuwen 2006:17) and used predominantly to tell stories, sell products and services and build organisational reputations (Parsa 2004:846). In order for an organisation’s activities to add value to its corporate identity, its marketing communication efforts have to resonate with its audience. The roles of organisations, consumers, government and society have changed significantly (Schmeltz 2012:29). This change relates to growth in values, motives and expectations of more social involvement and responsibility by organisations, and communicating about these activities, and not simply the quest for profits (Podnar 2008:76; Schmeltz 2012:33; Dach & Allmendinger 2014:410; Ngobeni 2011:105; Olkkonen & Luoma-aho 2011:13; Pomering & Johnson 2009:106). However, consumers have become more demanding and prescriptive in terms of their dealings with organisations, specifically in terms of CSR 2.0. Consumers are also becoming more conscious of organisations’ roles (or lack thereof) in society and as such responding to messages that they relate to and which provide meaning in their specific contexts.

Owing to the availability of vast amounts of information and consumers being overwhelmed with marketing communication messages, it has become increasingly difficult for organisations to differentiate themselves. This results in organisations battling to capture their target audience’s attention. When the designer, researcher and organisation understand cultural rules, codes and the way in which people make sense of the world around them, both strategic and tactical benefits can be enjoyed. Strategically, this helps to develop new and appropriate communication strategies, while tactically, it enables the organisation to replicate successful marketing communication aligned with the brand position (Lawes 2002:253). In other words, the tactical plans relate to the various combinations in which the elements in the marketing mix are deployed to achieve maximum impact.

The primary function of advertisements is to persuade consumers to think or act in terms of certain ideological ideas, information transmission and entertainment
Because advertising is a pervasive component in a society, it fulfills economic and cultural functions in shaping values, lifestyles, norms and consumer trends, and thus reflects consumer needs and aspirations, and cultural trends (Najafian & Ketabi 2011:64; Bezuidenhout 1998:1). Advertisements are fixed in a particular cultural context and the semiotic resources used in advertisements communicate meaning in that specific context.

In the context of this study, semiotic resources refer to the visual elements contained in the CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements and how they function individually and holistically to convey meaning – that is, they provide a method for making meaning. An important aspect to point out is that media texts are polysemic – open to additional and varied meanings and interpretations (Sonderling 2009:88; Stathakopoulos, Theodorakis & Mastoridou 2008:633). In addition, the meanings and varied interpretations are specific to a particular context(s) (Cilliers 2014:35). This study therefore explores this meaning making in OMSA’s corporate advertisements, based on the specific post-apartheid context of South Africa. The references to “hidden” and “underlying” meanings in the case of this research, relates specifically to this polysemy.

Visual semiotic analysis affords the organisation opportunities and the power to formulate specific and relevant messages as well as accurate modelling of branding and communication meanings, which offers a distinctive appeal. According to Najafian and Ketabi (2011:66), the elements used in advertisements (and by extension, marketing communication) are not accidental, but deliberate exercises in which ideologically laden choices are applied. It is about understanding how the different components function together to perform specific functions and comply with a particular discourse, which, in turn, leads to specific meanings and effects on readers (Najafian & Ketabi 2011:66; Bezuidenhout 1998:ch 6). With clear and definitive insight into the visual semiotic landscape, the marketer will be aware of specific meaning entities that are relevant to the marketing communication activity (Bezuidenhout 1998:ch 6). This awareness helps to break through the marketing
clutter and understand what the optimal blends of meaning entities are to ensure resonance with the target audience (Bezuidenhout 1998:ch 6).

As a means of contextualising this study in South Africa, it was deemed important to explain the influence of the historical platform upon which the socioeconomic contexts rest. This study was conducted with specific reference to the socioeconomic and other challenges faced because of the legacies of apartheid South Africa. Government policy during apartheid resulted in the marginalisation of non-whites, which means that they were marginalised and thus excluded, *inter alia*, from politics, respectable jobs, good education and healthcare (Busacca 2013:12). Hence, in order to redress this in post-apartheid South Africa, the focus of CSR 2.0 is in the areas of education, job creation, healthcare, entrepreneurial development and so forth. Gumede (2013:12) confirms that poverty and inequality are critical development areas that plague post-apartheid South Africa.

The legal framework surrounding corporate South Africa working to address these challenges is indicative of government’s regulatory approach to transformation. Social responsibility is thus part of corporate agendas in South Africa; through which organisations in the country contribute greatly to transformation (Skinner & Mersham 2008:245). The spending targets prescribed by government thus make CSR a “performance-driven” quest in organisations seeking to improve and maintain broad-based black economic empowerment (B-BBEE) scores (Skinner & Mersham 2008:246). In addition, changes in the macro environment (including social, economic, technological, regulatory and political factors, globalisation, cultural differences, recession and environmental issues) (Kerin, Hartley & Rudelius 2011:6; Kotler & Armstrong 2012:69; Kotler 2011:132) have a direct impact on how the organisation phrases its marketing thought and strategies. The South African legal framework is discussed at length in section 2.2.4.1.

OMSA acknowledges and recognises its responsibility in playing a role in building and strengthening a sustainable society, which in turn contributes to it becoming a trusted and connected part of society (Our approach to responsible business 2017).
OMSA believes that its integrated transformation philosophy supports the social and economic transformation of South Africa. Integrated transformation is vital to the socioeconomic progress of the country in redressing past inequalities, entrenching B-BBEE, ensuring sustainability and long-term growth, fuelling economic growth and creating employment (About Old Mutual Foundation 2017).

Although these are stated as business imperatives and infuse the strategy of the organisation, this transformation philosophy also includes corporate social investment through the Old Mutual Foundation (OMF), whose main aim is to manage the resources applied to these initiatives. OMSA’s strategic objectives and the needs identified in the communities at large have given rise to the following dimensions, which embody the OMF’s activity categories: enterprise development, skills capacity building, education and staff volunteerism (About Old Mutual Foundation 2017). These initiatives enable the OMF to provide opportunities for the integration of previously disadvantaged and other marginalised communities into the South African economy, with the focus on rural and peri-urban communities (About Old Mutual Foundation 2017).

1.2.1 Relevance of the study

The topic of this study is directly linked to the communication science discipline in that the study’s theoretical foundation is anchored in marketing communication, which is a field in organisational communication (Angelopulo & Thomson 2013:14) and visual communication. Angelopulo and Thomson (2013:17) assert that organisational communication is any communication happening in the context of the organisation, which naturally includes the organisation’s marketing communication. At a fundamental level, the discipline of communication is about creating meaning, be it written, oral or visual. Visual semiotics thus relates to how signs in visual texts communicate and readers generate meaning.

Although extensive research has been conducted in advertising and CSR 1.0 as a concept in general, the area of CSR 2.0 marketing communication specifically is still
under-researched – a gap that the researcher in this study wished to address. Research has mostly been theoretical, with a paucity of empirical research (Pollach, Johansen, Nielsen & Thomsen 2012:205, Bartlett, May & Ihlen, 2012:158; Mark-Herbert & Von Schantz 2007:5; Maignan & Ferrell 2004:17). Furthermore, the semiotics of CSR 2.0 marketing communication is still lacking, which became evident when reviewing research conducted by the following researchers: Pollach et al 2012:204), Ngobeni (2011:i), Weigel (2011:1), Basu and Palazzo (2008:22), Birth, Illia, Lurati and Zamparini (2008:182), Bartlett et al (2012:158), Mark-Herbert and Von Schantz (2007:4) and Maignan and Ferrell (2004:17). Research conducted in a South African context covers approaches that include general CSR 1.0 frameworks and their rise and impact in different South African economic and social spheres (Busacca 2013; Darty-Baah & Amponsah-Tawiah 2011; Flores-Araoz 2011; Hinson & Ndhlovu 2011; Skinner & Mersham 2008; Visser 2010a).

The aim of this study was to explore the underlying meanings, myths and ideologies in OMSA’s CSR 2.0 corporate advertising. This was to clarify the current practices in terms of the applications of various semiotic resources, particularly in a multicultural society such as South Africa, and in so doing to stimulate further research. In general and in the context of this research, multiculturalism is defined by Modood (2013:3) as “the recognition of group difference within the public sphere of laws, policies, democratic discourses and the terms of a shared citizenship and national identity”. In the South African context, with 11 different official languages and various cultural groups, this translates to the acknowledgement of the various cultural references existing in society, which may influence the reading of texts.

In communicating its CSR 2.0 activities in society, an organisation endeavours to relay specific messages in such a manner that its efforts are taken seriously and create credibility for the organisation in the marketplace and broader society (Norton 2012:3). Ultimately, it is about the quality of an organisation’s relationship and engagement with its stakeholders and their regard for the organisation. Norton (2012:4) and Coombs and Holladay (2012:5) posit that the organisation’s ability to
communicate effectively with its stakeholders is crucial to its long-term success. In addition, the way in which an organisation chooses to publicise its CSR 2.0 activities affects its organisational reputation and image with stakeholders (Coombs and Holladay 2012:5). Essentially, the CSR 2.0 information provided by the organisation justifies its behaviour, thereby boosting its corporate reputation to influence stakeholders’ image of and relations with the organisation (Birth et al 2008:184; Hooghiemstra 2000:57).

Hence, the significance of this study lies in its investigation into how OMSA uses various semiotic resources in its CSR 2.0 corporate advertising and how they function in these texts in the South African context. It becomes evident in this study that the communication of CSR 2.0 activities is a vital strategy applied by organisations to influence consumer behaviour and enhance their corporate identity and reputation.

1.2.2 Anticipated contributions to the discipline of communication

The findings of this study indicate the importance of deliberate thought applied to the application of semiotic resources in CSR 2.0 visual texts in that the underlying meanings convey meaning, which is, in turn, associated with the organisation’s corporate identity and reputation. The potential benefits of this study include the measurement framework to evaluate and analyse CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements. This should provide a platform for further research in marketing communication, specifically in relation to CSR 2.0. This study also provides a conceptual framework for CSR 2.0 and the link to stakeholder-organisation relationships. Through the elucidation of the new transformational approach to CSR 2.0, it is hoped that organisations will progress from CSR 1.0 to this approach in order to better entrench sustainability and responsibility in them and in society. Furthermore, in terms of application, it is hoped that this study will give creative designers insight into the consequences of the application of various visual resources to convey specific meaning.
1.2.3 Other research pertinent to this study

The purpose of the literature review for this study was to identify research conducted in the field of CSR 2.0 marketing communication, specifically the application of semiotic analysis of visuals in CSR 2.0 corporate advertising. The three-part literature review comprises a theoretical conceptualisation of the rise of CSR 2.0 and the broader organisational communication discipline in which marketing communication is situated. The final part of the review looks at the communication of CSR 2.0.

It emerged in the literature review for this study, amidst these different perspectives of corporate social responsibility, that the most prominent and applicable research is that of Visser (2010b; 2010d; 2012a; 2012b). He emphasises the failure of CSR 1.0, and indicates that a new transformational approach has become more relevant as opposed to an added extra. This new approach is a result of a philosophical progression of the concept of CSR in terms of organisational participation and societal impact (Visser 2010d; 2010c).

CSR 2.0 communication research is focused mostly on communication in general in terms of its forms, benefits and relevance, and not on the marketing communication specifically. More recent postgraduate studies on CSR 2.0 communication, which are in some form closest to this study, include those of Thulkanam (2014), Ngobeni (2012), Schmeltz (2012) and Ross (2008). In terms of visual semiotics in CSR 2.0 communication, the researcher was unable to identify recent dissertations with a bearing on this study. However, earlier dissertations by Delate (2001) and Bezuidenhout (1998) are deemed relevant in that they relate to the semiotic analysis of an advertising medium and advertising texts.

The theoretical conceptualisation below provides more detail on the key areas of this research.
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.3 THEORETICAL CONCEPTUALISATION

This section conceptualises the key theoretical constructs relevant to this study and includes CSR 2.0, visual semiotics and the theoretical models that support the relevant discussions.

1.3.1 Corporate sustainability and responsibility (CSR 2.0)

Since the earliest definition by Bowen in the 1950s, the concept of CSR has evolved and taken on many forms and definitions globally, and has since become an established global management and international academic concept (Moon [sa]:1–2). As a general concept, corporate social responsibility is acknowledged as a multidimensional, operationally complex and continuously contested concept. Depending on the particular approaches to the topic, different contexts, levels of corporate commitment and numerous umbrella terms, many scholars define its specifics differently (see Jones, Hillier & Comfort 2012:2; McWilliams et al 2006:3; Maignan et al 2005:958; Hemingway 2002:4; Carroll 1999:268; Crane et al 2013:5; Lindgreen & Swaen 2010:3; Kakabadse et al 2005:280; McElhaney 2009:31). This indeed hampers the effective and consistent definition of the concept and the way in which it is applied, and has made the comparison of research difficult (Hazarika 2012:319; Baladi 2011:204; McWilliams et al 2006:12).

There is nonetheless a common thread woven through the various approaches, namely that organisations acknowledge that they have a responsibility towards society, which extends beyond their self-interest (Hazarika 2012:320; Podnar 2008:75). It has become about the so-called “triple bottom line” for organisations – the environment, society and the economy (people, profit and planet) – and governance and business ethics compel organisations to take cognisance of it (Hazarika 2012:321; Baladi 2011:206; Flores-Araoz 2011:1; Hinson & Ndhlovu 2011:342; Ndhlovu 2009:7; Ross 2008:7; Skinner & Mersham 2008:252).

Visser (2012a; 2012b) has indicated that corporate social responsibility, as it has historically been known (which he refers to as CSR 1.0), has essentially failed and
should instead adopt a new transformational approach (a new “version” – CSR 2.0), which is grounded in “creativity, scalability, responsiveness, glocality, and circularity” and is entrenched in the philosophy (DNA) of responsible business. These characteristics are discussed in detail in section 2.4.4.1.

This study focused on explicating the concept of CSR 2.0 by wading through a variety of umbrella corporate social responsibility concepts. In an effort to adopt a specific perspective for this study, the rise and fall of CSR 1.0 was studied in order to illustrate its systemic pitfalls/shortcomings and why a new perspective is required. As such, the CSR 2.0 concept was unpacked theoretically for this study and saw the definition of this new concept, how and why CSR 1.0 has failed and what its evolution trajectory has been. A key aspect of this part of the literature review is the discussion of the inadequacy of Carroll’s (1991) iconic CSR pyramid in the South African context, and the need for a new model to meet the requirements of the new CSR 2.0.

Hence a model (see figure 2.4) indicating the multidimensional characteristics of CSR 2.0 was developed. This model provides a valuable theoretical point of departure for this study in that it provides a holistic, non-linear perspective of CSR 2.0 and sustainability among all stakeholder constituencies. The model primarily depicts the philosophy of responsible business as the overarching driver, which means that it is entrenched in the organisation’s core values. The framework indicates the instrumental, normative and descriptive value of CSR 2.0 as applicable to stakeholder theory. Its extensiveness indicates its applicability to the South African context.

1.3.2 A stakeholder perspective

In the context of this study, a stakeholder perspective provides clarification of the relationship and commitment of the organisation with and towards its stakeholders and how it conducts itself in its operational environment (Key 1999:319; Weigel 2011:2). The primary justification for applying stakeholder theory to this study was
its normative base (Donaldson & Preston 1995:87). This means understanding the organisational function and identifying its moral and philosophical bases for operation (doing the right thing) (Donaldson & Preston 1995:87). According to Carroll (1991:43), Raupp (2011:276), Maignan and Ferrell (2004:5), Branco and Rodrigues (2007:5) and Lindgreen and Swaen (2010:2), there is a “natural fit” between CSR 2.0 and stakeholders, which is essential in operationalising CSR 2.0. Principally, stakeholder theory indicates that stakeholders and the organisation are mutually dependent. As such, Arvidsson (2010:340) postulates that society as a whole sets the social responsibility agenda. It is therefore about the long-term sustainability of the relationships and the interactive dynamism that organisations engender with stakeholders.

For stakeholders to identify with the organisation, it is essential for the organisation to make stakeholders aware, through its communication, of its impacts on specific issues or areas in the social context (Maignan & Ferrell 2004:14; Morsing & Schultz 2006:323). These authors identify the following three main approaches through which the organisation can enhance stakeholder identification: the inclusion of CSR 2.0 visual texts in communications; sharing concerns around specific issues important to both stakeholders and the organisation; and encouraging and engaging in stakeholder interactions around CSR 2.0 (see section 2.3).

1.3.3 Visual semiotics

Semiotics is the study and analysis of how signs function in a specific cultural context. This discipline is focused on analysing and explaining the functioning of meaning in that it assists in understanding how meaning is produced (Stathakopoulos et al 2008:632–633; Fourie & Koenig-Visagie 2009:46,141; Bell 2011:4; Mushore 2010:14), rather than merely examining what the meaning is (Parsa 2004:844). In this regard, media messages are hardly neutral, but are inspired by social reality (Machin 2012:xiv) and fixed in a specific cultural context (Kress & Van Leeuwen 2006:4; Bezuidenhout 1998:1). Semiotics essentially
analyses, in a structured and systematic way, the various cultural meanings associated with various texts (Bell 2011:4; Bignell 2002:224). Semiotics enables one to understand the functioning of meaning in these texts and provides the instruments to analyse and describe how it is produced (Fourie & Koenig-Visagie 2009:46; Bell 2011:4). In the general human context, multimodal communication is predominant in making meaning, but remains underexplored (O'Halloran & Smith 2012:11).

Semiotic modes and visual language were deemed vital considerations for this study because CSR 2.0 communication at OMSA contains images aimed at generating specific meaning in the South African context. When examining semiotics from a grammar (language) perspective, it is necessary to consider semiotic signs in terms of their meaning potentials in various applied combinations (Machin 2012:2). Hence, when addressed in terms of a visual language approach, images take on their meaning through the grammar applied (combinations of signs), as opposed to signs in the images holding fixed meanings (Machin 2012:2).

This study falls within the multimodal sphere of visual semiotic research. Multimodal semiotics concerns the integration and interaction of more than one semiotic resource (speech, text, images and sound, amongst others) to realise a specific communicative function in the text (Kress & Van Leeuwen 2006:177; Machin 2012:ix; O'Halloran & Smith 2012:2). Visual semiotics is a deconstructing tool used to analyse and understand how visuals communicate and the systems applied to order and structure these (Parsa 2004:844). Encoders thus aim to anchor a dominant or preferred meaning by deploying a specific code system. In the context of this study, multimodality refers to Machin’s (2012) various semiotic resources employed in visual texts such as metaphorical association, iconography, modality, colour, typography and representation of social actors, and specifically how they create meaning. In the multimodal approach, these visual components of a text are not only seen as connotative devices, but also how they create moods, attitudes and convey ideas (Machin 2012:xi).
To this end, the focus of this study was the iconographic mode of Machin’s (2012) multimodal analysis toolkit on semiotic modes and visual language, which concerns the hidden meanings in images and the analysis was conducted at the denotative, connotative and mythical levels. Although only the iconographic mode is analysed in this research, it by no means suggests that this mode operates in isolation; neither should any of the modes be considered mutually exclusive. As the sampled texts depict people in various contexts, this qualifies why the iconographic mode is privileged in this study.

In conjunction with the semiotics theory, a consolidated measurement framework was developed to measure the sampled visual CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements. The measurement framework detailed the specific corporate advertising messages that would be considered; the appropriate CSR 2.0 communication styles; relevant corporate advertising media; and the specific visual semiotics strategy fitting the context of study context (see section 4.7). This framework provides a theoretical foundation for selecting visuals for CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements to enhance an organisation’s corporate identity.

1.3.4 Corporate advertising

This study focused specifically on the CSR 2.0 corporate advertising of the marketing communication of OMSA. It also explored marketing communication in a broad sense in order to narrow the focus to situating corporate advertising in the marketing mix. This served to provide a focus point in isolating OMSA’s corporate advertising as its mechanism for reporting its CSR 2.0 activities.

Furthermore, in terms of theoretical application, existing CSR 2.0 communication models were found to be inadequate in the context of this study. A more integrative CSR 2.0 communication framework was developed by combining Tonello’s (2011) and Du, Bhattachary and Sen’s (2010:11) models. The framework integrates elements of the holistic CSR 2.0 approach (as discussed in chapter 2) and consolidates the elements of the already existing models discussed. To ensure that
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communication is focused and integrated, this model highlights message content, channels, internal and external factors affecting CSR 2.0 communication effectiveness (contingencies). In addition, both internal and external communication outcomes are highlighted.

1.3.5 Corporate identity

In the context of this study, the corporate identity construct, as opposed to brand identity, was applicable. Corporate identity relates to an organisation’s defining attributes in terms of a combination of organisational values, culture, personality and visually recognisable identification and is informed by legal, economic and stakeholder perspectives – in a nutshell, who the organisation is and what it does. Hildebrand, Sen and Bhattacharya (2011:1358) and Du, Bhattacharya and Sen (2007:225) have confirmed that through the organisation’s CSR 2.0 communication, its character/soul is made manifest. This differs from the traditional marketing of products or services. As such, CSR 2.0 communication exposes facets of the organisation’s corporate identity and is mostly explicit in revealing its qualities (Du et al 2010:10). Chapter 4 focuses on how and why organisations communicate about their CSR 2.0 activities, and a strong link is suggested between CSR 2.0, corporate identity and reputation, consumer responses, expectations and attitudes to CSR 2.0 and its role in influencing consumer behaviour. The images in the CSR 2.0 communication reflect the organisation’s values, which in turn, are linked to its identity, image and reputation.

By contrast, brand identity relates to an organisational brand’s look and feel – brand names and logos (Laurence 2013:326). According to Ghodeswar (2008:5), brand identity comprises unique brand associations that denote promises to customers, and includes a core and extended identity. Core identity represents the central, constant soul of the brand and is focused on the organisation’s product or service attributes and performance and store or office ambience (Ghodeswar 2008:5). The
extended identity relates to the brand personality, relationships and the symbolic association of the brand (Ghodeswar 2008:5).

The above background and theoretical context provide the platform upon which the specific aim and research objectives of the study are discussed.

1.4 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Although briefly touched on in the earlier discussion, this section provides details of the goal and research objectives of the study.

1.4.1 Aim of the study

This research focused, firstly, on laying a theoretical foundation for the selection of visuals for CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements in order to enhance an organisation’s corporate identity. Secondly, as shown in section 4.5, organisations influence consumer behaviour through their CSR 2.0 activities and communication. These visual texts contain images, and by studying the signs and the relationships between these signs, it is evident that they are deployed to communicate specific meanings.

This study endeavoured to explain how the application of particular visual semiotic resources, specifically those relating to the iconographic mode, applied to CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements elements, convey specific meanings. Iconography relates specifically to the connotative and denotative devices applied in visual texts, as well as the ideology, myths and iconographic symbolism underlying the texts. When advertising specific products or activities, the advertisement designers use semiotic resources encoded in a specific ideological and cultural context that support the underlying meanings of the products or activities (Bignell 2002:26). This study provides sufficient insight into and useful guidelines for CSR 2.0 communication programmes applied in financial services organisations.

The field of semiotics is constantly changing, as are cultural contexts – hence the need for ongoing semiotic research. Semiotic resources change over time, making it imperative that marketers know what the current language of their target audience...
is (Lawes 2002:254). This allows them to remain current and culturally authentic by preventing the use of outdated or inappropriate signs in communications (Lawes 2002:254) in a particular context. This awareness of the meaning of signs and the various combinations allows organisations/marketers to make informed decisions about communication and maintain conventions, or it helps them create new meaning (Lawes 2002:254). Analysis gives the organisation valuable insight into the culturally available themes and narratives, which frame specific meanings (Lawes 2002:254) in the advertising context. In this study, through the analysis of OMSA’s CSR 2.0 corporate advertising, the dominant underlying ideologies, myths and meaning emerged. They portray what the organisation is communicating through the application of specific combinations of semiotic resources. This, in turn, ties in with the organisation’s corporate identity, which is driven by these associations.

1.4.2 Objectives of the study

Sequeira (2015:12) and Dolin ([sa]:4–5) describe research objectives as the particular actions or steps required to answer the research questions, and these objectives should be clear, achievable and verifiable because they help to answer the research questions. Du Plooy (2009a:50) identifies four types of objectives, namely exploratory, explanatory, descriptive and predictive. Explanatory objectives specify the direction of the cause-and-effect relationships between independent and dependent variables (Du Plooy 2009a:52). According to Walliman (2011:8) and Du Plooy (2009a:52), explanatory research can also be conducted as predictive research, which highlights the workings of phenomena. Descriptive objectives describe the characteristics of occurrences or relationships between variables and are found in qualitative and quantitative research (Du Plooy 2009a:51). Exploratory objectives examine an unfamiliar area of research, in the context of this study, the visual semiotic analysis of CSR 2.0 marketing communication.
The paucity of research in the semiotics of CSR 2.0 marketing communication, afforded the researcher an opportunity to explore this unknown territory. The objectives of this study were therefore formulated as follows:

**Objective 1:** To explore through the literature review, how CSR 2.0 is communicated visually by organisations and the application of visual texts in CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements.

**Objective 2:** To explore the underlying meanings in the visuals of OMSA’s CSR 2.0 corporate advertising, consistent with Machin’s (2012) iconography element.

The next section addresses the research paradigm for this study.

### 1.5 RESEARCH PARADIGM

The study was addressed from an interpretivist paradigm in the sense that a more subjective approach (Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter 2011:6) was adopted to explore the underlying meanings, ideologies and myths underlying OMSA’s CSR 2.0 corporate advertising, in accordance with Machin’s (2012) iconographic element. An interpretivist paradigm concerns subjective human experiences and comprises an intersubjective epistemology, together with an ontological belief that reality is socially constructed. Essentially, it relates to using these experiences to construct and interpret understanding through the data gathered (Thanh & Thanh 2015:24).

It was therefore argued in this study, that semiotics falls within the interpretivist paradigm and is mainly concerned with analysing meaning in texts (Du Plooy 2009b:141; Stathakopoulos et al 2008:632–633). It emerged in this study that in a multicultural society such as South Africa, the sender and receiver’s frames of references are culturally constructed, and misaligned references in marketing communication might lead to translation problems. Linking back to the note on polysemy of visual/advertising texts in section 1.2, the multicultural context in South Africa could see some signs accepted by one group and offensive to another. This could relate to body language, colours, and artefacts, among many others. The
subjective interpretation of messages in CSR 2.0 corporate advertising is thus based on these diverse cultural constructions. This is discussed at length in section 6.3.1.

The research paradigm described above provides the philosophical framework within which the research design is formulated. The following section explains the research design adopted for this study.

1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN

The formulation of the research problem, the interrelated research questions and the research method adopted are addressed in this section. The sampling, data collection and analysis processes follow this, with the discussion concluding with an outline of the dependability and credibility aspects of the study.

1.6.1 Formulating the research problem

Essentially, the underlying meanings, ideologies and myths of OMSA’s CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements are what the viewer perceives when he or she is exposed to the marketing communication, and interpretations could be contrary to what OMSA intended with the visual texts. Despite OMSA, the encoder, anchoring a preferred meaning. Earlier reference was made to the cultural diversity of South Africa, which invariably has an impact on interpretations. The iconography applied in the visual texts was therefore analysed to determine the underlying meanings conveyed through the myths and ideologies in OMSA’s corporate advertising.

These underlying messages, in turn, have a direct impact on OMSA’s identity and reputation and what the organisation is attempting to achieve in the community. The underlying messages are then associated with the organisation as well as its products and services (see chapter 3). As discussed in chapter 2, CSR 2.0 is embedded in everything the organisation does and portrays externally. To this end, OMSA’s CSR 2.0 marketing communication should reflect this – not only through its corporate advertising, but the underlying meanings, ideologies and myths should also correlate with the company’s CSR 2.0 DNA entrenched in its brand.
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It is also shown in chapters 3 and 4 that in advertising, underlying meanings are constructed based on a combination of semiotic resources that advertisers deliberately apply to these texts. To this end, semiotics plays a key role in marketing communication as the advertised products, services or ideas gain their meanings in their associations to ideas, values and characteristics from other domains. In the context of this study, images were used in CSR 2.0 advertising as part of the organisation’s corporate advertising strategies, and by analysing these visual texts, specific representations became evident.

Essentially, the concern in corporate advertising is about more than the overt representations of these visual texts – it is about exposing the deeper meanings underlying the texts through the understanding of what the ideas, objects, people, contexts and ideas represent (Parsa 2004:844). Hence, if the meanings portrayed in the advertisements are not obvious or messages are misinterpreted, incongruent decoding and restricted attention are applied to the advertisement (Delate 2001:15) and the intended associations are lost. In the multicultural society of South Africa, it is expected that various meanings and associations will be generated from specific semiotic resources used in CSR 2.0 advertising (as visual texts are polysemic). Therefore, making this study relevant and pertinent in terms of the myths, ideologies and underlying meanings deployed in a multicultural context where the encoder – OMSA – aims to anchor a dominant or preferred meaning.

The problem statement for this study was formulated as follows:

The purpose of this qualitative cross-sectional visual semiotic study is to analyse images of OMSA’s corporate advertisements for its CSR 2.0 communication in order to understand their hidden meanings, ideologies and myths.

1.6.2 Research questions

A research question serves as the basis for guiding and providing the scope of the research project (Walliman 2011:106). In simple terms, a research question is one
that a particular study endeavours to answer (Terre Blanche et al. 2011:540). These questions may be sources from existing literature on the topic, exploratory investigations, needs analysis, personal speculation and experiences or commissioned or contracted research (Terre Blanche et al. 2011:540). This study attempted to answer the following research questions:

**Research question 1:** What does the literature reveal about the role of visuals in corporate advertisements for CSR 2.0 communication?

**Research question 2:** What are the underlying meanings in the visuals of OMSA’s CSR 2.0 corporate advertising consistent with Machin’s (2012) iconographic element?

### 1.6.3 Research method

The research approach adopted in this study was qualitative semiotic visual analysis with exploratory objectives. This method was deemed an appropriate approach to realising the main aim of understanding which hidden meanings, ideologies and myths underlie OMSA’s CSR 2.0 corporate advertising. The interpretivist paradigm provides the philosophical framework within which to illuminate the underlying meanings contained in the visual texts. Du Plooy (2009a:30) and Terre Blanche et al. (2011:274) indicate the interpretivist paradigm relates to exploring meaning in a specific context in order to “interpret and construct the qualitative aspects of communication experiences”. Hence, in order to analyse the content and the underlying meanings contained in the advertising texts, a visual semiotic analysis was deemed the most appropriate method to conduct this study.

Through semiotic analyses, meanings at various levels are revealed. These include connotative (implicit) and denotative (explicit) meanings. To this end, Stathakopoulos et al. (2008:633) indicate that because consumer behaviour is driven by consumers’ perceptions of various marketing stimuli, semiotics enables one to better understand the semiotic resources applied in corporate advertising texts.
Furthermore, by applying the iconography element of Machin’s (2012) multimodal visual semiotic analysis to this study, this semiotic perspective served as a lens through which the empirical component was examined in order to expose the levels of meaning. The application of a semiotic method of analysis enabled a specific structure to analyse exactly how the resources function was provided (Bignell 2002:26) (see section 4.8).

1.6.4 Data collection

The data collection and analysis processes for this study were based on a combination of steps set out in the works of Leedy and Ormrod (2012:159), Petty, Thomson and Stew (2012:381) and Echtner (1999:50–52). This process provided a comprehensive approach to this study in that the salient aspects of each work were combined to define the steps in the process. Figure 5.1 illustrates this data collection and interpretation process.

1.6.4.1 Sampling

Step 1 of the data collection process referenced above relates to the sampling process, which is conducted through the non-probability purposive sampling technique. As the name suggests, purposive sampling refers to units selected for a specific purpose, based on the researcher’s knowledge of the population and relevance to the study. Purposive sampling is reliant on not only availability, but also the selected units or cases that are typical of the population (Terre Blanche et al 2011:139). This step is described in detail in section 5.3.5.

In terms of the sample for this study, the definition of CSR 2.0 corporate advertising formulated in chapter 4 provides the criteria against which the sample was sourced. The target population for this study was various OMF documents such as archived brochures (2008; 2011), banner advertisements displayed at the Mutual Park campus in Pinelands, Cape Town, South Africa, as well as the 2012 OMF annual report (Journey). The sample size was determined to be eight visual texts. The justification for this sample size was that because of the qualitative nature of this
study, the sample contained specific visual texts relating to CSR 2.0, and a smaller sample could be drawn when working within the qualitative paradigm (Terre Blanche et al. 2011:49). In addition, the sample was sufficient to allow for in-depth analysis in accordance with the aim of the study. Table 5.2 indicates the sample, together with the specific characteristics of each image.

1.6.4.2 Data collection, analysis and interpretation

Step 2 involved specifying and segmenting the relevant units of analysis, the result being a data collection matrix. Each of the sample items was listed to create the inventory where the details of the visual texts were organised into the respective iconographic elements of the data collection matrix. Table 5.2 illustrates this matrix, and this step is discussed in more detail in section 5.3.6.1.

Step 3 involved data classification where the iconographic elements in the sampled texts were analysed, both in isolation and holistically. Data was classified using grouping and colour codes. Further coding of the relationships between the elements and comparison across the sample were done by using cross-referencing and comment functions to highlight themes. Section 5.3.6.1 provides a detailed discussion of this process of categorisation.

Step 4 involved examining the relationships between the elements and comparing them across the sample. According to Echtner (1999:51), the objective of semiotic analysis is to understand the relationship between the elements and structure as a whole, and not merely the collation of the inventory, as specified above. The details of the aggregation process are provided in section 5.3.6.1.

Step 5 relates to the synthesis of data by grouping it thematically and according to relationships. In the context of this study, recurring patterns of objects, settings, participants, ideologies, myths and values emerged, which led the analysis process into the sixth step where common themes were identified and their significance questioned.
Finally, step 6 involved extracting the underlying meanings across the different levels of denotation, connotation, ideology and myth. By comparing the combinations of elements in each sample item and across the entire sample, the underlying structures and meanings emerged. This taxonomy illustrated the relationships between the different levels of meaning as well as the key themes identified in the analysis. These are discussed at length in chapter 6.

1.6.5 Population

The population in the context of this study related to all OMSA’s corporate advertisements, while the accessible population related to what the researcher could access. The researcher, as an employee of OMSA, had access to CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements, which were applicable to this study, as defined in section 5.3.3. The parameters of the population related to CSR 2.0 corporate advertising in the form of visuals in OMSA’s CSR 2.0 reporting, banner advertisements and other staff communications. The application contexts are indicated in table 5.2.

1.6.6 Units of analysis

In the context of this study, the units of analysis were the iconographic elements in the sampled social artefacts, comprising CSR 2.0 corporate advertising texts containing images.

1.6.7 Dependability and credibility of the study

Within the interpretative paradigm, reliability refers to the dependability of the results: “the degree to which the reader can be convinced that findings did indeed occur as the researcher said they did” (Terre Blanche et al 2011:93). This is realised by providing rich and comprehensive descriptions of findings as well as explicit details of the data collection and analysis methods (Terre Blanche et al 2011:93). In the context of this research, by adhering to the theoretical framework, research goals and methodological accuracy, the dependability of the research was ensured.
Furthermore, reliability was ensured through the explicit provision of details of the data collection and analysis process.

Moreover, through a process of reflexivity, the researcher was able to ensure the credibility and dependability of the study. Reflexivity relates to the researcher explicitly acknowledging personal biases and considering the possible effect of these on the study (Leedy & Ormrod 2013:312). This process is important in that the researcher acknowledges the influence of his or her subjectivity on the research (Petty et al 2012:381). In the context of this study, the researcher indicated her ideological and cultural frame of reference and acknowledged awareness that this would serve as the filter through which the data was analysed. At the same time, being a full-time employee of OMSA might have raised questions of bias. However, by rigidly following the research process and being explicit about the subjective influences, the findings of this study were deemed dependable. By continuously reflecting on preconceptions during the data analysis and interpretation process, the researcher consciously and deliberately challenged biases and confirmed interpretations with relevant sources.

Verification was another process used to ensure the reliability and validity of the study. Verification in qualitative research is the continuous process of checking, confirming and correcting errors at each step to ensure the reliability and validity of the study (Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson & Spiers 2002:17). In the context of this study, the researcher’s processes were iterative in the sense that continuous checks were performed to ensure congruence between the research problem, the objectives, the theoretical framework, data collection and analysis. Data analysis followed a specific, systematic process to ensure a fit with the conceptual framework regarding iconography, thus ensuring that the data that was collected and analysed was valid and relevant to the study parameters. This provided internal validity by ensuring the measurements and findings were in fact true descriptions, and evidence was consistently substantiated. The comprehensive literature review and theoretical framework underpinning this study further enhanced the validity of the research.
Regarding the research method, the measuring structure proposed in chapter 4 provides the specific framework within which this study was conducted. The detail surrounding the elements of analysis were defined, which gave the researcher the specific direction to enable her to proceed with the analysis. Although the proposed measurement framework only focused on iconography, content validity was ensured through the conceptualisation and operationalisation of the specific ambit of each element in terms of Machin’s (2012) toolkit. Additionally, the sample was deemed appropriate and representative because it formed part of OMSA’s CSR 2.0 marketing communication. The researcher was able to guarantee the credibility of the research by ensuring that the correct target population was sampled and appropriate analysis techniques were applied.

Terre Blanche et al (2011:90) state that the credibility of research relates to producing convincing and believable findings. Through the diligent application of specific processes and clarity on the use of these processes (such as sampling, data collection, analysis, etc.), the research should be able to create understanding (Golafshani 2003:601) as opposed to merely explaining what has occurred in the analysis.

1.7 FEASIBILITY OF THE STUDY

The completion of this dissertation was made possible by a bursary from Unisa's Master’s and Doctoral Student Funding. These funds were used to cover tuition, language and editing services, printing and binding. No funds were required to access OMSA because the researcher is a permanent employee of the organisation.

1.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study complied with the guidelines laid out in the Unisa’s Policy for Research Ethics. Although the focus of this study was inanimate artefacts/objects, and there were no ethical considerations pertaining to human subjects, a number of factors nevertheless still had to be noted. This included the researcher’s acknowledgement
that this dissertation in its entirety was her own work, and where the work of other authors was used, these sources were appropriately referenced. To this end, the researcher signed a declaration, which is included in the front matter of the dissertation. In addition, regarding copyright issues pertaining to the images analysed in this study, the OMF granted the researcher permission to use its corporate advertising material in the sample. This letter of permission is contained in addendum A.

In chapter 5 the research explains how the dependability and credibility of findings were achieved for this study. In terms of data collection and analysis, the researcher included all the details relating to these processes in order to provide readers and other researchers with the specifics of the processes followed in the study to ensure that all ethical requirements were met. These requirements related to the following: ensuring that the data collection categories were mutually exclusive and exhaustive and that the sampling procedure, the operationalisation of the constructs applicable to the study and the data analysis procedures were properly conducted (Du Plooy 2009a:398).

1.9 CHAPTER OUTLINE

The dissertation is structured as follows:

Chapter 2 of this study provides the theoretical context of CSR 2.0. The CSR milieu is vast and there are a wealth of opinions on organisations' social responsibility. The clarification of umbrella concepts and the reason why organisations engage in CSR provides the background on this environment. By narrowing the focus to the South African landscape with regard to CSR 2.0, the specific historical context and legal and regulatory framework provide clarity on situating South Africa in the CSR 2.0 landscape. Stakeholder theory provides a theoretical basis for explaining the organisation-society relationship. In the modern landscape, CSR 2.0 has taken a different path, that is, from a cheque-with-a-smile approach to a more holistic, systemic approach.
Chapter 3 lays the theoretical foundation for the organisation’s communication with its stakeholders, particularly about its CSR 2.0 activities. After taking a broad view of marketing and marketing communication, corporate advertising is shown as being key in building awareness and positioning the organisation among stakeholders with regard to its identity, which serves to create long-term goodwill with its stakeholders. In addition, the communication process and response models are discussed to provide an overview of the process through which viewers and CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements would progress.

Chapter 4 provides the theoretical foundation around communicating CSR 2.0. This additional theoretical chapter was deemed necessary because it provides focus on how and why organisations communicate about their CSR 2.0 activities. In addition, a discussion on semiotic modes and visual language offers a theoretical basis on which to ground the analysis of this study. This includes a discussion of Machin’s (2012) multimodal analysis toolkit, which provides a comprehensive framework for analysis of the semiotic resources as well as the underlying meanings contained in CSR 2.0 advertising texts. The chapter concludes with a proposed framework according to which the sampled visual CSR 2.0 corporate visual advertisements were measured.

Chapter 5 focuses on the research methodology and operationalisation. This study is situated within the interpretivist paradigm, which affords a subjective approach to exploring the hidden meanings, ideologies and myths underlying OMSA’s CSR 2.0 corporate advertising. This chapter deals with the research method, population sampling, dependability and credibility.

Chapter 6 contains the findings of the qualitative iconographic analysis, based on the measurement framework provided in chapter 4 to measure visual CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements. The denotative, connotative and mythical meanings of the images are illustrated, and the relationships between the levels of meaning
integrated. The interpretation of the findings is presented in three themes identified across the sample.

Chapter 7 revisits the research questions and also discusses the limitations of the study, formulates recommendations and draws conclusions.

1.10 SUMMARY

This chapter provided the context for this study in terms of the organisation, the relevance of the research and the theoretical and methodological approaches. The main research problem and interrelated research questions were also outlined. The chapter concluded with a brief outline of each chapter.

In conclusion, this chapter explained that CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements are strategically applied to reflect the organisation’s values, which, in turn, are linked to its identity, image and reputation. These advertisements reflect the organisation’s CSR 2.0 principles, practices and achievements, which hopefully elevate the organisation’s image. This in turn, leads to growth in investments and the client base. These CSR 2.0 advertisements serve as identity cues and show how the organisation wants to be seen. They are also a means to legitimise its behaviour (Farache & Perks 2010:236). Finally, the marketing communication tools available to the organisation help to enhance its CSR 2.0 activities.

Chapter 2 commences the three-part literature review aimed at conceptualising CSR 2.0.
The essence of CSR is positive contribution to society – not as a marginal afterthought, but as a way of business (Visser 2010d:20).

2.1 INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

Having provided an overview of the research background and design in chapter 1, this chapter addresses the conceptualisation of CSR 2.0. The explication of the CSR concept provides an appropriate base from which to bring clarity to the array of CSR umbrella concepts. Furthermore, this discussion includes a debate on whether CSR or any of the other concepts are relevant, with the view to clarifying the choice of concepts for this study. The definitional debates surrounding CSR are highlighted with the formulation and adoption of a definition that underscores this study.

Thereafter, a brief journey through time follows, describing the historical trajectory of CSR during recent decades and highlighting the seminal contributions. Importantly, the South African (and African) context is explored with particular reference to the validity of applying Carroll’s (1991) CSR pyramid in these unique contexts. In this new age of transformation, no discussion would be complete without an exploration of the legal and regulatory framework applicable to social development and transformation in South Africa.

To provide a specific theoretical perspective for this study, stakeholder theory is discussed as well as the adoption of a CSR 2.0 perspective for this study. Essentially, this part of the chapter focuses on the failure of CSR 1.0 and the rise of CSR 2.0. Before concluding the chapter, CSR 2.0 is discussed in terms of its key characteristics and theoretical underpinnings.

The next section unpacks the CSR concept in terms of the varying and alternate CSR concepts. These concepts include the dominant perspectives that surround it
and an explanation of why CSR 2.0 was the focus of this study and not any of the competing concepts.

2.2 EXPLICATING THE CONCEPT OF CSR

There are currently four dominant perspectives of CSR, namely corporate social responsibility (CSR1), corporate social responsiveness (CSR2), corporate social rectitude (CSR3) and strategic-oriented CSR. CSR1 relates to the organisation’s interactions with society, which O’Dwyer (2003:4) refers to as corporate social obligations. CSR2 places the emphasis on corporate responsiveness to pressures from society in terms of economics, socioeconomics, politics and culture (O’Dwyer 2003:4).

In comparison with CSR1, CSR2 relates to organisations’ managerial processes in response to societal pressures (O’Dwyer 2003:5), that is, social planning, forecasting, organising, controlling, decision-making and social policies (Carroll 1979:502; Lamandi 2007:10). This responsiveness refers to the organisation’s relationship with divergent social responsibilities and is more concerned with society’s impact on business as opposed to business’s impact on society alone (O’Dwyer 2003:5; Lamandi 2007:3). This perspective demonstrates the organisation’s adaption of its strategies to social pressures and change in order to make a meaningful contribution. The transition from CSR1 to CSR2 represents a move from a philosophical approach to more managerial action (Moir 2001:5; Min, Esposito & Desmoulins-Lebeault 2013:3; Rao, Zaidi, Hasim and Suhaidah 2013:17). According to Sethi (1975:62–63), social responsiveness not only relates to how organisations should respond to social pressures, but also to what their future role in society is – thus representing an anticipatory and preventive role.

Wood (2010:54) posits that the social responsive approach entails environmental scanning to gather and analyse the organisation’s various environments. Stakeholder management is important to enable active and constructive stakeholder engagement and issues/public affairs management where the organisation is able
to identify and analyse specific social or political issues affecting it directly (Wood 2010:54). Wood (2010:52) further indicates that this responsive focus is based more on the actions rather than the duty or responsibility of the organisation. Responsiveness is seen to be a conceptual enhancement in the sense that there has been a shift from academic and managerial thinking to a more practical approach (Wood 1991:703). This conscious responsiveness allows the organisation to contribute meaningfully to specific issues in its societal context (Näsi, Näsi, Phillips & Zyglidopoulos 1997:319).

The CSR2 perspective underpins this study in that CSR is not viewed only as a token or philanthropic generosity, but strategically coordinated and implemented actions in the organisation. The aim of this action-driven approach, as opposed to duty or responsibility, is to contribute meaningfully to specific issues in its societal context. As confirmed by Iamandi (2007:3), organisations evaluate their role in society and focus on areas that transcend just its economic considerations. As such, this perspective is concerned with sustainability, which extends to both the organisation and the society in which it operates.

The third perspective under discussion is corporate social rectitude (CSR3). The moral correctness of organisational policies and actions becomes pertinent and sees the emergence of CSR3. CSR3 represents a more ethical base for decision-making (Moir 2001:5). As such, CSR3 sees adherence to central values, which represents a more ethical approach to organisational decision making (O'Dwyer 2003:4). This approach provides a moral basis/anchor for organisational decision-making in terms of its social responsibilities. Frederick (1986:135) asserts that CSR3 represents the normative correctness of organisational policies and strategies. It becomes clear that CSR was already perceived as an organisation’s responsibilities, which are broader and go further than the organisation’s immediate economic and legal obligations, namely profits and losses (Carroll 1999:270).

The last perspective under discussion is strategic-oriented CSR, which relates to organisations linking their strategies and core business activities to specific
discretionary social issues/projects (Waddock [sa]:13). This approach represents the organisation’s relations with society and these include, *inter alia*, philanthropy and volunteerism, aimed at improving the environment and/or society (Waddock [sa]:13). The inclusion of the term “strategic” implies that involvement in these social activities is intended to directly or indirectly benefit the organisation in order to achieve its objectives (Waddock [sa]:13). These perspectives are discussed in more detail in section 2.2.2, where the historical progression of the perspectives is touched on.

2.2.1 Clarifying CSR umbrella concepts

Definitions of CSR abound, but a single universally accepted definition has not yet been agreed on (Manoiu *et al* 2016:370). There are various concepts that fall under the umbrella concept of CSR, namely corporate social investment, corporate citizenship, strategic philanthropy, corporate social performance, triple-bottom-line, shared value, corporate sustainability, corporate accountability, CSR 2.0 (Copenhagen Business School’s Centre for Social Responsibility 2014).

2.2.1.1 Corporate social investment (CSI)

CSI originated from philanthropy and is deemed part of CSR. It is defined as social development that is not linked to generating income and is seen to be strongly socially developmental (SA NGO pulse 2006). To this end, organisational resources are used to improve society and are deemed external to the organisation and its profit-generating objectives (SA NGO pulse 2006). CSI is merely philanthropy in the sense that organisations “give back” to society (Busacca 2013:17; Kakabadse *et al* 2005:283), and it is not necessarily integrated into organisations’ core strategies or philosophies. CSI is characterised by community donations, staff volunteerism and cause-related marketing, which are solely used to increase corporate reputation and maximise profits (Thulkanam 2014:30).

In the South African context, organisations practising CSR prior to 1994 viewed CSR “neither as an admission of guilt for their share of the agony of apartheid, nor is it implying responsibility for the socio-economic welfare of the country” (Skinner &
Mersham 2008:240). The concept “investment” was therefore deemed more favourable than “responsibility”, which essentially linked organisations to the idea of their being contributors of apartheid (Skinner & Mersham 2008:240). CSR was thus also linked to a business outcome rather than a responsibility (Skinner & Mersham 2008:240). Therefore, in South Africa, CSI has historically been used to rectify negative corporate reputations and in combination with BEE (Black Economic Empowerment), a way to secure a licence to operate in the new South Africa (Rumney 2013).

This concept is indeed a South African phenomenon that emerged on the back of South Africa’s particular history (Hinson & Ndhlovu 2011:343; Ndhlovu 2009:7; Skinner & Mersham 2008:240). CSI has primarily been driven by legislation and industry charters, and can thus be seen as investment in social change in terms of economic transformation (Hinson & Ndhlovu 2011:343; Ndhlovu 2009:7; Skinner & Mersham 2008:240). The mining charter, for example, “is a legally binding commitment by the industry” to increase previously marginalised communities’ access to the country’s mineral resources and the benefits associated herewith (Visser 2006:39). This manifests in the development and promotion of previously disadvantaged employees, creating partnerships with empowerment companies and black-owned procurement preferences (Visser 2006:39).

2.2.1.2 Corporate citizenship

Hinson and Ndhlovu (2011:335) define corporate citizenship as “the integration of social and environmental considerations into all aspects of the enterprise’s operations”. The place of CSR in business has been the focus of long-standing debates. One school of thought holds that business should be conducted in the interest of shareholders only because CSR weakens the market mechanism and places a strain on organisational profits and resources (Hinson & Ndhlovu 2011:335). However, it is believed that the organisation is ethically compelled to help solve social problems and improve society. To this end, Hinson and Ndhlovu (2011:336) state that in the wake of globalisation, deregulation and market crises,
organisations have progressed from the profit maximisation paradigm to accepting their roles as responsible corporate citizens.

In striving to achieve its goals and objectives, organisations attempt to behave in a socially responsible manner and demonstrate good corporate citizenship (Ross 2008:2). Good corporate citizenship implies that the organisation establishes and sustains relationships with stakeholders in order to enhance open communication (SAICA [sa]:29), thereby increasing its stakeholder value and growing its brand. According to Du et al (2010:8) and Du, Bhattacharya & Sen (2007:224), an organisation’s good corporate citizenship inadvertently leads to consumers being more loyal and, in turn, becoming brand ambassadors. Not only do the positive benefits relate to financial gains, but also to, *inter alia*, factors such as preferred employer and company investments (Du et al 2007:224; Du et al 2010:8).

This approach, which is distinct from public relations, ensures that the organisation is aligned with the society in which it operates and that personal and corporate values become aligned. This relates to corporate policies and practices pertaining to society and the environment (Du et al 2010:8; Du et al 2007:224). In the early 1990s, corporate citizenship became a prominent CSR concept, which essentially served to induce large organisations to be good and responsible citizens/neighbours (Crane, Matten & Spence 2014:69).

### 2.2.1.3 Strategic philanthropy

Since the 1980s, organisational philanthropy has changed significantly from simple charitable giving to a strategic, institutionalised process. This is because organisations have evaluated their impact on society (Carroll [sa]:18) and criticism that it was merely an instrument to gain social acceptance of organisational plans (Crane, Matten & Spence 2014:294). Conceptually, organisations’ CSR and corporate citizenship programmes consist of philanthropic activities (Carroll [sa]:17). Strategic philanthropy, which is characteristically not only altruistic (Carroll [sa]:15), manifests in various forms such as employee volunteerism linked, *inter alia*, to human resource development strategies, marketing and charitable causes and
cross-sector partnerships with stakeholders (Carroll [sa]:15). Roper and Fill (2012:119) and Fisman, Heal and Nair ([sa]:1) view CSR as strategic philanthropy, which is utilised by organisations to build reputational capital with stakeholders, where organisations go beyond normal organisational boundaries and contribute meaningfully to the improvement of society. Essentially, the strategic philanthropy approach is focused on addressing and giving to social issues that align closely with the organisation’s overall mission, goals and objectives (Carroll [sa]:18), which implies a double impact.

2.2.1.4 Corporate social performance (CSP)

The concept of CSP has been operational since the mid-1970s, particularly in the United States of America (USA) (Wood 2010:691). Carroll’s (1979) definition of CSP centres on a three-dimensional model, the elements of which are social issues, social responsibility categories and philosophies of social responsiveness. In attempting to define CSP, Wood (2010:693) proffers a definition that is an advancement of the following one formulated by Wartick and Cochran (1985), that is, “... a business organization’s configuration of principles of social responsibility, processes of social responsiveness, and policies, programs, and observable outcomes as they relate to the firm’s societal relationships”.

In other words, it concerns the extent to which the organisation’s social responsibility principles of legitimacy, public responsibility and managerial discretion motivate its actions. It also relates to socially responsive processes such as environmental assessment, stakeholder management and issues management. These processes are dependent on the policies and programmes available to manage the organisation’s relationships with society and the impacts of these actions, programmes and policies on society (Wood 2010:693-694; Carroll 1979:504). The seminal work of Sethi (1975:59) raises a vital point in that CSP is in fact bound to specific cultural and temporal contexts.
2.2.1.5  **Triple bottom line (TBL)**

Organisational sustainability programmes result from a commitment to the health and care of the environment, society and economy (What is sustainability? [sa]; KPMG 2012:129; Vanclay 2004:29; Van den Ende 2004:32; Werther & Chandler 2006:7). This is referred to as the "triple bottom line" for organisations in the sense that they should be coordinated to be environmentally sound, socially responsible and economically viable (people, profit and planet) (Flores-Araoz 2011:1; Ross 2008:7; Hazarika 2012:321; Ndhlouvu 2009:7; Hinson & Ndhlouvu 2011:342; Skinner & Mersham 2008:252; Baladi 2011:206; Iamandi 2007:4). This consideration is enforced through governance and business ethics. TBL is fundamentally not merely a method of accounting, but is also meant to be a mode of thinking about CSR (Vanclay 2004:29). In an attempt to demonstrate itself as transparent and accountable, the organisation applies the TBL to its CSR audit and reports (Werther & Chandler 2005:72).

2.2.1.6  **Shared value**

Porter and Kramer (2011) define shared value as follows:

> ... policies and operating practices that enhance the competitiveness of a company while simultaneously advancing the economic and social conditions in the communities in which it operates. Shared value creation focuses on identifying and expanding the connections between societal and economic progress.

Value creation relates to not only financial profitability, but also the advancement of the social context in which the organisation operates (Porter & Kramer 2011; Visser 2012a; Jonikas 2012:693). If applied to the South African context, it could relate to infrastructure development, employment and skills development, to mention but a few. A purpose-driven organisation would therefore embody meaningful engagement with all stakeholders, growth and innovation (Low 2013) and increasing societal and economic association. This translates to a value creation philosophy, where the
organisation’s social responsibility has a primarily strategic and operational impact, which automatically leads to sustainable business and strategically entrenched philosophies (Low 2013).

To this end, the convergence of CSR and sustainability constructs is inevitable. This ensures the organisation’s sustained existence, and it is intricately linked to its custodianship of the social and natural environment as well as its own well-being (Tan [sa]:1). This acknowledgement has led to organisations applying CSR as a strategic mechanism in their efforts to ensure long-term success and valued contribution to society. It is a shared value.

2.2.1.7 Corporate sustainability

Sustainability denotes a holistic approach in terms of ensuring environmentally sound, socially responsible and economically viable (people, profit and planet) organisations, and governance and business ethics force organisations to take cognisance of it (Flores-Araoz 2011:1; Ross 2008:7; Hazarika 2012:321; Ndhlovu 2009:7; Hinson & Ndhlovu 2011:342; Skinner & Mersham 2008:252; Baladi 2011:206; Iamandi 2007:4). This entails preserving the continued existence and prosperity of the future, while taking care of it today (Saiia [sa]:40). While the organisation’s main objective is to achieve its goals (profits), it also has to concern itself with human and social welfare, and at the same time be aware of and reduce its ecological footprint (Falkenberg 2006:13; Dentchev 2007:31; Saiida [sa]:40).

According to KPMG (2011:12), sustainability in this regard essentially relates to “… adopting business strategies that meet the needs of the enterprise and its stakeholders today while sustaining the resources, both human and natural, that will be needed in the future”.

The primary drivers of corporate sustainability include regulatory requirements, brand enhancement, risk management, cost reduction and primarily environmental concerns in terms of resource and energy efficiency (KPMG 2011:12).
2.2.1.8 Corporate accountability

As a foundation and the most basic aspect of CSR, Pava [sa]:48) defines corporate accountability as “the continuous, systematic and public communication of information and reasons designed to justify an organization’s decisions, actions and outputs to various stakeholders”.

This is a form of ethical communication which speaks to the organisation’s past, present and future actions reasonably, meaningfully and accessibly, and is specifically focused on those constituencies that are affected by organisations’ activities (Pava [sa]:48). Clear and concise communication is likely to enhance the organisation’s competitive advantage.

The above discussion was aimed at clarifying the various concepts that fall under the umbrella concept of CSR. The next section addresses the rise of CSR and explains why organisations engage in CSR. The South African context and its specific legal and regulatory framework are then addressed.

2.2.2 The rise of CSR

The increased activities of multinational companies as well as domestic organisations in developing countries and emerging economies have been a key driver of the upsurge of CSR 2.0 over the last 20 years (Crane et al 2014:18). It is clear that a myriad umbrella concepts and perspectives of CSR exist, as explained above. As pointed out earlier in sections 1.2.2 and 1.3.1, CSR is acknowledged as a multidimensional, operationally complex and continuously contested concept. CSR has evolved conceptually and taken on many forms and definitions globally. Initially, it developed as a management concept early in the 20th century and has since become an established global management and international academic concept (Moon [sa]:1–2).

As early as the 1950s, Bowen (1953:6), in his landmark book, Social responsibilities of the businessman, emphasised that there is an obligation on businesspeople to be aware of society in their decisions and actions. In this sense, social responsibility
was equated with social obligations, business morality and public responsibility (Bowen 1953:6). Acquier, Gond & Pasquero (2011:625) assert that Bowen’s work covered the individual (the businessperson), and organisational and national levels. This is indicative of the systemic nature of Bowen’s (1953) approach to social responsibility, which concerns the interrelatedness of historical, institutional, political, managerial, psychological, moral and economic dimensions (Acquier et al 2011:625). During this period, Frederick (1986) devised CSR1 for the organisation’s interactions with society in order to improve society.

During the 1960s and 1970s, academic interest in CSR increased, resulting in the emergence of various models, definitions and debates (Kakabadse et al; Carroll 2016:1–2; Carroll 1999:291; Hunma 2013:13). There were indeed many definitions of and approaches to CSR, ranging from legal responsibility, ethical behaviour, causal responsibility, charitable giving (philanthropy), social consciousness, legitimacy, social problem solving and fiduciary duty (Carroll 1999:280). In the late 1970s, Carroll (1979:499) developed a comprehensive definition of CSR that was grounded in corporate social performance (CSP) – see section 2.2.1.4. This required organisations to have an understanding of the social issues, the reasons for CSR and a specific response philosophy to these issues. Based on these requirements and principles, Carroll (1979:500) formulated the following definition: “The social responsibility of business encompasses the economic, legal, ethical and discretionary expectations that society has of organizations at a given point in time.”

In the 1970s and 1980s, the most commonly accepted view of CSR was that if organisations adopt a socially responsible approach, the result is economic gain for the organisation and society as a whole (Carroll 1999:271). After the 1970s, Frederick (1986) improved the CSR1 concept to describe the organisation’s responses to social pressures – CSR2 (corporate social responsiveness). This concept was discussed in detail in section 2.2.

The focus changed during the 1980s, with the interest in CSR certainly not dwindling. This change in focus saw more CSR research and the development of alternate and
divergent concepts emerging, which included, *inter alia*, corporate social responsiveness, CSP, public policy, business ethics and stakeholder theory/management (Carroll 1999:284). A contributing author to clarifying the CSR concept during this period was Jones (1980:65), who expressly stated that CSR should be seen as a process and not merely a host of outcomes.

Later, Drucker’s (1984:62) instrumentalist view was that social problems should in fact be turned into economic opportunities and benefits, productive capacity, human competence and wealth. This represented a perspective in which CSR is the means to the end in that profitability and responsibility are seen as compatible (Drucker 1984:62). During the 1990s, CSR merely served as a reference point for other concepts such as, *inter alia*, CSP, stakeholder theory, business ethics theory and corporate citizenship, and did not see many exceptional contributions to the concept (Carroll 1999:288). However, significant and meaningful contributions emerged in terms of conceptualising CSR in a much broader context and more focused on outcomes (Carroll 1999:280).

As mentioned in chapter 1, Visser (2010b; 2010d; 2012a; 2012b) states that CSR 1.0 has essentially failed, and instead, a new transformational approach has become more relevant, which should be entrenched in the philosophy (DNA) of a responsible business. Visser (2010c; 2010d) demonstrates a philosophical progression of the concept of CSR in terms of organisational participation and societal impact (see section 2.4.2 and figure 2.2). Crane *et al* (2014:12) concur with Visser’s (2010b; 2010d; 2012a; 2012b) view of a “built-in” standard of CSR in the organisation as opposed to an “added extra”. The characteristics and theoretical underpinning of CSR 2.0 are discussed later in this chapter (see section 2.4).

Dahlsrud (2008:1) posits that because of the abundance of definitions, it is difficult to develop and thus implement the CSR construct in the corporate world. This has also made the comparison of research difficult (Hazarika 2012:319; Baladi 2011:204; McWilliams *et al* 2006:12). As stated in chapter 1, there is still a common thread.
woven through the various approaches, which relates to organisations acknowledging their responsibility towards society.

The reasons for organisations engaging in CSR are discussed in the next section.

### 2.2.3 Why organisations engage in CSR

In attempting to answer why organisations engage in CSR, the literature focuses mostly on the relationship between financial performance and CSR, which relates to success and higher profits through CSR (Kotchen & Moon 2012:1). In addition, Hinson and Ndhlovu (2011:334) and Dahlsrud (2008:8) conclude that there is a strong correlation between CSR, profits and corporate financial performance (CFP). In fact, a virtuous cycle is indicated where robust CSR practices lead to higher CFP and more profitable returns, and the strong CFP and higher profits in turn enable greater CSR impact (Dahlsrud 2008:8). Organisations engage in CSR for the following reasons:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2.1: Reasons why organisations engage in CSR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To score BEE points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry charters and legislative requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisations are on the JSE SRI index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability reports are required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax rebates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertisement of sponsorship results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good for business in terms of selling more products/services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Rossouw ([sa]:6); Vettori (2005:336).
In light of the reasons advanced for engagement in CSR in table 2.1 above, organisations’ involvement in CSR can also be viewed from three perspectives. Hinson and Ndlovu (2011:337) regard CSR from neo-classical, Keynesian and new institutional economics (NIE) perspectives. In the neo-classical paradigm, the view is held that organisations should remain solely focused on their “economic and legal obligation”, because CSR is deemed to impose on profits and dilute strategic foci, thereby decreasing the competitive advantage (Hinson & Ndlovu 2011:337; McWilliams et al 2006:5). The Keynesian perspective holds that CSR has a broader conception and as such comprises economic, social, technological and environmental dimensions (Hinson & Ndlovu 2011:337). The view is that it is vital for organisations to establish and maintain relationships with society and actively address issues to develop that society. Hence, according to this perspective, CSR is regarded as organisations’ responsibility to society (Hinson & Ndlovu 2011:337).

The NIE perspective, which is a combination of the neo-classical and Keynesian approaches, views CSR as an integrative, more holistic approach, which sees CSR flowing through every aspect of the organisation and community at large as well as maximising profits (Hinson & Ndlovu 2011:339). The NIE perspective holds that organisations have a responsibility to the society in which they operate. However, Hinson and Ndlovu (2011:333) indicate that debates continue around whether CSR should be voluntary or not, particularly in areas such as environmental issues, labour practices and human rights. Similarly, Acquier et al (2011:637) posit that the uncertainties around the appropriate mix of CSR as voluntary versus obligatory in terms of organisational activities and the public interest had already been evident in the 1950s. Over the years, organisations have increasingly been called upon to increase their participation in society. In this regard, Hinson and Ndlovu (2011:335) contend that organisations garner greater benefits from their participation. Social development is therefore not government’s exclusive responsibility, but organisations operating in society have an equally responsible role to fulfil (Hazarika 2012:319; Skinner & Mersham 2008:239).
Based on the shift to the “softer sides” (Rogers 2012:2) of the organisation where sustainability and social enhancement are becoming more important, stakeholder expectations drive organisations to be more responsible in their operations. The term “responsible business” would be a classification of the organisation’s approach to its contribution to its own goals and those of the society in which it exists. Essentially, it is about the “why” of the organisation’s existence – its higher purpose as it were, namely purpose-driven business, which ties in with sustainability and business leadership (Low 2013). D’Anselmi (2011:34) relates CSR to an awareness of the state of society. This transcends to innovations in the organisation, the people hired as employees, how a brand communicates this philosophy and how the CSR initiatives support the brand’s purpose (and not merely making profits) (Stoiber 2013:2).

Not only does it relate to internal organisational awareness, but also to what the organisation’s direct and indirect impact on society is. Naturally, this translates not only into the responsibility the organisation has to society and the environment, but also its acceptance of this responsibility and being accountable for its actions. If the organisation is not driven by a specific, all-inclusive transformational purpose, and denies its responsibility to produce its products and services without negatively impacting the environment and neglecting social communities, its CSR efforts will reflect merely as window dressing in the public domain.

In an attempt to narrow the focus in terms of the manifest dimensions of organisations’ CSR involvement, research conducted by Dahlsrud (2008:4) produced five dominant dimensions of CSR by means of a content analysis of CSR definitions. These include environmental, social, economic, stakeholder and volunteerism dimensions (Dahlsrud 2008:4). As such, CSR essentially integrates business and social objectives and is therefore closely related to sustainable development and competitive advantage (Hazarika 2012:320). This consideration was deemed relevant to this study because these dimensions relate to OMSA’s CSR
2.0 activities, and the images sampled were classified using these dimensions. This helped to ensure that valid artefacts were sampled for this study.

Dahlsrud’s (2008:4) dimensions are depicted in table 2.2 below:

**Table 2.2: Dimensions of CSR 2.0**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIMENSIONS</th>
<th>ENVIRONMENT</th>
<th>SOCIETY</th>
<th>ECONOMIC</th>
<th>STAKEHOLDER</th>
<th>VOLUNTARINESS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DEFINITIONAL CODE</strong></td>
<td>• Natural environment</td>
<td>• Relationship between organisation and society</td>
<td>• Socioeconomic or financial including describing CSR 2.0 in terms of organisational operation</td>
<td>• Stakeholder groups</td>
<td>• Actions that are not prescribed by law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONTENT/KEY INDICATOR</strong></td>
<td>• Cleaner environment</td>
<td>• Contribution to a better society</td>
<td>• Stakeholder interactions (employees, customers, suppliers, communities)</td>
<td>• Treatment of the organisation’s stakeholders</td>
<td>• Ethical values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Environmental stewardship</td>
<td>• Integration of social concerns in business operations</td>
<td>• Preservation of profitability</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Beyond legal obligations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Environmental concerns in business operations</td>
<td>• Consideration of impact on communities</td>
<td>• Business operations</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Voluntary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Dahlsrud (2008:4)

As indicated in table 2.2, an organisation’s CSR activities can be classified under one or more of these identified CSR dimensions. Depending on the CSR fit or the chosen cause(s), the content of the organisation’s CSR messaging will correspond with these dimensions. This is discussed further in sections 2.4.5 and 4.9.

The South African and the broader African contexts, albeit to a lesser extent, are now discussed to provide further context on CSR in South Africa. The broader African detail is provided solely to situate South Africa in a particular context and provide a comparative perspective.

**2.2.4 The South African context**

As mentioned earlier, political reform has been a major driver of CSR in South Africa, in that organisations have moved towards integrating social and ethical issues into their strategies (Darty-Baah & Amponsah-Tawiah 2011:130). This reform includes, *inter alia*, corporate governance, collective business action for social upliftment, BEE
and business ethics, environmental policies and labour laws (Darty-Baah & Amponsah-Tawiah 2011:130).

Hinson and Ndhlovu (2011:333) argue that CSR literature is underrepresented in Africa, with South Africa and Nigeria being the focus of most research. African CSR literature is dominated by South Africa (57%), while other research also exists in other parts of Africa (Hinson and Ndhlovu 2011:333). These CSR activities are predominantly performed by organisations such as the South African mining, petrochemical and other large organisations. South African organisations’ CSR and social transformation projects are playing a much greater role in social change and development.

In the South African context, CSR spend holds much promise in terms of how organisations can contribute to the social and economic transformation in South Africa. In South Africa, large organisations such as OMSA are mostly engaged in social transformational CSR projects to try to right the wrongs of the apartheid era (Hinson & Ndhlovu 2011:333). Hence the role of organisations in transforming Africa, and by implication South Africa, is essential in terms of astute governance, investment in people, infrastructure, economic growth and participation, fair trade and labour practices (Visser 2006:30). The scope of these issues defines the challenges for CSR and organisations’ role in contributing to change.

2.2.4.1 The South African legal and regulatory framework

The sociopolitical context of South Africa presents ideal opportunities for organisations to be involved in education, literacy and numeracy, job creation, housing, healthcare and so forth, in order to improve South African society. With the dawn of the new South Africa in 1994, organisations were keen to take on a caring persona to play a more active role in social transformation, and this was seen with the introduction of the B-BBEE Act of 2003 (Hinson & Ndhlovu 2011:340). Steinman and Van Rooij (2012:12) define B-BBEE as follows:
… an integrated and coherent socio-economic process that directly contributes to the economic transformation of South Africa and brings about significant increases in the numbers of black people that manage, own and control the country’s economy, as well as significant decreases in income inequalities.

Compliance with this Act (scorecards and codes of conduct and industry charters) was the only way to secure their operations in the country and encourage previous disadvantaged groups to participate in the economy (Hinson & Ndhlovu 2011:340; Flores-Araoz 2011:1).

The B-BBEE Act developed on the basis of the redefinition of the BEE code to include issues broader than the original BEE and promote social upliftment through skills development and empowerment (Busacca 2013:21). BEE developed on the back of the reconstruction and development programme (RDP) and growth, employment and redistribution (GEAR), a macroeconomic strategy, aimed at addressing economic inequality and exclusion and the need for affirmative action “through a legally binding framework in the public sector” (Busacca 2013:20). The B-BBEE code contains legal and regulatory instruments and specific certification tools based on the B-BBEE scorecard (Busacca 2013:20). Despite B-BBEE being voluntary, non-compliant organisations are negatively scored, which impedes their operational legitimacy and image. There are seven key elements of B-BBEE, namely ownership, management control, employment equity, skills development, preferential procurement, enterprise development and socioeconomic development, and this framework acts as an instrument through which CSR activities are certified (Busacca 2013:21; Steinman & Van Rooij 2012:12).

The B-BBEE codes and various industry charters provide the framework for social transformation and empowerment against which organisations are scored according to specific targets for each element in the B-BBEE codes (Skinner & Mersham 2008:245). Since this legal framework is indicative of government’s regulatory approach to transformation, CSR is part of corporate agendas in South Africa, through which business contributes greatly to transformation in this country (Skinner
The spending targets prescribed by government thus make CSR a “performance-driven” quest in businesses seeking to improve and maintain B-BBEE scores (Skinner & Mersham 2008:246).

Partnerships between government, corporates and NGOs in South Africa are the order of the day in projects such as AIDS awareness and education, where organisations collaborate with government departments to improve the economic and social needs of South African society. These partnerships could prove useful and beneficial in extending a wider reach to make a meaningful impact in society. In addition, customers are also pushing organisations to incorporate and extend CSR in their operations (Flores-Araoz 2011:3).

The following question arises: Despite the fact that organisations are compelled by legislation (e.g. B-BBEE and industry charters) to practise CSR, is this also driven by a keen and authentic sense of responsibility to be good corporate citizens? One often hears and sees organisations flaunting their so-called “B-BBEE ratings” in an attempt to indicate their compliance, and by implication, their communicating levels of compliance and social economic development (SED) involvement. Another question that comes to mind regarding the scorecards and legislation, is how accountable is government for SED and infrastructure development in light of these strategic partnerships? In these social projects, it is vital that beneficiaries and social investors engage meaningfully to achieve the set goals (Hinson & Ndhlovu 2011:342). To this end, Hinson and Ndhlovu (2011:342) and Skinner and Mersham (2008:249) indicate that the partnerships between organisations and government should be based on measuring and evaluating project delivery in terms of their social impact (social contract). In addition, Hinson and Ndhlovu (2011:342) and Visser (2010a) indicate that the CSR impact should also be measured (i.e. social programmes and policy assessment) in terms of the context of change or improvement in the organisation regarding society and the environment.

In essence then, B-BBEE should be viewed by organisations as a means of empowerment of previously disadvantaged/marginalised groups and not only a
vehicle for black participation in the economy (Flores-Araoz 2011:1). This relates to expanding the economic field of South Africa by addressing racial and economic disparity. However, much work still needs to be done because social and economic inequality still ravages South Africa. All social areas are in need of development and transformation, but education, skills development (entrepreneurship) and healthcare (HIV/AIDS) are essential to truly embracing the B-BBEE philosophy of economic empowerment and participation.

The impact of charters and B-BBEE codes on organisations in terms of their social responsibility involves increased communication, a more formalised approach, new or refined strategies, greater management and board involvement, increased or decreased expenditure and changes in project selection or focus areas (Rossouw 1997:27). Post-1994, South Africa was characterised by social inequalities in terms of education, infrastructure, economic power and access to basic services (Flores-Araoz 2011:1). Although government has attempted to “right the wrongs”, the task has proven too enormous. Based on good corporate citizenship as well as various policies and legislation (such as the King Commission reports and B-BBEE, to mention but a few), which expressly call for the acknowledgement of a “triple bottom line” approach by all stakeholders, organisations have become more involved in social transformation (Flores-Araoz 2011:1).

Another element in the framework is the South African Social Investment Exchange (SASIX), which was launched in 2006. This was the first online social investment stock exchange in South Africa, where social investors could access social development projects in which to invest (SASIX 2011; Steinman & Van Rooij 2012:8; Ndlovu 2009:75). According to Skinner and Mersham (2008:246), the SASIX profile social development projects aid potential investors in their contributions to specific projects. The SASIX (2011) focuses on evaluation and continuous feedback, thus engendering a “culture of performance-based giving, or social investment, where measurement is no longer an optional add-on, but a core function in the development process” (Skinner & Mersham 2008:246).
Following King II and various sustainability programmes, in May 2004, the Social Responsibility Index (SRI) was launched (the first in emerging markets) by the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE) to mirror the complexity of South African society, engender good corporate citizenship and stimulate sustainable development (JSE SRI 2013; Hinson & Ndlovu 2011:342). The JSE SRI is grounded on the TBL approach and underpinned by good corporate governance (Visser 2005:3). This index advises investors and market agents of listed companies’ CSR and sustainability policies and practices, which encourages investors to support these organisations and encourages organisations to fortify their CSR and sustainability activities (Flores-Araoz 2011:2; Ndhlovu 2009:7). An advisory committee determines the inclusion of companies on the index, based on specific criteria determined by the JSE (JSE SRI 2013). The annual evaluation of listed companies is based on environmental, social and governance (ESG) as well as climate and other associated sustainability issues.

Measurement of the impact of organisations’ CSR activities on society has become reliant on the codes of conduct (relating to human rights indices, environmental protection, employee rights, etc.) and integrated reporting requirements such as those proffered by the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) (Hinson & Ndlovu 2011:339). As the regional networks partner of WBCSD in South Africa, the National Business Initiative (NBI), which was established in 1995, works with organisations through partnerships, programmes and policy engagement efforts, towards sustainable growth and development in South Africa (NBI 2011). The institution is committed to leading by example and leading research in relevant areas in terms of demonstrating responsible business leadership in its efforts towards achieving sustainability (thus effecting systems change). The NBI is focused on thought leadership and advocacy centred on the role of business in society, education and skills development, climate and energy through the following activities (NBI 2011):
• a business vision of and critical pathways for a sustainable South Africa by 2050
• doing business responsibly through a set of core values, tools and an integrated sustainability approach
• focal point for the United Nations Global Compact in South Africa
• schooling and skills development as foundations for a sustainable future
• energy efficiency
• carbon disclosure project
• water

In terms of organisational reporting, the first King Report (King I), completed in 1994, was a key framework on corporate governance (Rossouw 1997:1543). The implementation of this framework was supported by the Institute of Directors of South Africa, the South African Chamber of Commerce, the Chartered Institute of Secretaries, the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA), the JSE and the South African Institute of Business ethics (SAIBE) (Rossouw 1997:1543). This document comprises guidelines on, *inter alia*, the duties and responsibilities of boards, auditing standards and stakeholder communication (Rossouw 1997:1544), and views stakeholders as a wider concept than that of shareholders. Among the reporting requirements detailed in the report (financial, employment, customer and supplier interests) are organisations’ environmental and social responsibilities.

Flores-Araoz (2011:1) further explains that the King reports serve as corporate governance parameters and best practices in South Africa in the areas of social, environmental and economics, which adopt a "comply-apply-explain" stance, which basically compels organisations to involve themselves in CSR. While compliance with the King codes of governance is voluntary, compliance has become a listing requirement on the JSE and large corporations have responded well (Visser 2005:3; Visser 2006:44; Busacca 2013:15). The King II report also contains the elements of good corporate governance, which includes discipline, fairness, transparency, social responsibility, independence, accountability and responsibility (Flores-Araoz 2011:2;
Corporate governance relates to the systems that direct and control organisations (KPMG 2012:34).

The King III report, which came into effect in July 2010, however, is focused more on sustainability, corporate citizenship and leadership and continues to emphasise the fact that organisations are responsible to all stakeholders, which is indicative of organisations’ intersection with society (Flores-Araoz 2011:2; SAICA [sa]:3). The King III report indicates that emphasis on the TBL ensures the benefits of operational performance, protection and improvements in reputation, organisational relevance in society and economic, social and environmental sustainability (SAICA [sa]:18). In addition, a holistic approach ensures, inter alia, effective opportunity and risk management (SAICA [sa]:18). Two of the main implications of this report are that organisations should become strategic with regard to sustainability and more accountability should be demanded from senior management (Trialogue 2013a).

Since June 2010, organisations have been required by South African law to integrate reporting. The aim of integrated reporting is to enable stakeholders to assess the value of the organisation and its activities (KPMG 2012:194). This transparency increases the stakeholder’s trust and confidence in the organisation and its role in society.

The South African legal framework is indicative of government’s regulatory approach to transformation and as such, sees CSR as part of corporate agendas in South Africa. In light of the preceding discussion on the nature, growth and legal and regulatory framework of CSR, it is clear that organisations’ stakeholder constituencies are at the heart of their CSR policies, activities and programmes. The next section focuses on the stakeholder perspective and its relevance to CSR.

2.3 ADOPTING A STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVE

As indicated in earlier discussions, because CSR is such a highly complex and contested topic, based on the various approaches adopted in this area, there are specific theoretical perspectives, which frame the debates on this topic. In the
context of this study, the stakeholder theoretical perspective clarifies the organisation’s relationship with and commitment towards its stakeholders, and how it conducts itself in its operational environment (Key 1999:319; Weigel 2011:2). The word “social” in CSR is somewhat vague in that it does not specify with whom the organisation’s responsibility lies. To this end, Carroll (1991:9) postulates that stakeholder theory allows the specific groups or people to be more personalised. This perspective suggests that socially responsible behaviour by the organisation is evident when “decisions and actions account for, and balance, diverse stakeholder interests” (Maignan & Ferrell 2004:5).

As stated in chapter 1, relationships with stakeholders and not merely transactions are the organisation’s definitive source of wealth and accrual of competitive advantage (Branco & Rodriguez 2007:13; Figar & Figar 2011:2). It is the organisation’s ability to build and sustain relationships in its operational context that defines its long-term sustainability and survival (Branco & Rodriguez 2007:13; Figar & Figar 2011:2; Duncan & Moriarty 1998:3). Essentially, the focus has shifted to a more interactive relationship between organisations and their stakeholders, which entails engagement and integrated communication (Morsing & Schultz 2006:325; Duncan & Moriarty 1998:8).

Organisations no longer focus on economics (profit) only, but also recognise that the organisation and the social context in which it operates are inextricably linked. From a marketing perspective, the customer as a key stakeholder is more prominent than the other groups, but a more holistic orientation towards all stakeholder groups is essential (Maignan et al 2005:957; Maignan & Ferrell 2004:3; Branco & Rodrigues 2007:5). In the relationship marketing milieu, it is important to create meaningful and profitable relationships with stakeholders that benefit both the organisation and stakeholders. This would then imply that in order to be successful, the stakeholder values must match the organisational values to ensure alignment in the organisational delivery and the perceptions of stakeholders.
Podnar (2008:78), Scharf and Fernandes (2013:34), Schmeltz (2012:33), Öberseder, Schlegelmilch and Murphy (2013:1862) and Ngobeni (2011:105) have all indicated a shift in stakeholder values and expectations regarding organisations’ participation in and communication about CSR. Furthermore, Podnar (2008:78) states that marketers should incorporate CSR in their strategic marketing and communications and be cognisant of stakeholder values, motivations, expectations and involvement in CSR activities. As such, organisations acknowledge this and have become more receptive to stakeholder demands and expectations as well as their influence on stakeholder opinions and attitudes towards the organisation (Birth et al 2008:183; Hooghiemstra 2000:57; Chaudhri & Wang 2007:232).

2.3.1 The principles of stakeholder theory

In the seminal work of Freeman (1984:41), stakeholders are defined as “groups and individuals who benefit from or are harmed by, and whose rights are violated or respected by, corporate actions”.

This definition has been expanded by Murray and Vogel (1997:142), Cragg (2001:2), Branco and Rodrigues (2007:5) and Maignan et al (2005:959) and forms the basis of this study and underlies the theoretical and practical application of stakeholder theory to CSR. “Stakeholders relate to any individual, group or organisation that directly or indirectly affects and are affected by a specific organisation’s operations and includes internal or external parties such as employees, communities, customers, other organisations and suppliers, amongst others.”

Within this broad conceptualisation of whom the organisation is responsible to in terms of its CSR, Arvidsson (2010:340) emphasises that society as a whole sets the agenda for social responsibility.

According to Donaldson and Preston (1995:66), the dimensions of stakeholder theory are threefold:

- Stakeholder theory is described as descriptive in that it offers a model of the nature of the organisation (past, present and future).
• It is instrumental in that it offers a structure for evaluating the links between stakeholder management and organisational goals (such as profitability).

• Fundamentally, stakeholder theory is normative in that regardless of the organisation’s interests or impact on its stakeholders, they remain important and merit individual consideration, not only for the benefits the organisation can derive from them (underlying moral and philosophical principles).

Stakeholder theory assists in a practical way to understand the “S” in CSR and as a managerial tool to help organisations identify, manage and engage with its various stakeholder groups (Crane et al 2014:134; Moir 2001:8). The value of stakeholder theory is that it serves as an analytical tool to position all stakeholder groups (Crane et al 2014:136). In addition, it serves to assist in identifying the influence and power of various stakeholders and enables the organisation to manage relationships with its various stakeholder groups (Crane et al 2014:136). As a stakeholder management model, stakeholder theory proposes attitudes, structures and practices, which combined, represent focusing in the legitimate interests of stakeholder groups. In this sense, stakeholder theory is meant to describe the structure and guide the organisation (Donaldson & Preston 1995:70).

2.3.2 The debates surrounding and shortcomings of stakeholder theory

Donaldson and Preston (1995:65) posit that stakeholder theory is justified in its overall use because of its “descriptive accuracy, instrumental power and normative validity”. However, it is used in its either descriptive form (observed reality) and instrumental (stakeholder management and corporate performance) or normative bases (doing the right thing). This is essentially based on corporate characteristics and behaviours, the nature of relationships between the organisation and its stakeholders (or lack thereof), between the organisation and attaining its corporate objectives and clarity on the organisational functions and recognition of the “moral or philosophical guidelines” to be followed in organisational operations and management (Donaldson & Preston 1995:70). Cragg (2001:2) refers to stakeholder
theory as a mechanism that illuminates the basic moral principles of the organisation towards its stakeholders – all of them should be accorded the same treatment.

However, authors such as Branco and Rodriguez (2007:8), Aguinis and Glavas (2012:943) and Kakabadse et al (2005:291) view the instrumental and normative dimensions as different approaches to stakeholder theory. The normative approach regards stakeholders as an end, whereas from an instrumental perspective (the expected financial outcomes) they are regarded as a means to enhancing financial performance and efficiency – a mechanism to achieve objectives (predominantly profits) (Kakabadse et al 2005:291). Furthermore, Aguinis and Glavas (2012:943) indicate that at the organisational level, the non-financial outcomes resulting from CSR engagement include, inter alia, product quality, improved management practices, operational efficiency and attractiveness to investors and other stakeholder groups.

This instrumentalist approach could be regarded flawed and therefore open to more criticism as it lacks any ethical grounding and justifies organisations’ purely economic bases (Kakabadse et al 2005:291). Another criticism levelled by Kakabadse et al 2005:292) and Phillips, Freeman & Wicks (2003:485) is that stakeholder theory does not offer enough practical guidance on day-to-day management and in terms of managing stakeholder interests. This shortcoming is based on stakeholder theory discussions conducted in the abstract and the focus on urging management to concentrate on stakeholder interests (Phillips et al 2003:485). Organisations need to be clear on what these interests are and whom exactly they relate to. Adopting an instrumental approach does not necessarily imply a moral point of departure (Phillips et al 2003:485). From a normative perspective, it recognises the ethical legitimacy of stakeholder claims in terms of the good and intentions behind it.

The three dimensions (descriptive, instrumental and normative) of stakeholder theory are in fact nested within each other, as indicated in the seminal work of Donaldson and Preston (1995:70). This nested configuration relates to the
descriptive dimension depicting relationships, whereas the instrumental layer supports this descriptive layer in its predictive value (Donaldson and Preston 1995:70). For example, if an organisation engages in CSR, then it will reap financial rewards. Lastly, the normative layer lies at the core and relates to the belief that all stakeholders’ interests have inherent value (Donaldson & Preston 1995:70). Figure 2.1 below demonstrates this inextricable relationship. By recognising and acknowledging its moral obligations, the organisation is essentially engaging the normative dimension of stakeholder theory. As such, the stakeholder perspective then defines the constituencies in society that the organisation should focus on. In this context, Branco and Rodrigues (2007:11) describe CSR 2.0 as a two-way relationship where society and the organisation have mutual expectations – society’s recognition of the organisation’s CSR 2.0 and its role in society, and the organisation gaining society’s approval for its responsible behaviour.

Figure 2.1: Stakeholder theory: different views

As depicted in figure 2.1 above, it is clear that these three dimensions are essential to the goals of the organisation in terms of its CSR 2.0 objectives. In stakeholder theory, the organisation is seen as an open and flexible system comprising an array of participants who are all involved in an intricate network of relationships (Maignan
& Ferrell 2004:5). Therefore, in the context of CSR, it does not make sense to view any of the three “approaches” in isolation, but instead to acknowledge that in certain contexts, a single or more than one dimension may be more dominant than the other.

### 2.3.3 The relevance of stakeholder theory to CSR and this study

The prime justification for applying stakeholder theory to CSR is its normative base (Donaldson & Preston 1995:87; Phillips et al 2003:481; Crane et al 2014:134). This relates to understanding the organisational function and identifying its moral and philosophical bases for operation (doing the right thing) (Crane et al 2014:134). The challenge for organisations is balancing the needs of society as well as their competitive ability and maximisation of profits. Branco and Rodrigues (2007:5) and Lindgreen and Swaen (2010:2) emphasise that the stakeholder perspective is inextricably linked to the CSR domain and as such, essential in operationalising CSR, as mentioned in, section 1.5.2. To this end, Raupp (2011:276), Kakabadse et al (2005:298) and Maignan and Ferrell (2004:5) echo Carroll’s (1991:43) view that a “natural fit” between CSR and stakeholders exists – essentially connecting stakeholder theory to CSR. As indicated in the discussion above, a key tenet of stakeholder theory is that there is an obligation on organisations to engage in social responsibility in terms of addressing all stakeholder needs (Busacca 2013:6).

Together with organisational processes, the organisation adopts values and norms which minimise any negative impacts and, in turn, maximise positive impacts on issues that are important to stakeholder groups (making CSR 2.0 issue specific) (Maignan et al 2005:958). In implementing CSR in the organisation, Maignan et al (2005:965), Branco and Rodriguez (2007:8) and Aguinis and Glavas (2012:941) postulate that the organisation should be clear on its own values and norms, which may impact on CSR, know who its stakeholders are (in terms of power and legitimacy) and understand what their particular issues, concerns and passions are.

For stakeholders to identify with the organisation, it is essential that the organisation makes stakeholders aware (through its communications) of its impacts on specific
issues or areas in the social context, as suggested by Maignan and Ferrell (2004:14) and Morsing and Schultz (2006:323). They identify three main approaches through which the organisation can enhance stakeholder identification, namely the inclusion of CSR visual texts in communications, sharing concerns around specific issues important to both stakeholders and the organisation and encouraging and engaging in stakeholder interactions around CSR. According to Aguinis and Glavas (2012:941), stakeholder actions are a significant directive for the organisation’s CSR 2.0 activities and policies as well as regulatory and other institutional forces that influence its CSR involvement. Organisations that engage in CSR activities are deemed to improve their accrual of reputational capital and customer loyalty (Aguinis & Glavas 2012:941).

Consequently, the bond between an organisation and its stakeholders is what galvanises its reputational capital (Roper & Fill 2012:119; Fisman et al[sa]:1; Skinner & Mersham 2008:248). This, in turn, drives organisational growth, stakeholder loyalty and alignment with stakeholders (Rogers 2012:1; Taken-Smith & Alexander 2013:158) and sees organisations go beyond normal business boundaries to contribute meaningfully to the improvement of society through an integrated reputation management strategy. This reputation management strategy is partly driven by its CSR programmes. The integrative strategy is used by organisations as a differentiator over competitors and a tool to attract good employees, and it essentially creates a connection between the organisation and the society in which it operates (Hinson & Ndhlovu 2011:333; Roper & Fill 2012:121). Corporate reputation is discussed in detail in section 4.3.

In establishing its role as a good corporate citizen, the organisation continually works at enhancing its stakeholder value, growing its brand and building relationships with stakeholders. In this regard, dialogue is vital in stakeholder management and this effective communication is acknowledged in growing CSR in organisations (Kakabadse et al 2005:294). As such, Key (1999:322) and Garriga and Melé (2004:60) suggest that organisations should focus on balancing stakeholder
interests and not be bogged down by trying to identify stakeholder groups as independent groups. CSR communication is discussed in detail in chapter 4.

Having discussed stakeholder theory in terms of its key principles, the debates surrounding it and its shortcomings, and how it is relevant to this study, the foundation has been laid for revisiting CSR and adopting a new, more relevant CSR perspective. The following section thus focuses on this new perspective – how it evolved, its main definitions and key characteristics, and why it is more relevant than the original CSR.

2.4 ADOPTING A CSR 2.0 PERSPECTIVE FOR THIS STUDY

For the purpose of this study, the concept “CSR 2.0” was adopted. As explained above and specifically in chapter 1, it is ultimately about the outcomes and impact, organisations’ commitment to society and the generation of shared value between stakeholders and the organisation. In this section, CSR 2.0 as a new approach to CSR is discussed, commencing with a definition to guide the discussion. The evolution of CSR 2.0 is then explored to indicate the rise of this new approach and its relevance to this study. This discussion includes the key principles of this perspective, the differences between the old and new CSR, the inadequacy of applying Carroll’s (1991) internationally acclaimed CSR pyramid and the suggestion of a new relevant framework for CSR 2.0, specifically in the African and South African contexts. In addition, the theoretical underpinning of CSR 2.0 is explained, including its key characteristics.

This new perspective, referred to as CSR 2.0, was developed by Wayne Visser (2010c; 2010d:8). It is essentially based on what is called the failure of the old CSR (CSR 1.0) and a progression to a new transformative approach (CSR 2.0) of the organisation’s responsibility to society. As stated in chapter 1, Visser (2010c; 2010d:8) reconceptualised CSR 1.0 into a new, systemic approach (CSR 2.0), which challenged the current economic model and offered valid solutions to global challenges (Lauesen 2008:19).
2.4.1 Defining CSR 2.0

Most CSR definitions describe what CSR as a phenomenon is and not exactly what it is or the actual social responsibilities of the organisation (Hazarika 2012:320; Clark & Granthum 2012:24; Dahlsrud 2008:6). Essentially, this could be cause of the definitional disagreement as to what exactly CSR constitutes (Dahlsrud 2008:6). Hence, Hazarika (2012:320) and Carroll (1999:280) expressly call for CSR to be defined as responsibility, and specifically what and to whom that responsibility relates. Referring back to section 2.2.4.1, the regulatory framework of South Africa provides a clear definition of the areas that are in focus in order to move South Africa forward. Clarke and Grantham (2012:40) hold that “the social responsibility of business is to not be irresponsible”. Their (Clarke & Graham 2012:4) evaluation of the diversity of CSR definitions and difficulty in defining the concept stem from the difficulty in the specifics of what “responsibilities” business has and to whom.

The reason for the heterogeneous array of CSR definitions doing the rounds is the fact that organisations operate in varying social contexts and thus focus on different needs in society (Crane et al 2013:5; Kakabadse et al 2005:281). Definitions therefore tend to be either business or society centred, depending on the focus (Kakabadse et al 2005:281). Hazarika (2012:320) defines CSR as “a company’s commitment to operate in an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable manner, while recognising the interests of its stakeholders, beyond its statutory/legal obligations”. CSR is thus a means of organisations exhibiting their socially responsible commitment to social and economic development in society, at the same time creating goodwill for the organisation (Hazarika 2012:321).

The CSR definitions proffered by Gomez and Preciado (2013:157) and Lindgreen and Swaen (2010:3) revolve around CSR being a voluntary approach, embedded in the organisational strategy to engage stakeholders, and organisations’ commitment to be ethical in their operations and at the same time influence economic development while improving the quality of society and the planet (TBL). Flores-Araoz (2011:1), by contrast, defines CSR in broader terms as organisations’
voluntary engagement in social projects that enhance society, *inter alia*, in the health, housing, education and environmental spheres. In essence, the organisation goes further than its own existence, and a change is evident in the sense that shareholder value and returns are no longer the exclusive goals of the organisation (Flores-Araoz (2011:1), but a more inclusive and integrative stakeholder approach is adopted. Coors and Winegarden (2005:1) and Aguinis and Glavas (2012:948) define CSR as “the alignment of business opportunities with social values: CSR consists of integrating the interests of stakeholders into the company’s business policies and actions … and the triple bottom line of economic, social and environmental performance”. However, the question arises as to which values the organisation pursues in its operations: minimise business’s negative impact on society or maximise profit impact, stakeholder preferences in terms of, say, the environment, labour, shareholders or consumers (Coors & Winegarden 2005:1).

According to the CSR definition formulated by McWilliams et al (2006:3), CSR entails “situations where the firm goes beyond compliance and engages in actions that appear to further some social good, beyond the interest of the firm and that which is required by law”. These actions are aimed at improving society and establishing a balance between all stakeholders’ interests (Hinson & Ndhlovu 2011:333; Roper & Fill 2012:121). The scope of CSR activities is seen to encompass social dimensions in products and processes such as environmentally friendly technology and practices (e.g. recycling and a smaller carbon footprint), progressive human resource practices, social enhancement and so on (Flores-Araoz 2011:1).

A rather broader definition of CSR is proffered by Skinner and Mersham (2008:249), who frame it within a public relations perspective by simply defining CSR as “an organisation’s relationship to the society in which it operates” and its involvement relevant to that society. Pomering and Johnson (2009:107) describe CSR in terms of “… how businesses act to implement the broad societal responsibility of going beyond economic criteria, such as creating products, employment, and profits, to meet broader social and environmental expectations”. Roper and Fill (2012:119) and
Fisman et al (2013:1) view CSR as strategic philanthropy that organisations apply to build “reputational capital” with stakeholders, where organisations go beyond normal organisational boundaries and contribute meaningfully to the improvement of society.

It is evident from the various definitions above, that there is consistency in the authors’ reference to the five specific dimensions indicated in table 2.2, namely the environmental, social, economic, stakeholder and volunteerism dimensions. Dahlsrud (2008:7) points out that CSR definitions are “predominantly congruent” which therefore minimises the problem of a universally accepted definition. This is evident in the golden thread running through the definitions provided above. This relates to organisations’ commitment to operate beyond their self-interests, minimising their impact on society and the environment around them and an integrated stakeholder approach. The real problem is the lack of guidance on managing the challenges in CSR (Dahlsrud 2008:7). Instead of the focus being on defining CSR, it should rather be directed towards how CSR is constructed socially in a particular context and how this is integrated into the business strategy (Dahlsrud 2008:7).

Critics hold that CSR is defined strictly by the organisation’s interest and functions as a mechanism to strengthen influence and power of organisations as opposed to meeting society’s expectations (Perks, Farache, Shukla & Berry 2013:1882). This means that organisations are seen as being unable to “fulfil their part of the social contract and thus focus on mitigating the effects of social and environmental actions” (Perks et al 2013:1882). A case in point is the recent controversy around Shell South Africa’s fracking project in the Karoo. As pointed out by Visser (2010d), organisations are rather about being less bad than good.

Perceptions abound that the organisation is acting in its own interests and this conflicts with societal values (Perks et al 2013:1882). According to Kotchen and Moon (2012:8), to this end, CSR is a means used by organisations to counter any bad they do, thereby mitigating financial losses or social costs. Where there is
inconsistency between the organisational activities and social values, Kotchen and Moon (2012:8) posit that a proactive approach is better to mitigate conflict and is a key motive for CSR engagement. This means that organisations believe that their irresponsible behaviour will be offset by the good they do through their CSR initiatives (Kotchen & Moon 2012:8). This in fact fuels the uncertainty of the CSR debate in the sense that any organisation with a large marketing/PR budget and alluring cause can actually divert attention from potentially harmful and more important business opportunities (Clark & Granthum 2012:24).

A more topical view is that the term “CSR” should be revised as there are impediments in the articulation and inclusivity of what exactly constitutes social responsibility (Low 2013). In terms of the concept of CSR, Low (2013) underscores the following concerns pertaining to the concept:

- “Social” is too narrow in relation to what it is actually meant to communicate and is not able to adequately convey environmental and economic concerns.

- “Responsibility” in CSR has negative connotations in the sense that organisations see it as a burden. However, organisations taking responsibility and making positive contributions in society at large, rather than just their bottom lines, have seen the simpler term “responsible organisation” evolve organically, which is devoid of the connotation of burden (Low 2013). Da Piedade and Thomas (2006:58) also state that the term “responsibility” reduces arguments to obligation and/or accountability.

However, the term “responsible business” does not focus on the “potential that this responsibility holds” (Low 2013), and it is just as broad and all-encompassing as the CSR concept (encompassing, inter alia, employees, society and the environment). In principle, it is easy to rethink this concept, but more difficult to actually find an umbrella term that is globally accepted and loaded with specific meaning, as pointed out earlier.
The way forward, according to Low (2013) and Visser (2012a), is a value creation philosophy where the organisation’s social responsibility has a primarily strategic and operational impact, which automatically leads to sustainable business and a strategically entrenched philosophy. This translates directly into the organisation generating shared value between customers, society and itself, which automatically results in sustainable business and a strategically entrenched philosophy. Trialogue (2016:112) avers that shared value represents an ideological shift in that profits are not the only priorities of the organisation. Instead, it represents the acknowledgement of “the interconnectedness and mutual dependence that exists between shareholders, customers, suppliers, employees, and society at large” (Trialogue 2016:112). The emphasis is thus on stakeholder benefits through the organisation’s initiatives, where the profits are used to support the national economy and at the same time uplift and strengthen society (Trialogue (2016:112).

Visser (2012a) posits that this value creation relates to financial profitability as well as the advancement of the social context in which the organisation operates: infrastructure, employment, skills development, to mention but a few. A purpose-driven organisation would therefore embody meaningful engagement with all stakeholders, growth and innovation (Low 2013). Consumers are more inclined to connect with brands they trust and respect, which are aligned with their values and are seen to be sincere and authentic in their social engagements and play a positive role in society. Therefore, an organisation truly aligned to its own and its stakeholder values and purpose, produces and motivates advocates and clients that neither money nor advertising can buy (Low 2013).

The convergence of CSR and sustainability constructs is evident. Its function is to ensure the organisation’s sustained existence, and it is intricately linked to its custodianship of the social and natural environment as well as its own well-being (Tan [sa]:1). This acknowledgement has led to organisations applying CSR as a strategic mechanism in their efforts to ensure long-term success and a valued contribution to society, namely shared value.
There is still a paucity of definitions of CSR 2.0 because of the fact that it is a new CSR approach. The definition of CSR 2.0 that was adopted for this study is that of Visser (2011:26) since it supports an integrative approach to CSR, which includes all stakeholders. The concept of CSR 2.0 is thus grounded in a purpose-driven sustainable philosophy, which is ultimately aimed at meaningful contributions to society and at the same time generating goodwill, reputational capital and a strong brand. Visser’s (2011:26) definition of CSR 2.0, which was adopted for this study, is as follows:

CSR 2.0 is the way in which business consistently creates shared value in society through economic development, good governance, stakeholder responsiveness and environmental improvement. CSR 2.0 is thus an integrated, systemic approach by business that builds, rather than erodes or destroys, economic, social, human and natural capital.

This definition has been adapted by Garcia (2013:35), Osuna (2013:30) and Weber (2014:2), who regard it as the goal of systemic CSR and based on internal drivers of the organisation as opposed to an outside-in approach. Pedrosa (2012:292) concurs with this view of CSR 2.0 as it incorporates the what and how of CSR in terms of consistently creating shared value through economic development, good governance, environmental enhancement and stakeholder responsiveness.

This new CSR approach, referred to as CSR 2.0, stands for “corporate sustainability and responsibility” – sustainability routed in environmentalism and responsibility in social activism (Visser 2010b; 2011:35; 2012a). Sustainability and responsibility are in fact complementary, with the former relating to the organisation’s destination (the challenges, vision, strategy and goals), while the latter (solutions, responses, management and actions) is about how it reaches its destination – the journey (Visser 2010b; 2011:35; 2012a).
2.4.2 The failure of CSR1.0 and the evolution of CSR2.0

Following on from the definitional debate in section 2.4.1 in this study, CSR has slipped from its original status into merely being a technique that organisations use to accrue reputational credit, increase profits and the like (Acquier et al 2011:635). Visser (2010b; 2011:27) and Heemskerk (2012:5) opine that CSR 1.0 has been utterly disastrous in the sense that CSR engagements at social, environmental or ethical levels have missed the mark. One could argue that this opinion is somewhat presumptuous, but, if CSR 1.0 is evaluated according to what Visser (2010b; 2010d:9; 2011:27) and others (Heemskerk 2012:5; Jonikas 2012:696; Pedrosa 2012:296), who have also adopted this view, refer to as the “triple curse of modern CSR”, the argument does appear plausible, as explained below.

● **Peripheral CSR.** This is usually practised in a small department or there is a single manager who ensures minimum compliance with codes and standards (usually in large organisations). This leaves intact the organisation’s “underlying growth-and-consumption model that fuels environmental degradation and social disruption”. Although organisations attempt to align their CSR efforts with operational impacts, they fail to amend their core business practices or the damaging effects of their operations, products or services.

● **Incremental CSR.** Despite evidence of small-scale social, environmental and other improvements, the impact is negligible in light of the social and sustainability crises faced in society.

● **Uneconomic CSR.** There are changes that require large investments and change that organisations do not support, but one should rather opt for the easier issues such as eco-efficiency in waste and energy. Visser (2010b; 2011:28) refers to this as the “inconvenient truth”, in that CSR works only in some areas.
If organisations, as socially responsible entities, are to move CSR forward and make a meaningful contribution to society, they need to evolve through various phases to reach a transformative rather than defensive CSR stage (Visser 2010c; 2010d:8). This involves a fundamental shift in paradigm to a systemic approach to CSR (Pedrosa 2012:296). In the final age of responsibility, organisations should be encouraged to progress or remain trapped in earlier states, which will obviously see CSR continuing to fail amidst the severe crises faced in society (Pedrosa 2012:296). The various ages and stages of the CSR 2.0 maturity model are depicted in figure 2.2 below.

**Figure 2.2: The evolution of CSR: 1.0 to 2.0**

![The Evolution of CSR: 1.0 – 2.0](Image)

Source: Visser (2010c:1)

Figure 2.2 shows that the first four stages are not characterised by a transformative, fully integrated credo. Organisations in the first four ages are in denial in that they either believe that there are no problems, it is not their problem, there are minor
problems or they can profit from problems (Visser 2010d:12). Visser (2010c) and Lauesen (2008:18) explain the evolution of the CSR 2.0 maturity model as follows:
The defensive stage is characterised merely by *ad hoc* interventions through social investments that only serve as a token of philanthropy by the organisation and satisfy shareholders’ interests. The charitable stage relates to donations and sponsorship projects to society, while the promotional stage is characterised more by public relations in an effort to manage organisational brand and reputation through various media. The strategic stage sees more of an alignment to core business, and CSR is driven primarily through codes of practice. The final stage of transformation sees a more responsible approach driven by innovating business models, processes and policies that address the root causes of problems. In addition to admission (being honest about contributing to problems in society and environment), ambition is also key in the age of responsibility (Visser 2010c). Visser (2010d) further states that only by striving for a zero negative impact, becoming restorative as opposed to destructive and being sincere in trying to better society with a net positive balance, can organisations dispel the triple curses of CSR 1.0.

Visser (2010d:13) likens the progression to the age of responsibility to a growing revolution where business leaders are sincerely committed to sustainability and take their responsibility to society and the world seriously. The systemic approach sees this transformative and responsible approach applied to everything the organisation does and is. However, it is not ideal for organisations to do it alone, but rather to collaborate (with society, one another and government) to inventively find solutions and effect change (Visser 2010d:14).

This maturity model clearly indicates through the progression how different CSR 2.0 and CSR 1.0 are. These differences are depicted in table 2.3 below.
Table 2.3: Differences between CSR 2.0 and 1.0

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CSR 1.0</th>
<th>CSR 2.0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A vehicle for companies to establish relationships with communities, channel philanthropic contributions and manage their image</td>
<td>Defined by &quot;global commons&quot;, “innovative partnerships” and “stakeholder involvement”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mostly practised by large organisations such as petrochemical companies and other large corporates</td>
<td>Mechanisms include diverse stakeholder panels, real-time transparent reporting and new-wave social entrepreneurship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travelled down the road of &quot;one size fits all&quot; standardisation, through codes, standards and guidelines to shape its offering</td>
<td>Recognising a shift in power from centralised to decentralised; a change in scale from few and large to many and small; and a change in application from single and exclusive to multiple and shared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meta-level shifts from CSR 1.0 to CSR 2.0</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philanthropic</td>
<td>Collaborative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk based</td>
<td>Reward based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Image driven</td>
<td>Performance driven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialised</td>
<td>Integrated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standardised</td>
<td>Diversified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marginal</td>
<td>Scalable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western</td>
<td>Global</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk</td>
<td>Reward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Drivers</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Image, brand, public acceptance</td>
<td>Performance, markets, products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Actors</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporation, unilateral philanthropy</td>
<td>Corporate + multistakeholder networks, collaborative value creation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relation to the bottom line</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No direct contribution: CSR is value distribution</td>
<td>Integral goal: CSR is value creation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Organisations practising traditional CSR direct their efforts towards generating profits and creating value without considering the broader stakeholder expectations (Crane et al 2014:67). The drivers are building brand allegiance, enhancing organisational image and generating greater public acceptance (Crane et al 2014:67). However, organisations practising contemporary CSR 2.0 inherently live up to society’s expectations and CSR 2.0 forms part of their normal business operations (Crane et al 2014:67).

As indicated in table 2.3 above, it is becoming increasingly clear that the core of CSR 2.0 is “not just a marginal afterthought, but as a way of doing business” (Visser 2010b:5). It is about revolutionising current business models to establish sustainable and responsible, organisational and strategic orientation, the key drivers and philosophy whereby the purpose of business relates to a better, more rewarding world (Visser 2010b; Szutowski & Ratajczak 2014:5; Crane et al 2014:67). It represents a more focused approach to organisational sustainability and responsibility by positively affecting society at large (Moravčík, Sakál, Šmida, Hrdinová & Štefánková 2012:149).

Having adopted a definition for this study and discussing the inadequacies of CSR 1.0 and the consequent evolution to CSR 2.0, it should be noted that the alignment of the organisation with society differs in various contexts. The application of internationally accepted models might therefore be problematic. In South Africa, for instance, the situation is unique because of the country’s history – hence the application of Carroll’s (1991) CSR pyramid might not be adequate in this context. This consideration is explored in more detail in the next section.
2.4.3 The inadequacy of Carroll’s (1991) CSR pyramid in the African context

The role of business in transforming Africa, and by implication, South Africa, is essential in terms of astute governance, investment in people, infrastructure, economic growth and participation, fair trade and labour practices (Visser 2006:30). The scope of these issues defines the challenges for CSR 2.0 and organisations’ role in contributing to change. In addition to the earlier discussion in section 2.2.4, the South African (and African) contexts are discussed next in terms of the applicability of Carroll’s (1991) CSR pyramid.

Carroll (1991) explains the dimensions of CSR in terms of economic, legal, ethical and discretionary responsibilities, and the concept has since become renowned as the “pyramid of CSR”. However, several authors such as Visser (2006:31), Heemskerk (2012:7), Visser, McIntosh and Middleton (2006:13), Zabin (2013:20), Smit (2014:2) and Crane et al (2014:71) hold that the application of Carroll’s (1991) CSR pyramid in the African or developing world context is inadequate. Cited as the main limitations of Carroll’s (1991) pyramid are the ambiguity of categorising issues and the sequential ranking of the layers as well as the omission of environment as a dimension from the pyramid (Visser et al 2006:13; Heemskerk 2012:67). In addition, according to Zabin (2013:20), the order of the pyramid dimensions indicates weighting of each dimension.

However, in recent literature, Carroll (2016:6) posits that the pyramid is not intended to be viewed as a sequential fulfilment of responsibilities, but rather the fulfilment of the responsibilities in an integrated fashion. Instead, the pyramid is viewed as a dynamic and adaptable framework, which drives the organisation’s present and future activities (Carroll 2016:6). Gee (2008:8) states that “a model is just a scaled-down and simplified way of thinking about something that is more complicated and complex”. In light of Carroll (2016:4) re-examining and verifying the original intention of the CSR pyramid, the following is posited to justify its validity and present it as a reflection of the organisation’s role in society:
The content validity of the CSR construct when applying the four categories of the pyramid in earlier research is underscored and validates the research.

Placing economics at the base is congruent with the need for the organisation to be economically sound and sustainable.

Legally, society requires the organisation to be legal and compliant with regulations that legitimise it in society.

Specifically in developing countries (such as certain African countries, including South Africa), multinationals invest on the basis of the legal and regulatory framework that exists (or does not exist) in the country.

The expectations in terms of ethics are dominant in relation to the organisation doing the right thing(s) fairly and without harm to any of its stakeholders. This element is present in all the components of the pyramid.

Society expects the organisation to contribute to society in such a way that it is empowered financially and physically.

Carroll’s (2016) perspective is depicted in the building blocks of an integrated framework within which the organisation operates. When examining this argument, the perspectives highlighted by Visser (2006:31), Heemskerk (2012:7), Visser et al (2006:13), Zabin (2013:20), Smit (2014:2), Crane et al (2014:71) and Busacca (2013:54) appear to be somewhat flawed. If the CSR pyramid merely constitutes a framework, the sequencing of the dimensions is irrelevant and raises the question of whether it could in fact be applied to the African context.

Furthermore, in citing the shortcomings of the applicability of Carroll's (1991) pyramid, Visser (2006:36), Heemskerk (2012:2) and Crane et al (2014:68) opine that it is predominantly relevant to the American and European contexts. However, if applied in the African context, the pyramid would look different. The dimensions would be layered differently with economic responsibilities mainly emphasised, followed by philanthropy, legal and ethical responsibility (Visser 2006:36; Darty-Baah & Amponsah-Tawiah 2011:129; Heemskerk 2012:7). If one were to apply a sequential interpretation, the focus on economics would be poverty, external debts,
high unemployment rates and limited foreign direct investment (Heemskerk 2012:7). Therefore, based on these problems, it follows logically that philanthropy would follow the economic layer in order to improve conditions in the African context (Heemskerk 2012:7). The extreme social needs prevailing in South African (and Africa) compel organisations to act philanthropically (Visser 2006:40) – do the right thing. By improving the society in which it operates, the organisation ensures its own sustainability. Figure 2.3 below depicts the differences between the two pyramids.

**Figure 2.3: Carroll’s CSR 1.0 pyramid versus Africa’s CSR 2.0 pyramid**

Sources: Carroll (1991:40–42); Visser (2006:37)

Regarding figure 2.3 above, and continuing with the sequential interpretation, Visser (2006:42) and Darty-Baah and Amponsah-Tawiah (2011:131) state that legal responsibility ranks lower in African countries compared to legal responsibility in the developed world because regulatory frameworks and responsible business implementation are still in their infancy (Heemskerk 2012:2), and corruption is still widespread (De Jongh & Prinsloo 2005:120; Mwaura 2004). The reason for this is poorly developed legal infrastructure and resources and the fact that these countries are sometimes less independent and administratively inefficient (Mwaura 2004). In South Africa, however, the legal landscape is more advanced than in the rest of Africa in the sense that a great deal has been done to develop a legal and regulatory framework within which organisations operate. This framework, which relates to
social and economic transformation in post-apartheid South Africa, was discussed in detail earlier in section 2.2.4.

In the African context, CSR 2.0 is least affected by ethics (Visser 2006:44). Essentially, developing countries are largely characterised, *inter alia*, by poor working conditions and environmental protection, high corruption and oppressive regimes (Crane *et al* 2014:19; De Jongh & Prinsloo 2005:120). In the South African context, however, the landscape is coloured far differently as there is strong focus on ethics in the market environment, be this in relation to how businesses operate or their ethical responsibility towards the society in which they operates.

Organisational responsibility should be addressed within the framework of business ethics and the following should be considered:

- Africa and South Africa’s colonial and apartheid history influences business ethics at a macro level (Rossouw 2000:226; Visser 2006:2). The matters of appropriate macro-economic policies, first and third world relations and debt are significant in this context (Rossouw 2000:226).

- The moral responsibility of business regarding the transformation of African societies applies at the meso level. In the South African context, for example, organisations became extremely involved in transformation activities post 1994. South African businesses that practised CSR prior to 1994, viewed CSR “neither as an admission of guilt for their share of the agony of apartheid, nor is it implying responsibility for the socio-economic welfare of the country” (Skinner & Mersham 2008:240). The concept “investment” was therefore deemed more important than “responsibility” which essentially linked businesses as being contributors to apartheid – hence the idea that CSR is linked to a business outcome rather than a responsibility (Skinner & Mersham 2008:240). Large businesses are often thought to be in collusion with oppressive regimes and are expected to play a key role in negating the ills of the past (Rossouw 2000:226).
• At the individual level, the history of injustice is reflected in organisations' method of dealing with issues such as affirmative action (AA) in order to overcome racism, sexism and economic exclusion (Rossouw 2000:226).

Referring back to the discussion in section 2.3 on stakeholder theory, sustained stakeholder engagement is a vital aspect of managing ethics in an organisation (Rossouw & Van Vuuren 2003:400). The organisation links its moral interactions to stakeholders as part of its identity, and this engagement involves two-way communication where the organisation reveals economic, social, environmental performance and also listens to what stakeholders have to say (Rossouw & Van Vuuren 2003:400). As such, business ethics is a vital enabler of trust (Bews & Rossouw 2002:377) between the organisation and its stakeholders.

Although Carroll’s (1991) pyramid is a durable model for conceptualising CSR, in different geographic contexts, CSR 2.0 can be interpreted differently. For example, in Germany, social responsibility relates to secure employment, whereas in China, it pertains to high quality products (Busacca 2013:13). In South Africa, the three areas receiving the greatest support in terms of CSR 2.0 spend are education, health and social and community development (Trialogue 2016:72). The three main drivers for CSR 2.0 expenditure are indicated as moral imperatives, the licence to operate and B-BBEE codes (Trialogue 2013a:9). CSR 2.0 expenditure in South Africa almost quadrupled from 2001 to 2013, and when comparing the year-on-year growth of collaboration between companies, the 2013 statistics indicate that this grew substantially (Trialogue 2013b:25). Corporate expenditure is greatest in only three provinces in South Africa, namely the Western Cape, Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal (Trialogue 2016:33).

As mentioned earlier, according to Visser (2006:49) and Zabin (2013:20), Carroll’s (1991) CSR pyramid is not necessarily the best framework for CSR 2.0 in Africa, in particular, because of conceptual ambiguity and descriptive inaccuracy. Furthermore, in light of the concerns proffered by the various authors above, the inadequacy of Carroll’s (1991) CSR pyramid is based on the following:
The so-called “conceptual ambiguity” relates to inconsistencies in why CSR is portrayed hierarchically – it sometimes relates to linear historical development (Carroll 1979; 1991), and at other times ordered in terms of dependence and priority (Carroll 1991; 2004). Visser (2006:46) suggests that by including concepts such as corporate citizenship, business ethics and stakeholder management in the pyramid, it becomes difficult to explain the concepts. In 1991, Carroll equated corporate citizenship with philanthropy, and later in 1998, suggested that the term is interchangeable with CSR. However, he subsequently returned to its original position at the top of the pyramid (Carroll 2004). Visser (2006:46) argues that Carroll’s inclusion of the related themes is his attempt to build an overarching concept, which demonstrates the organisation-society relationship. An obvious oversight in Carroll’s pyramid is the omission of environmental and sustainability dimensions (Visser 2006:46; Zabin 2013:20). Carroll’s (1991) model indicates the instrumental value of CSR (Visser 2006:46).

As pointed out earlier, Carroll’s (1991) model has not been successfully applied and tested outside the USA and is interpreted differently in different geographic contexts (Visser 2006:47; Zabin 2013:20). Another shortcoming mentioned by Visser (2006:47) is the model’s static nature, which fails to embody the complexities of CSR 2.0. In the African context, conflicts could arise in terms of two or more dimensions: how job creation and environmental protection are reconciled, profitability and HIV/AIDS campaigns. As such, there are no interconnections between the dimensions. Visser (2006:47), for instance, raises the question about HIV treatment being an economic responsibility (effects on the workforce and economy) or an ethical (basic human rights) or philanthropic issue.

In the same vein, Busacca’s (2013:54) application of Visser’s (2006:13) African pyramid to the South African mining industry is challenged, and the above criticisms apply to it as well.
In the context of this study, however, the perspective of Visser’s (2010b) CSR 2.0 was applied, which includes a more dynamic and robust conceptualisation. This perspective is discussed in more detail below and highlights why Carroll’s (1991; 2016) CSR pyramid was deemed not applicable to this study. As indicated in section 1.4, an alternate framework, which is more descriptive of the complexities of CSR 2.0, particularly in the South African context, is presented in this study.

Conceptually, this model indicates the multidimensional characteristics of CSR 2.0. No indication is given of the historical development of the CSR 2.0 concept, because it would be superfluous in a model intended to provide a framework in which to situate CSR 2.0 in the South African context. A responsible business philosophy is the overarching driver, and as such, it is entrenched in the organisation’s core values, with the four DNA values (value creation, good governance, societal contribution and environmental integrity) and their corresponding goals steering the organisation in terms of the desired outputs in the form of the key indicators. Manoiu et al (2016:377) concur that the organisation’s actions should be grounded in CSR 2.0 and not merely an act of philanthropy or a fad. These principles provide the foundation for the organisation’s strategies, which, in turn, assist in focusing resources around the organisation’s CSR 2.0 dimensions (economic, stakeholders, volunteerism, society and the environment). The indicators of the organisation’s performance based on these principles would ideally be the 12 key indicators demonstrated at the base of the model.

The objectives are defined on the basis of organisational goals in each CSR 2.0 dimension and accountability is embedded and assigned in business systems. The model is not depicted in a linear fashion, but as an overlapping and interrelated relationship framework. Input into the framework from the external environment indicates a dynamic system, which is adjusted according to stakeholder input. Constant monitoring of the regulatory environment is essential to ensure compliance. In addition, trends in society must be monitored and applied while benchmarking CSR 2.0 activities against relevant stakeholders is key. As discussed
in section 2.3, when relating this model to stakeholder theory, it assists organisations by identifying stakeholder groups and their influence and power, and promotes relationship management. In contrast with Carroll’s (1991) and Visser’s pyramids (2006), this framework does not prioritise any specific CSR 2.0 dimension, but indicates the cohesion in delivering the key outputs in the specific context of the organisation. Figure 2.4 below illustrates this integrative model.

**Figure 2.4: A new CSR 2.0 framework**

![Responsibility Business Philosophy Diagram](image)

**Sources:** Adapted from Dahlsrud (2008:6); Visser (2010d:19); AAK (2016).

Figure 2.4 above depicts the instrumental, normative and descriptive values of CSR 2.0. The non-linear, dynamic design of this framework indicates its applicability to any organisational context in the South African economy. The framework demonstrates the mandate of the organisation and indicates the key performance indicators and targets. It also demonstrates that organisations should be held
accountable and should be compliant and responsible in managing and implementing their CSR 2.0 actions. It indicates that performance is measured and benchmarked and CSR 2.0 activities are adequately reported. An organisation embracing and practising social responsibility should understand and appreciate the importance of displaying its response to society and stakeholders’ expectations in the form of reports and audits (Crane et al 2014:401). This is not only a requirement in terms of showing what the organisation is doing – it is also a regulatory requirement.

2.4.4 The rise of the CSR2.0 approach: the theoretical underpinning

CSR 2.0 – also known as radical CSR, holistic CSR or systemic CSR – integrates Carroll’s (1991) CSR pyramid, stakeholder theory, CSP, TBL, strategic CSR and SRI (Visser 2010d:19; 2011:33). Theoretically, CSR 2.0 is based on five key principles (Moravčík et al 2012:149; Visser 2010d:19; 2011:33) and a DNA code comprising four key elements. These are discussed below as the theoretical foundation of this concept.

2.4.4.1 The key characteristics of CSR 2.0

The principles that characterise the realisation of the new transformational approach to CSR 2.0 are indicated by Visser (2011:29) as creativity, scalability, responsiveness, glocality and circularity.

- **Creativity (C).** A tick-box approach to CSR codes and standards governs current practices, but social and environmental problems are indeed far more complex than this, and creativity is important to meet society’s needs (Visser 2010b; Lauesen 2008:18). A case in point is the banks’ cardless transaction ability and Old Mutual’s (OM) mobile query/customer service centre.

- **Scalability (S).** According to Visser (2010b), projects of a responsible and sustainable nature seldom go to scale. This implies that social impact is of concern here.
- **Responsiveness (R).** Cross-sector partnerships and stakeholder-driven methods are key to driving the transformative process (Visser 2010b; Lauesen 2008:19). In this context, accountability and responsibility in terms of industry processes or business models drive the problems and/or solutions.

- **Glocality (2).** In the current context of interconnectedness and globalisation, global and local combinations of solutions have become standard. A case in point is Habitat for Humanity, who build homes for needy families across the world (Habitat for Humanity South Africa 2017). Visser (2010b:1) points out that “we are moving from an ‘either-or’ one-size-fits-all world to a ‘both-and’ strength-in-diversity world – think global, act local”.

- **Circularity (0).** The global economic system is deemed to be flawed in its design where practices reflect a limitless supply of resource consumption or disposal of waste. Both Visser (2010b) and Lauesen (2008:19) refer to the so-called “cradle-to-cradle approach” that constitutes a “multi-attribute, continuous improvement methodology that provides a path to manufacturing healthy and sustainable products for our world, designed with the future impact in mind” (Shaw Contract Group 2014). Essentially, it is about “closing the loop on production and designing products and processes to be inherently ‘good’, rather than ‘less bad’” (Visser 2010b:2).

Furthermore, the understanding and practice of CSR 2.0 revolve around six key characteristics (Crane *et al* 2013:9-12). These characteristics represent the distinguishing qualities of CSR 2.0 and underpin CSR 2.0 definitional thoughts and debates. These characteristics are highlighted in figure 2.5 below.
In figure 2.5 above, it is evident that many definitions describe CSR 2.0 as voluntary and going beyond the prescriptions of law and the organisation’s economic goals. However, critics regard this as a major flaw of CSR 2.0 conceptualisations as they argue that the organisation’s mandated accountability should be the focus (Crane et al 2014:10). Nevertheless, these authors indicate that this view is changing, which is evident when one looks at the CSR 2.0 framework of built-in DNA (see figure 2.6). In addition, it is clear that CSR 2.0 is concerned with taking into account a range of stakeholders and their varied interests and concerns – it is not only limited to shareholders’ interests. Similarly, the organisation has to consider the positive and negative aspects of its economic behaviour that is borne by others (e.g. minimising air pollution through technologies. In order to reduce any negative externalities, the organisation should develop and adopt an integrated strategic approach that is guided by ethical and sustainability principles, which will alleviate risks (Scagnelli & Cisi 2014:3).
CSR 2.0 has become much more than only giving to the disadvantaged or being a discretionary activity. It is about the collective impact of the organisation on society. This represents an embedded philosophy that drives all the organisational processes and operations. As stated earlier, CSR 2.0 is a philosophy or value set that underpins the organisation’s practices (Crane et al 2014:11). These values form the core of debates around organisations’ actions versus “why” they do it. Fundamentally, by balancing stakeholders’ interests, social and economic responsibilities are aligned (Crane et al 2014:11). The fundamental elements of the new CSR 2.0 are discussed in the next section.

### 2.4.4.2 Fundamental elements of CSR 2.0 (DNA)

In addition to the above characteristics, Visser (2011:33) describes the fundamental elements of CSR 2.0 as value creation, good governance, societal contribution and environmental integrity. These four responsibility bases represent the essence of the CSR 2.0 DNA model (Visser 2011:33). Figure 2.6 below demonstrates the DNA model, which indicates the code, the linked strategic goals and the key indicators of each element.
Figure 2.6: DNA model of CSR 2.0

Source: Visser (2010d:19; 2011:33)

Figure 2.6 shows that value creation relates to more than profits. This means economic development in terms of improvements in the economic context and includes infrastructure investment, job creation, skills development and suchlike (Visser 2010d:20; 2011:33). This list of key performance indicators (KPIs) is endless, but Visser (2010d:20) highlights the following two issues:

- Do the organisation’s products and services truly better the lives of society or are they harmful and low quality.
- Are economic benefits shared in terms of the level of contribution to empowerment of employees, small and medium enterprises in the supply chain and what contributions are made to disadvantaged communities in terms of economic empowerment.

Good governance is an extremely relevant element nowadays. As much as the organisation would like to make a difference in improving society or the environment, its own effectiveness and transparency are equally important (Visser 2010d:20; 2011:33). Important success indicators include reporting, use of social media and brand or product-linked public databases of CSR 2.0 performance and an ethically based corporate culture (Visser 2010d:20; 2011:33).

Social contribution is addressed more than the other areas because of the stakeholder orientation of CSR 2.0. Issues such as unfair labour practices, child labour and the like are illuminated. As critical components of CSR 2.0, stakeholder engagement, community involvement and supply chain integrity remain matters of concern (Visser 2010d:20; 2011:33).

Environmental integrity does not only relate to minimising damage – it is also about environmental sustainability. Key examples here include renewable energy and zero waste. Continuing the current practices are highly risky in terms of biodiversity loss and irreversible climate changes (Visser 2011:33).

As such, depending on the organisation’s core business, certain strategies may be defined as socially responsible and sustainable. For example, Old Mutual Investment Group develops investment products that afford clients the opportunity to invest in socially responsible projects such as alternative energy sources and infrastructure development, to mention a few. The group’s approach to responsible investment is grounded in the appreciation of growing sustainability and the impact on the various sectors in the industry (Responsible Investment Guidelines 2013). In applying their guidelines, the group incorporates applicable ESG factors in its decision-making processes; it acts as a responsible custodian of stakeholder interests and assets; it is a leader in responsible investment (RI); and it is committed
to transparency and disclosure of its operations, policies and governance structures (Responsible Investment Guidelines 2013). According to Boshoff (2012), RI means “incorporating material non-financial issues and/or philosophies into investment decisions. It is founded on the underlying assumption that companies that actively and deliberately manage their ESG risks and opportunities will generate greater returns over the long term”.

The above discussion provides the basis for indicating the steps the organisation should transition through to embed CSR 2.0 in the organisational policies, practices and operations.

**2.4.4.3 Steps in implementing CSR 2.0 in practice**

In transitioning to the transformation stage of CSR 2.0, organisations should follow these steps, as indicated by Visser (2012d:25) and depicted in figure 2.7 below.

**Figure 2.7: Steps in implementing CSR 2.0**

![STEPS TO CSR 2.0 IMPLEMENTATION](image)

**Source:** Visser (2012d:25)
Figure 2.7 above illustrates the phases the organisation should transition through to embed the transformative philosophy in its DNA. The first phase concerns the organisation’s reassessment its CSR policies, programmes, activities and impact. Essentially, it is about the scalability of projects and the nature of the social impact (Visser 2010b). These policies, programmes, activities and impact need to be realigned in order to parallel the organisation’s new transformative philosophy. Collective action and leadership are vital during this realignment stage (Visser 2010b).

During the redefinement stage, leadership is critical in championing the change and should be characterised by personal commitment and not merely lip service (Visser 2005:1). In addition, Coady (2014:6) posits that leaders should set the tone and pace by keeping the vision alive, through consistent communication and being authentic in their actions and vision. The redesign phase is characterised by innovation. This relates to the new way of doing business transcending to innovations in the organisation, revolutionising current business models, the people hired as employees, how a brand communicates this philosophy and how the CSR 2.0 initiatives support the brand’s and society’s purpose (not merely about making profits) (Stoiber 2013:2). Finally, the restructure of the organisation is characterised by a transformation in practices, policies, strategies, thinking and perception of all stakeholder constituencies.

2.5 SUMMARY

This chapter explained the CSR 2.0 concept by clarifying umbrella concepts, indicating the rise of CSR 2.0 and why organisations engage in social responsibility. Furthermore, the above discussion included clarification of the choice of concepts applicable to this study. In addition, the definitional debates surrounding CSR were highlighted as well as the adoption of a definition that underscores this study. The legal and regulatory framework applicable to social development and transformation in South Africa were also explored to provide specific context for this study. The
South African (and African) context were explored with particular reference to the applicability of Carroll's (1991) CSR pyramid in these unique contexts. The theoretical perspective for this study was discussed, followed by the definition and application of the CSR 2.0 perspective for this study.

Chapter 3 deals with the theoretical aspects of marketing communication, with the focus on corporate advertising.
Saying hello doesn’t have a ROI. It’s about building relationships
(Gary Vaynerchuk [sa])

3.1 INTRODUCTION
This chapter addresses marketing communication and the marketing communication mix elements (tools), with the focus on corporate advertising in particular. It is important because it lays the theoretical foundation for the organisation’s communication with its stakeholders, particularly about its CSR 2.0 activities. Marketing communication tools are necessary to build and enhance an organisations’ CSR. As indicated in chapter 2, CSR creates value, not only for stakeholders, but also for the organisation.

This chapter indicates that advertising is key in building awareness and positioning an organisation among its stakeholders. The discussion starts by first contextualising marketing communication within the broader field of marketing and the organisation as a whole. This briefly touches on the marketing mix (4Ps) and positions marketing communication in this context. After a definition of marketing communication is adopted for the purpose of this study, the marketing communication mix is explored, and each of its elements briefly explained. Thereafter the different types of advertising are discussed, with corporate advertising receiving specific attention. Advertising is depicted as a communication process and the dual origination and feedback elements are highlighted, where the consumer now also forms part of the advertising communication process. A generic model is presented to elaborate on the factors that influence the reception process in the communication process, after which the traditional response models are discussed. It is essential to position marketing communication in the broader marketing context.
3.2 MARKETING COMMUNICATION IN THE CONTEXT OF MARKETING

As indicated in chapter 1, modern marketing is underpinned by satisfying consumer needs and wants and building sustainable relationships. Broadly speaking, marketing is a discipline concerned with discovering, understanding and attempting to meet the needs of consumers (Joshi 2012:8; Blythe 2005:5). This includes determining what the actual products or services are, what the best pricing strategies would be, how best to promote these products or services and the most effective way to deliver these products and services to the consumer. Essentially, marketing serves as a connective link between the organisation and the consumer.

To this end, traditional anonymous transactional exchanges with customers have been transformed into more relational exchanges, which are sustained over the long term – lifetime value (Xiang & Petrick 2008:236; Blythe 2005:6). In this relationship marketing paradigm, technology (e-mail and social networks such as Twitter, Facebook and Instagram) enables organisations and their clients to be more interactive and this promotes the growth of relationships. This is a key characteristic of the relationship marketing paradigm, which emphasises value creation and engagement (Xiang & Petrick 2008:237; Kotler & Armstrong 2012:17).

Numerous definitions of marketing exist, which are testament to the evolution of this discipline. Kerin et al (2011:5) define marketing as “… the activity for creating, communicating, delivering and exchanging offerings that benefit the organization, its stakeholders and society at large”. Kotler and Armstrong (2012:5) define it “… as the process by which companies create value for customers and build strong customer relationships in order to capture value from customers in return”. These definitions have similar foci in that the customer is at the centre of everything the organisation does (Goneos-Malka 2011:78). In addition, providing offerings to meet customer needs benefits to the organisation, and creating value exchanges between the organisation and its customers and relationships is part of the foci of these definitions (Goneos-Malka 2011:78). Kotler and Armstrong’s (2010:29) definition was adopted for this study because it is clear from this definition that marketing is
much more than simply selling and advertising products and services. It speaks to marketing developing a strategy aimed at providing superior value to customers and building sustained and profitable relationships with customers. This is relevant to this study in that it looks at the broader corporate advertisement of the organisation’s CSR 2.0 activities, and in so doing, builds a stronger corporate identity, which resonates with stakeholders.

In developing the marketing strategy, the organisation considers various factors. Broadly stated, an organisation’s marketing strategy is a directive in terms of who the targeted customers are and how it will create value for both the customers and the organisation. When developing this marketing strategy, the organisation should first be clear about its value proposition, which is the set of benefits or value it promises to customers (Kotler & Armstrong 2012:9). In addition, the organisation should be clear on the guiding philosophy of its marketing strategy. This refers to how the weighting is spread in the interests of customers, the organisation and society (Kotler & Armstrong 2012:9).

Various other factors influence marketing in the organisation. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2012:22–29), these are as follows: an uncertain economic environment, the digital age, rapid globalisation and sustainable marketing (social responsibility). In addition, the micro (internal) environment of the organisation, in terms of its mission and objectives, management structures, competitors, customers and other stakeholders, also influences marketing in the organisation (Kotler & Armstrong 2012:69). The macro (external) environment comprises social, economic, technological, regulatory and political factors, as well as globalisation, cultural differences, recession, environmental issues and so forth (Kerin et al 2011:6; Kotler & Armstrong 2012:69). Changes in any of these areas have a direct impact on how the organisation phrases its marketing thought and strategies. For example, changes in the social environment may encourage organisations to be more considerate about social values, pressures and drivers.
The organisation’s marketing strategy is aimed at a specific audience whom the organisation has targeted through specific segmentation exercises. The resulting marketing programme “… builds customer relationships by transforming the marketing strategy into action” (Kotler & Armstrong 2012:12). This relates to the marketing mix (also referred to as the four Ps) which the organisation uses to implement its marketing strategy. These elements are controllable and are effectively combined in the organisation’s quest to satisfy consumer needs through long-term strategies and short-term tactical plans (Kerin et al 2011:10; Kotler & Armstrong 2010:12). The marketing mix implemented by a specific organisation will vary based on market conditions (Dominici 2009:18), its available resources and ever-changing customer needs (Goi 2009:4).

The marketing mix comprises the four Ps, namely product, price, place and promotion (promotion is also referred to as marketing communication, which will be the term used in this study) (Du Plessis 2013:155). In its attempts to deliver on the value proposition, the organisation must create an offering that satisfies consumer needs (product) (Kotler & Armstrong 2012:12). Du Plessis (2013:156) refers to the product as the tangible and intangible bundle of attributes and features. Decisions must be made on how much the organisation will charge for the offering (price), how it will make the offering available to its consumers (place) and how it will communicate to its target consumers about the offering and persuade them to purchase (promotion) (Kotler & Armstrong 2012:12).

This discussion is aimed at laying the theoretical foundation for this study, which is focused on the fourth P of the marketing mix, namely marketing communication (promotion). However, the 4P elements are now briefly discussed with more elaboration on the marketing communication element.

3.2.1 Product

The product relates to the tangible elements, features or benefits (Ivy 2008:289; Blythe 2005:11) that an organisation makes available for attention, purchase and consumption by its customers (Kotler & Armstrong 2012:51). This includes, inter
alia, brand image, specific product features, product benefits, packaging and aftersales service (Egan 2011:24; Blythe 2005:126).

### 3.2.2 Price

This element is related to what is charged for the products or services that the organisation makes available for sale – the value delivered to the consumer (Morgan 2012:106). The price also relates to the perceived quality of the goods or services of the organisation (Morgan 2012:105). Prestige brands are priced higher and are perceived to carry a higher status, whereas economy brands are much lower priced (Chattopadhyay, Shivani & Krishnan 2010:70). The elements related to the price of products or services are competitiveness, value, incentives and so on (Egan 2011:24).

### 3.2.3 Place

This refers to the distribution methods the organisation uses to make its goods or services available to consumers (Kotler & Armstrong 2012:52), examples of which include the management of distribution channels, retail location, retail image, logistics and so forth (Egan 2011:24).

### 3.2.4 Promotion (marketing communication)

Marketing communication encompasses all the tools and techniques an organisation uses to inform consumers about its products and/or services as well as the prices and places where these are available. Du Plessis (2013:157) describes the main purpose of marketing communication as the development of “effective communications by focusing on what to say, how to say it, to whom to say it, as well as through which media and how frequently”. Marketing communication, as the fourth P of the marketing mix, comprises various promotional mix elements (referred to as marketing communication mix elements in this study). This mix encompasses a variety of tools, which the organisation uses in varying combinations to convey its message(s) to the market. This therefore relates to purposefully integrated, orchestrated and carefully executed marketing strategies aimed at promoting
products, services or non-economic activities in society. This indicates a complementary relationship between the marketing mix elements contained in an organisation's marketing plan (Du Plessis 2013:158).

Furthermore, the marketing communication mix elements differ among marketing communication scholars owing to different perspectives and epistemologies. In this study, these included personal selling, advertising, sales promotions, point of purchase, customer service, public relations, direct marketing, packaging, merchandising, digital marketing (new media), word of mouth, events and sponsorships (Moriarty, Mitchell & Wells 2012:71; Belch & Belch 2009:18; Koekemoer 2005:6; Arens 2006:19; Kerin et al 2011:334; Wells, Burnett & Moriarty 2003:79). Since advertising was the focus of this study, more emphasis was placed on this marketing communication mix element (see section 3.6).

The following three factors alter marketing communication today: Firstly, through technology, consumers are more informed, self-reliant and better empowered and as such are able to find information, exchange brand-related information with other customers or even create their own marketing messages (Kotler & Armstrong 2012:409; Perreault, Cannon & McCarthy 2009:380). Secondly, organisational marketing strategies are also changing. In an attempt to build closer relationships with customers, there has been a shift to more focused marketing programmes, as opposed to mass marketing (Kotler & Armstrong 2012:409). Thirdly, communication technology advances have given rise to a new marketing communication model (Kotler & Armstrong 2012:409; Perreault et al 2009:381). Consumers have become more than mere receivers of communication messages, but also initiate messages through various technologies. As such, consumers control the amount of information they receive and who they receive messages from (Perreault et al 2009:381) (see section 3.6, which deals with authentic advertising). Digital media have changed the way in which organisations and customers interact with each other – platforms such as social media networks, brand websites, e-mail, inter alia, make communications that much easier, interactive and immediate.
This does not mean that the old media model (television, radio, print) has disintegrated. On the contrary, the old and new media are blended and create a new mix of traditional mass media and the new more targeted and personalised new media (Kotler & Armstrong 2012:410; Mangold & Faulds 2009:357). The challenge for organisations and marketers is finding the most appropriate media mix to best convey brand messages and enrich customers’ brand experiences.

Following this discussion, it would be apt to present a schematic illustration of the position of marketing communication within marketing as a whole, and an illustration of the marketing process. Figure 3.1 below depicts this context.

**Figure 3.1: Positioning marketing communication in the broader marketing context**

![Positioning marketing communication in the broader marketing context](image)

**Source:** Adapted from Kotler & Armstrong 2012:29).

Figure 3.1 above illustrates the value exchange between the organisation and its customers. In steps 1 to 4, the organisation creates value for its customers and builds relationships by understanding their needs and wants (marketing insight). A customer-driven marketing strategy (specific market segment(s) and targets) best
positions and differentiates the organisation from its competitors (value proposition). This marketing strategy integrates the marketing mix tools at its disposal to deliver a superior marketing programme and thus build profitable and sustainable relationships with customers. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2012:29), the final step is concerned with gaining value from customers (profits, loyalty, customer lifetime value, increased market share and share of customer). It is incumbent on organisations to utilise marketing technology, harness global opportunities and ensure that business operations are ethical and socially responsible (Kotler & Armstrong 2012:29).

In terms of the role of marketing communication in this process, the consolidation of the marketing communication elements for consistent, seamless brand messaging, both across all media employed and over time, is imperative (Finne & Gronross 2009:179; Roper & Fill 2012:226). Essentially, it serves to combine the organisation’s planned and unplanned brand messages and images (Kotler & Armstrong 2012:43). The primary drivers of integrating the organisation’s marketing communication are streamlined structures, cost reduction and consistent message delivery (Roper & Fill 2012:228).

The next section addresses the expansion of the traditional marketing communication mix is.

3.3 EXPANSION OF THE TRADITIONAL MARKETING MIX

Several versions of the marketing mix have appeared over time as extensions to the traditional 4P mix (Du Plessis 2013:158). Newer models have also emerged, such as the 4Cs model proposed by Kotler and Armstrong (2012:52) or the 7P model proposed by Booms and Bitner (1981). Kotler and Armstrong (2012:52) state that the 4P model takes more of a seller’s view of the market, whereas the buyer’s view is best represented by the 4C model (customer solution, customer cost, convenience and communication). However, if one compares these models, they could merely represent semantic differences in order to satisfy the specific point of
departure. In addition, Dominici (2009:17) states that scholars have been divided in the applicability of the traditional 4P mix. Conservatives are of the opinion that the 4P paradigm has the ability to adapt to changes in the macro environment through the addition of new elements in each “P” (Dominici 2009:17). In the revisionist camp, however, the 4P paradigm is viewed as obsolete (Dominici 2009:1). Regardless, the 4P paradigm is still widely used and adopted, and by no means obsolete.

As posited in chapter 1, the aim of this discussion is to lay a theoretical foundation for this study, which is focused on the fourth P of the marketing mix, namely marketing communication. Regardless of which marketing mix model is used, either the 4P, 7P or 4Cs model, the marketing communication element is represented in all of them (4P promotion = 4C communication). For the purpose of this study, the traditional 4P mix was discussed above, as it was still deemed relevant for this study in that it comprises more underlying elements than it overtly suggests. For example, the marketing communication element comprises all the traditional ways that an organisation communicates with its audience(s) and can now be extended to include digital media and other new communication elements. Although the 4P mix remains unchanged, by defining and using it appropriately, it remains relevant to marketers today (Dodd 2015). Interestingly, several of the new approaches to the 4Ps include the traditional 4Ps as the core in their revised marketing mix models, but with various extensions and adjustments (Dominici 2009:20).

The next section addresses the definition of marketing communication that was adopted for this study.

3.4 FORMULATING A MARKETING COMMUNICATION DEFINITION

This section mainly focuses on the appropriate marketing communication definition for this study, but first provides some context. Marketers strive to satisfy consumer needs to enable them to differentiate their products and services and organisation from competitors, thereby creating a competitive advantage in the marketplace (Moriarty et al 2012:68). Whatever promotional strategy the organisation implements
to communicate its value proposition, it is vital that the messaging and activities are integrated to deliver consistent and seamless communications. This means consistency in informing consumers about the availability and benefits of the products/services, persuading them to try these products/services and reminding them later about the benefits enjoyed when using them (Kerin et al 2011:334). In positioning its brand, the organisation will also make use of marketing communication to build brand awareness, corporate identity and preference (Dahlstrom 2011:117).

Marketing communication fulfils the role of expanding the organisation’s purpose to the stakeholders. Angelopulo and Thomson (2013:20) posit that marketing communication relates to the building of strong brand relationships through each area of contact between an organisation and its customers. It further relates to strategically positioning the organisation in the market to allow stakeholders to understand the organisation’s goals and role in society and how to interact with society (Roper & Fill 2012:220; Illia & Balmer 2012:418). However, it is important that the organisation provide consistent, coherent and purposeful engagement internally and externally through its various communication methods and channels (Illia & Balmer 2012:418), thereby influencing attitudes and behaviours. The level of integration of the organisation’s messages is made possible by coordinating organisational activities. Consumers are deemed to make associations with the organisation, based on its expertise in the market and product/service quality and its ability to communicate this effectively to its audience(s) (Roper & Fill 2012:223).

Kotler and Armstrong (2012:408) define marketing communication as “the specific blend of promotion tools that the company uses to persuasively communicate customer value and build customer relationships”. Essentially, this means that whatever promotional strategy the organisation implements to communicate its value proposition, the messaging and activities need to be integrated to deliver consistent and value-driven communications as well as encouraging customers to
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Engage with the organisation in order to build relationships. This definition focuses on the value that the organisation aims to deliver to customers.

By contrast, Roper and Fill’s (2012:217) definition of marketing communication is aimed at engaging (persuading, informing and reminding) the organisation’s stakeholders with messages around its brand(s), products and services. This definition centres around persuading, informing and reminding customers about the organisation’s brand and its products and/or services on offer. It leans more towards an identity-oriented definition.

Podner (2008:75) proffers a more comprehensive and relevant definition that defines marketing communication as “… managing of different organization communication tools designed to provide true and transparent information about a company’s or a brand’s integration of its business operations, social and environmental concerns, and interactions with stakeholders”.

This definition takes Kotler and Armstrong’s (2012:408) and Roper and Fill’s (2012:217) definition a little further. It not only mentions the marketing communication tools the organisation uses, but also includes communication about the organisation’s operations, its social and environmental concerns and interests and engagement with stakeholders. As such, a more holistic perspective is offered. There are clear commonalities between these definitions in that they focus on the tools at the organisation’s disposal in order to inform, remind and persuade customers. For the purpose of this study, Podnar’s (2008:75) marketing communication definition was adopted because it extends to the organisation’s social concerns and responsibility and does not only imply communication about the brand’s products and/or services.

Having contextualised marketing communication in the broader context of marketing and formulated a marketing communication definition for this study, the composite elements of the marketing communication mix are discussed in the following section.
3.5 THE MARKETING COMMUNICATION MIX

As emphasised previously, numerous scholars have different perspectives about what elements should be included in the marketing communication mix. The elements included for this discussion in the study are presented in a typology, which is categorised in terms of digital and traditional media (and their blends), and is relevant in terms of the tools organisations employ for their communications. It also clearly shows how traditional and digital tools are integrated. In addition, an advertising communication model is discussed to indicate the relationship between the different elements of or steps in the advertising process and the factors influencing it. Tied to this model is a discussion around the aspects of reception, which will show its importance to marketing communicators in helping them to identify the communication strategy best suited to their target market.

Referring back to section 3.3.4, which dealt with the marketing mix elements, figure 3.2 provides a typology of the marketing communication elements.

Figure 3.2: Marketing communication elements

Figure 3.2 provides the conceptual basis upon which the discussion around the elements of the marketing communication mix is based. Traditionally, the marketing communication mix excluded most of the digital marketing components. However, today more organisations than ever have an online presence where details of the organisation's business, policies, social activities, employment and the like are available. In addition, technology such as mobile and social marketing is utilised to engage with customers and build relationships with them.

In the discussion below, each element of the marketing communication mix is briefly discussed. This serves to provide context and offer a means of delimiting this study to the advertising element, given that the objects for analysis comprise the CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements of OMSA.

3.5.1 Personal selling

Personal selling relates to interpersonal interaction/communication between buyers and sellers, which is designed to influence purchase decisions (Kerin et al 2003:337). Interaction is personal in the sense that the seller is involved in two-way communication with the buyer. This element is not applicable to this study because it relates to directly selling a product or service, whereas the focus of this study is in fact the advertising of CSR 2.0.

3.5.2 Trade- and consumer-oriented promotions (sales promotion)

Trade promotions are used to convince resellers to carry a particular brand, give it shelf space, advertise it and promote the product to customers (Kotler & Armstrong 2012:486). Consumer-oriented promotions include tools such as samples, coupons, premiums, price-off deals and bonus packs, which all refer to short-term and incentivised tactics to arouse interest and entice buyers to purchase products (Shimp 2010:7; Kerin et al 2003:339; Perreault et al 2009:371). Promotions are essentially applied to launch new products or services, boost falling sales, maintain sales of seasonal products and so forth. Similar to personal selling, this element is not applicable to this study because it relates to directly selling and promoting a product.
or service, whereas the focus of this study is in fact corporate advertising of CSR 2.0.

3.5.3 Public relations (PR)

PR is the element that is used as “a form of communication management that seeks to influence the feelings, opinions or beliefs held by customers, potential customers, stockholders, suppliers, employees and others about a company and its products and services” (Kerin et al. 2011:338). This is done by applying tools such as special events, image management, the press and so on. These tools are applied to publish newsworthy information about a product, service, activity, person, place, idea or organisation to create awareness and in so doing to generate positive publicity (Kotler & Armstrong 2012:454). Although it could be argued that PR can be applied to communicating about CSR 2.0, for the purposes of this study, it was deemed not applicable as the study focused specifically on the advertising of CSR 2.0.

3.5.4 Publicity

Publicity refers to non-personal, unpaid for communication in the form of news, editorials or announcements about an organisation, its products, services and brands (Perreault et al. 2009:370; Kerin et al. 2003:338). Organisations generate publicity through press releases in print media, radio and digital media in an effort to elicit interest in its products/services and the organisation as a whole. In terms of relevance to this study, this element was deemed not applicable as the focus was specifically on CSR 2.0 advertising.

3.5.5 Marketing public relations (MPR)

MPR is an umbrella concept that integrates PR, marketing, advertising and research techniques (Papasolomoua, Kitchen & Panopoulosc 2013:578). MPR relates to the activities that are intended to support an organisation’s marketing objectives, which include, inter alia, creating and sustaining awareness, informing and building trust with consumers (Papasolomou & Melanthiou 2012:323). The core of MPR is protecting and enhancing the organisation’s brand and inspiring stakeholders such
as traditional media, electronic media and consumers, *inter alia*, to voluntarily share the organisation’s product and/or service messages (Papasolomou & Melanthiou 2012:323). MPR is complementary to traditional marketing communication mix tools such as advertising and direct marketing because of creating media hype which far exceeds the impact of traditional tools (Papasolomou & Melanthiou 2012:323). Although MPR could possibly include CSR 2.0 content, it was not directly applicable to this study because corporate advertising was the direct focus.

### 3.5.6 Event marketing

Event marketing and sponsorships are used to promote organisational brands and occur predominantly as mobile brand tours, festivals, concerts and marathons (Kotler & Armstrong 2012:486), to mention but a few. Shimp (2010:8) adds that appealing giveaways at events generate excitement and encourage positive associations to a particular brand. Since the focus of this study was specifically on advertising, this element was also not applicable.

### 3.5.7 Sponsorships

Organisations use sport sponsorships in order to, say, achieve their broader corporate objectives (competitor differentiation, target market reach), brand objectives (introduction, positioning, awareness and sampling), sales objectives, media coverage objectives (visibility, publicity, reach and frequency) and public relations objectives (public awareness, corporate image, public perception) (Du Plessis, Bothma, Jordaan & Van Heerden 2003:289). Shimp (2010:8) adds that appealing giveaways at events generate excitement and encourage positive associations with a particular brand. Since the focus of this study was specifically on corporate advertising, this element was not applicable.

### 3.5.8 Point-of-purchase advertising and store signage

These displays and demonstrations are aimed at attracting the buyers’ attention (e.g. electronically and musically, and via signage and demonstrations, *inter alia*) (Shimp 2010:24). Joshi (2012:30) refers to them as the “silent salesperson”. Since the focus
of this study was specifically on corporate advertising, this element was not applicable.

3.5.9 Direct response marketing/advertising

Direct marketing communicates directly with consumers in order to directly generate a response such as an order, a request for more information or a visit to a retail outlet (Kerin et al 2011:339). Direct marketing tools include, inter alia, catalogues, direct mail/email, telephone calls and online marketing. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2012:505) and Goneos-Malka (2011:165), marketers incorporate mobile phone marketing in their direct marketing as a means to enhance operations. This is discussed in more detail in section 3.5.10. Since the focus of this study was specifically corporate advertising, this element was not applicable.

3.5.10 Digital media marketing

With the proliferation of digital technology, there have been significant changes in customer communications, specifically social media, which Mangold and Faulds (2009:357) refer to as consumer-generated media. In addition, Papasolomou and Melanthiou (2012:320) posit that the consumer-generated media are in fact key tools in marketing public relations – creating, sharing and educating one another on products, services and brands. These interactive technologies allow organisations/marketers to tap into the creativity of consumers for advertising messages and ideas (Kotler & Armstrong 2012:443). Examples include advertisement competitions, video sites and various promotions (Kotler & Armstrong 2012:443). To this end, marketers/organisations have access to an array of tools in the digital domain where online information is created, initiated, circulated and consumed by consumers (Kotler & Armstrong 2012:443).

Additional digital tools include e-mails, websites, interactive television and search engines on the internet. Digital media technologies can complement traditional marketing communication elements to ensure effective deployment of the organisation’s marketing objectives as well as allowing organisations to build meaningful relationships with their customers. As such, it is vital for organisations to
focus on capturing customers’ attention and continuing through engagement to sustain their attention (Hanna, Rohm & Crittenden 2011:267). These authors further state that customers have transitioned from passive bystanders to participants in the media process, and are referred to as prosumers.

Customers are more knowledgeable and selective about the product and/or service information they access and as such are able to compare different offers, access organisational information, and in the process, form their own opinions based on the information they consume. Klimis (2010:16) holds that modern consumers are in fact more involved in promotional communication and prefer to interact directly with organisations. By integrating digital marketing communication mix elements, the organisation promotes consumers’ participation, and in so doing enables them to have a total customer experience, which in turn leads to long-lasting relationships (Klimis (2010:16). Interactivity and content co-creation are elaborated on in section 3.6.1.6. This digital media marketing element was not applicable to this study, since the focus was specifically corporate advertising.

The above discussion included the main elements of the marketing communication typology presented in figure 3.2. Since advertising was a key focus of this study, it is explored in much detail in the following section.

3.6 ADVERTISING

Advertisements are used to organise and construct reality and produce specific meaning and ideology in the advertisement discourse (Najafian & Dabaghi 2011:20; Parsa 2004:846; Machin 2012:xvi; Mushore 2010:14). The purpose of advertisements is to inform and persuade consumers to buy different products and services. However, the images and iconic symbols used in advertising function to stimulate specific emotions, serve as proof of something really happening and instruct a specific inherent link between the advertised product or service or organisation and the consumer in a particular social and cultural context (Najafian & Dabaghi 2011:20; Parsa 2004:846). If the meanings alongside the visual texts (the
advertisements) are not obvious, or messages are misinterpreted, the result is incongruent decoding and restricted attention (Delate 2001:15) and the intended associations are lost. In a multicultural society such as that of South Africa, one can expect various meanings and associations to be generated from specific semiotic resources used in CSR 2.0 advertising (visual texts are open to a range of interpretations).

The generally accepted definition of advertising by several authors (Kotler & Armstrong 2012:436; Kerin et al 2011:336; Perreault et al 2009:369) is as follows: “any paid form of nonpersonal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods, or services by an identified sponsor”. This definition was also relevant to this study as it indicates that the organisation is deliberate in its communication to its stakeholders about its products, services and/or activities. By extension then, it is obvious that the organisation is deliberate in advertising its CSR 2.0 activities to its stakeholders as well as persuasively communicating about its products and/or services.

Depending on the overall objectives of the organisation, the following goals are central to the organisation’s advertising strategies: building brand awareness, providing information, persuasion, supporting marketing efforts and encouraging action. In its basic form, advertising comprises media such as television, radio, print, direct mail, place advertising, which includes outdoor media such as billboards and bulletins, posters, transit advertising and cinema advertising (Kotler & Armstrong 2012:447; Perreault et al 2009:432; Shimp 2010:24); and digital media, which includes, social media, mobile technology and so forth. Alternative media are also used to advertise and may take any form, examples of which could include advertisements on turnstiles, ATMs, municipal bins and the like (Kotler & Armstrong 2012:448).

As mentioned above, communication technology offers advertisers a new platform to communicate. Traditional and digital media are blended to create a new mix of mass media and the new more targeted and personalised new media (Kotler & Armstrong 2012:410). However, the challenge is finding the most appropriate media
mix to best convey messages to customers (Kotler & Armstrong 2012:410). In light of this interactive characteristic, advertising plays a definitive role in both marketing and communication (Moriarty et al. 2012:37).

As a structured and composed form of communication, advertising comprises the key dimensions of communication, marketing, economic and social activity (Arens 2006:25; Moriarty et al. 2012:37). It is fitting that in the modern marketing context, the consumer is added as another dimension. As discussed above, the consumer is a key component of the advertising process, and as such, modern/digital technology offers more control in terms of what information they access, and when, how and why they do so. In relation to this study, the consumer is a key stakeholder in terms of CSR 2.0 communication content.

As indicated in figure 3.3, since the consumer may represent both the recipient and source of communication messages, it is a key element in the advertising process. Both marketing and communication are inextricably linked in that the one cannot function without the other. The communication process is further elaborated on in section 3.6.2.

### 3.6.1 Types of advertising

There are different types of advertising which include, *inter alia*, retail, direct-response, business-to-business, non-profit and brand/image (corporate/institutional advertising), political advertising, public service advertising, interactive/digital advertising and native advertising (Belen 2012; Moriarty *et al.* 2012:39; Koekemoer 2005:70–72).

In the discussion below, the different types of advertising are briefly addressed as a means of providing context and completeness to this study. Corporate advertising was applicable in the context of this study because it relates to organisations working on creating a sustainable corporate identity and image (discussed in detail in chapter 4). In terms of this study, it could be by communicating to its stakeholders the positive impact the organisation has on society through its CSR 2.0 communication (Moriarty
et al 2012:39; Roper & Fill 2012:274). Given that the objects for analysis comprise the CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements of OMSA, section 3.6.1.7 elaborates on this type of advertising.

Regardless of the type of advertising applied by an organisation, the different media alternatives available to organisations to execute their advertising strategies are vast and can be applied in various combinations. This includes, *inter alia*, place-based media (out-of-home advertising) such as airports, buildings, television, radio, print media (magazines, newspapers, yellow pages), digital media, direct mailing (Kerin et al 2011:367). Below are brief descriptions of each type of advertising for the purpose of contextualisation.

3.6.1.1 Retail (*business-to-consumer*) advertising

Retailers are involved in selling services or products directly to the end consumers for personal use (Kotler & Armstrong 2012:374). These include speciality stores (e.g. Exclusive Books), department stores (e.g. Game), supermarkets (e.g. Pick n Pay and Checkers), convenience stores (e.g. 711 and Fresh), discount stores (e.g. Macro), and superstores (e.g. Hyperama) (Kotler & Armstrong 2012:375). Retail advertising therefore relates to advertising from retailers about services and products such as food and clothing. Retailers apply the marketing communication mix in a variety of combinations – for example, print advertising can be supported by radio and or television inserts (Kotler & Armstrong 2012:387). In addition, retailers have websites where customers have access to information, other features and online sales (Kotler & Armstrong 2012:387). Pick n Pay is a case in point, where customers can do online shopping, download recipes, view healthy lifestyle content and so on.

3.6.1.2 Business-to-business (*B-to-B*) marketing/advertising

Organisations determine which products and services are required for their operations and sales, and engage with appropriate suppliers of such services and products (Kotler & Armstrong 2012:166). Essentially, B-to-B marketers need a sound understanding of the business buyers and build long-term profitable relationships.
with business customers (Kotler & Armstrong 2012:166). Direct marketing is regarded as an ideal option for B-to-B interaction because organisations are able to interact directly with customers telephonically or online, and in so doing learn more about the needs and customisation opportunities (Kotler & Armstrong 2012:498). In addition, B-to-B marketers also use, inter alia, websites, e-mails, e-product catalogues, e-trading networks, brand advertising and telemarketing (Kotler & Armstrong 2012:166; Shimp 2010:23).

3.6.1.3 Direct-response advertising

Direct-response advertising is geared to move consumers towards a specific/immediate action (Kotler & Armstrong 2012:438). For example, the Cars.co.za television advertisement urges viewers to immediately visit this website and find the car they have been looking for. Alternatively, many advertisements are driven by strengthening long-term relationships with customers (Kotler & Armstrong 2012:438). They cite Nike’s television advertisements of athletes engaged in extreme sporting challenges, where viewers are not driven to purchase anything per se. Instead, the objective is to change consumer brand perceptions.

3.6.1.4 Non-profit advertising

According to Kotler and Armstrong (2012:28), in recent years, marketing and advertising have become key to non-profit organisations. In South Africa, for example, many of the non-profits are utilising digital media to market their causes, create awareness and elicit responses (advocacy or financial) from supporters. Another powerful mechanism at the disposal of non-profits (and other organisations for that matter) is mobile technology (Kotler & Armstrong 2012:28). Integrating mobile phone marketing in direct marketing and advertising campaigns, the marketer engages directly with the audience and has the ability to elicit a specific response with short codes – for example, SMS a certain number to donate R10 to the Guide Dog Association, or a specific cause. Another clever example is the 24-hour campaign of the “Save the Rhino Trust”.

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3.6.1.5 Native advertising

Native advertising is also referred to as “custom content”, “brand journalism” or “advertisorials” (Kurnit 2014), and is essentially about brands (Benton 2014:51). This type of advertising “matches the function and style of whatever platform it’s on, making it difficult or altogether impossible for readers to differentiate …” (Patten 2015). Essentially, regardless of the platform or environment, the advertising/content will be effective if it looks and feels as native to the platform (Benton 2014:51). Pullizi (2015) indicates that native advertising is content that is paid for on third-party media platforms and highly targeted at particular audiences. What contributes to native advertising’s main characteristic is that user experiences are not interrupted because the advertising takes the form of the hosting channel (Pullizi 2015). Examples include the “you might also like” or “other users liked” links on web content, which are referred to as recommendation widgets owned by the third parties (Patten 2015) and embedded videos or images on Buzzfeed, Twitter feeds or Facebook posts.

In Carlson’s (2015:855) research, native advertising was assumed to be trickery or camouflage in terms of independent content and as such should be classified as advertisements on the platforms. To this end, apart from exposure on the platforms, native advertising endeavours to use the credibility of the platform/publication to enhance credibility and persuasiveness – betraying readers by fooling them that the content is objective and authentic (Carlson 2015:856; Dumenco 2014). Although native advertising may enhance revenue – considerably more highly than other digital advertising forms (Benton 2014:50) – Carlson (2015:857) indicates that a virtuous cycle exists between profits and respectability.

3.6.1.6 Digital/interactive advertising

The role of marketing as we know it, changes from pushing/broadcasting messages to an anonymous, passive audience to one that aggregates marketing content, facilitates collaboration and participation (Himanen 2011:1). The interactivity of Web 2.0 has led consumers to be more dictative in terms of the nature, extent and context of marketing communication messages (Hanna et al 2011:265). This compels
organisations to listen, engage and be transparent in interactions with customers (Himanen 2011:1). Himanen (2011:21) regards digital marketing as the “bridge bringing the customer touch points and firm’s conversation interfaces together”. Customer touch points relate to platforms such as social media, mobile technology and the like, whereas the organisational interfaces relate to platforms such as digital advertising, emails and so forth (Himanen 2011:21). Mobile technology also offers the organisations platforms to interact with specific customers about specific issues. Mobile sites are optimised for specific mobile operating systems (e.g. IOS or Android) and customers can access the organisation’s online sites and platforms directly and immediately in order to engage. Customers are able, inter alia, to manage their profiles, shop online, log service calls, or track claims or queries.

As such, mobile and digital marketing represents a combination of the customer as well as organisation’s perspectives, indicating a two-way dialogue. This translates into both organisations and customers creating and receiving information. This is depicted in figure 3.3, which illustrates the advertising communication process. In addition, social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram offer organisations platforms to engage directly with supporters and rely on the powerful word-of-mouth that these platforms provide. As stated in the section on authentic advertising below, in using social media as a marketing platform, organisations are in fact leveraging user-generated content – that is, providing the consumer with a platform to engage with and share what is important in their lives – what matters to them. To this end, Papasolomou and Melanthiou (2012:320) indicate that organisations use digital media to interact with consumers, and in so doing, build sustainable relationships with them.

a. Authenticity in advertising

Consumers are always talking about brands on social media, ranging from locations, movies, motor vehicles, clothing and many more, and organisations can leverage off this because these conversations hold persuasive power (Slabaugh 2015). This in itself effects authenticity in communication as
opposed to merely transmitting brand messages to customers. Marketers are using customers’ social voices to provide “proof” of their experiences by infusing these messages with the brand messages (Slabaugh 2015). “Traditional advertising is dying” (Moore 2015). “Now, more than ever, trust and peer recommendation trump traditional and ‘programmatic messaging from brands’” (Carey 2015). Slabaugh (2015) further indicates that advertising is in the middle of an authentic advertising revolution – customers are now the best (digital) marketers. More social, means more trustworthy and persuasive.

In using social media as a marketing platform, organisations are in fact leveraging user-generated content. Consumers are becoming more averse to traditional mass media marketing messages because they prefer to be social in terms of sharing information via new media technologies (Moore 2015). It is about providing consumers with a platform to collaborate, connect and share what is important in their lives and what matters to them. Through this sharing, connecting and collaboration customers have become powerful sources of influence in their social spheres.

As indicated earlier in this discussion, in the context of this study, corporate advertising is applicable because it relates to organisations working towards creating a sustainable corporate identity and image by communicating the impact of its social initiatives through its CSR 2.0 communication (see the detailed discussion in chapter 4).

### 3.6.1.7 Corporate advertising

As indicated in section 1.3.4, the focus of this study was corporate advertising which relates to organisations working on creating a sustainable corporate identity and image, for example, by communicating to its stakeholders the positive impact it has on society through its CSR 2.0 communication (Moriarty et al 2012:39; Roper & Fill 2012:274). Corporate identity has to do with an organisation’s defining attributes relating to a combination of organisational values, culture, personality and visually...
recognisable identification and is informed by legal, economic and stakeholder perspectives (see section 4.3). Organisations reinforce their role in society and adopt CSR 2.0 as a strategic mechanism in corporate identity building because of their ability to build a credible corporate reputation (Hildebrand et al 2011:1360) and promoting corporate image attractiveness, thus increasing competitive differentiation and advantage (Arendt & Brettel 2010:1485; Roper & Fill 2012:121; Pomering, Johnson & Noble 2013:249; Pollach et al 2012:207).

Corporate image is partly seen as a result of an organisation’s perceived credibility (Roper & Fill 2012:250). To this end, and in the context of this study, it is evident that the positive corporate image an organisation derives from its CSR 2.0 activities correlates positively with consumers’ purchase intentions and helps them differentiate between an organisation and its competitors (Rahim, Jalaludin, Tajuddin 2011:121). As such, consumer loyalty and commitment increase if organisations are seen as socially responsible corporate citizens. Both corporate image and identity are discussed at length in chapter 4.

Corporate advertising relates to non-product advertising, which includes PR and institutional, corporate identity and recruitment advertising (Arens 2006:358). According to Vestergaard and Schroder (1995:1), corporate advertising relates to the advertising of an organisation’s name or image and creating long-term goodwill with its stakeholders. To this end, Kim (2013:294) states that corporate advertising is focused on social responsibility, which leads to issue or advocacy advertising. Osman (2008:59) asserts that corporate advertising is used to enhance an organisation’s overall image and brand. The definition is extended to include the social or economic matters with the goal of fostering a relationship between the organisation, brand and customers (Osman 2008:59). Roper and Fill (2012:272) also maintain that with corporate advertising, the organisation attempts to increase recognition of its name (brand) and establish goodwill for the organisation as a whole. Furthermore, corporate advertising generates a link between the organisation’s identity and its mission and value proposition and informs
stakeholders about its CSR 2.0 activities (Roper & Fill 2012:272). As such, advertisements for the organisation’s CSR 2.0 activities are important as they function as an identity cue and express how the organisation wants to be seen and understood (Roper & Fill 2012:273).

As a means of delimiting a corporate advertising definition for this study, the following definition of Roper and Fill (2012:272) was adopted for this study: “Inform and build awareness, define a position or defend an organisation’s activities and reputation. The focus is on managing organisational reputation and trust amongst a wide array of stakeholders, rather than selling products and services to customers.”

This definition was deemed applicable to this study because it covers the reputational and image elements of an organisation, and extends advertising beyond selling products and services and focuses on all stakeholders, and not only customers. Corporate advertising takes the form, inter alia, of reporting accomplishments (such as the CSR 2.0 reports as indicated in above), positioning the organisation in the market, communicating change in identity and improving employee morale and corporate image (Arens 2006:358; Moriarty et al 2012:501). Organisations also use corporate advertising to inform stakeholders of their CSR activities (Farache & Perks 2010:236). These CSR advertisements serve as identity cues, show how the organisation wants to be seen and are used to legitimise its behaviour (Farache & Perks 2010:236).

A key aspect of corporate advertising is that the messages should build on the organisational reputation and reinforce the corporate story and brand promise (Roper & Fill 2012:272). The impact of corporate advertising is measured by changes in stakeholders’ knowledge, attitudes and behaviour (Roper & Fill 2012:272) (see figure 3.4). The media predominantly used to provide corporate advertising include print (newspapers, magazines, journals and annual reports), digital advertising (corporate websites, blogs and videos, and television) (Roper & Fill 2012:274) and social media such as LinkedIn, Facebook, mobile phone marketing and so forth.
3.6.2 Advertising as a communication process

It is evident from the above discussion that both the marketing and communication roles are inextricably linked in the sense that one cannot function without the other. As such, advertising is deemed a communication process of exchange, based on the basic sender-message-channel-receiver communication process (Kotler & Armstrong 2012:414). As mentioned above, the consumer is no longer only a receiver in the communication process, but is also the source that initiates communication. Figure 3.3 below illustrates the communication process, comprising the transmission, reception and processing of information, and depicts a two-way process between the sender and receiver.

Figure 3.3: Advertising communication process

![Adverting communication process diagram]


Among many communication models, the process applicable to this study is depicted in figure 3.3 above. The communication process consists of the transmission,
reception and processing of information and represents a two-way process between the sender and receiver (Clow & Baack 2014:32; Perreault et al 2009:376). This model represents a generic communication process suitable for this study in that it serves a demonstrative purpose in terms of the role of the organisation and the co-creator role of the consumer in the interactive communication process. Hence, because the focus of this study was on corporate advertising and the related CSR 2.0 messaging, it was deemed appropriate to present a generic communication model for this purpose.

One should note, however, that there is scope for new marketing communication models to represent the more interactive nature of digital media, which will consider new variables and media that are not catered for in the traditional communication models (Goneos-Malaka 2011:93). An example of such variables would be tapping into consumers’ personal networks and leveraging connections to benefit the organisation (Goneos-Malaka 2011:93). Figure 3.3 also indicates the advertising communication loop and the different variables that could affect the transmission and reception of an advertised message.

The source represents the originating organisation or its advertising agency that make decisions about the desired effects of the advertisement. The source also selects the words, symbols, images, sounds and so on, which are used to transmit a specific message symbolically. This is known as the encoding process (Kotler & Armstrong 2012:415). Traditionally, the consumer was regarded as the passive receiver of messages, but from a digital perspective, the consumer can also represent the source – consumer-generated content. Digital communication, however, does not follow a linear information flow between sender and receiver, which is what happens in the traditional communication process (Goneos-Malaka 2011:93).

According Kotler and Armstrong (2012:414), for the message to be effective, the sender’s encoding process should dovetail with the receiver’s decoding process. This implies that overlapping in the sender’s and receiver’s fields of experience and
terms of reference will render a more effective message (understanding the customer’s field of experience) (Perreault et al 2009:377; Kotler & Armstrong 2012:414). However, audiences may misinterpret the intended message of the source where there are cultural or translation problems (Perreault et al 2009:377). A case in point could be South Africa with its diverse cultural society.

From Delate’s (2001:15) research in the South African context, it is evident that if the meanings of the advertisements are not obvious, or messages are misinterpreted, the advertisement receives incongruent decoding and restricted attention, and the intended associations are lost. In a multicultural society such as that of South Africa, one would expect various meanings and associations to be generated from specific resources used in CSR 2.0 advertising (visual texts are open to a range of interpretations because they are culturally informed). The underlying premise of Delate’s (2001) research is that meanings in messages are fluid, and as such, open to varying interpretations informed by culture. In addition, Hall (1973:4) indicates that the encoder intention and decoder reality may differ. This arises through misaligned encoding (producer) and decoding (receiver) contexts that translate into misunderstanding during the communication process.

The receivers’ responses are the key focus, which are also measured to determine whether the objectives have been met (Wells et al 2003:157) from an organisational or advertiser’s perspective. From the consumers’ perspective, it is about being heard and taking action based on their messages or responses. The message and media mix factors relate to the crafting of the advertising message strategy. This strategy also includes media planning – media mix and the best way of delivering messages to the right audience at the right time and in the right place (Wells et al 2003:157). From the consumers’ perspective, they expect the organisation to offer, access and monitor communication platforms, on which they are able to create their own messages.

The noise factors that may interfere or distort the advertising communication process in terms of message delivery are classified as internal and external – the former
representing the personal internal factors affecting the recipient, and the latter representing factors outside the recipients' and originators' control (such as competing advertisements).

Feedback relates to the recipient’s response to the sender’s/communicator’s message and includes purchases, enquiries, questions, complaints, feedback on websites, blogs or other social media (Clow & Baack 2014:19) – hence also user-generated content. Feedback is not always direct as in the ubiquitous environment of the internet, and consumers are able to communicate directly with the organisation (Clow & Baack 2014:19) and provide and/or receive feedback.

From the above communication process, it can be inferred that marketers are not guaranteed that their messages will reach the audience as intended and achieve the desired results or behaviours. This is because of factors such as the noise that filters or distorts messages and perception. The message reception and response node relate to the reception of the messages, which is dependent on a combination of effects (learning, persuasion and behaviour).

3.6.3 Factors influencing reception process

In the communication context, and as a means of providing clarity on the process viewers experience in viewing and interpreting the organisation’s CSR 2.0 messages, advertising is indicated as a communication process of exchange, based on the basic sender-message-channel-receiver communication process (Kotler & Armstrong 2012:414). This communication model is presented in combination with Wells et al’s (2003:157) model on the factors that influence the viewer’s reception process. A direct link is made to interpreting CSR 2.0 messages in section 6.3.1. These reception factors indicate how the underlying messages tie in with the corporate identity and reputation messages the organisation aims to convey.

The perception element in the communication process in figure 3.3 above, represents the variables that affect the reception and perception processes of the receiver. As stated above, consumers do not all respond to messages in exactly the
same way. When viewing the advertisement, consumers associate and memorise based on their understanding of the content of the message and relevance to their interests and situations. This is associated with the learning node of the schema set out in figure 3.4.

**Figure 3.4: Factors influencing the reception process**

![Factors influencing the reception process diagram](image)

**Source:** Wells *et al* (2003:157).

As illustrated in figure 3.4, in terms of the outcome of the cognitive stage, the consumer forms an opinion of the message, based on attitudes, emotions and their convictions (persuasion effect). This, in turn, leads to specific response behaviours (*Wells et al* 2003:157) or the formation of attitudes and opinions. This model, unlike the sequential models discussed below, indicates the factors that influence consumers' perceptions and not the sequence of processes they progress through.
In considering this response model, marketing communicators are able to identify the communication strategy best suited to their target market (Wells et al 2003:157).

Following the discussion on advertising as a communication process and the factors influencing the perception process, traditional response models are discussed in the next section as a means of providing context.

### 3.6.4 The irrelevance of traditional response models

In Hanekom’s (2006:7) research, the traditional response hierarchy models are indicated to include AIDA, the hierarchy of effects (DAGMAR), the innovation adoption model and the information processing model. Despite the variety of response models available, the focus on this study remained generic because none of the traditional models are applicable to the CSR 2.0 communication of OMSA. These traditional models indicate the linear processes that consumers progress through from being unaware of a particular product or service to their purchasing behaviour (Hanekom 2006:62).

These models are predominantly based on three specific behavioural dimensions, namely cognitive, affective and conative (Goneos-Malaka 2011:90; Hanekom 2006:63). However, these linear models are relevant if consumers progress through their decision making in a linear fashion, if all customer awareness is in exactly the same state and if consumers deliberately ignore competing messages and any other noise (Goneos-Malaka 2011:91; Hanekom 2006:64). Essentially, these are the limitations that make the application of these models questionable (Hanekom 2006:64). According to Saha (2012), advertising messages do not necessarily result in immediate behaviours such as purchasing, but a specific sequence of effects occurs first before the consumer moves through the steps in the process (sequentially). Hence, since this study was not directly focused on the actual consumer decision-making process or the effect of advertising on consumer behaviour, but the evidence of the semiotic resources applied in CSR 2.0
advertisements, a generic response model (see section 3.6.2) is used to assist the discussion.

### 3.6.4.1 The AIDA model

This model represents the specific hierarchy that the consumer progresses through when exposed to a communication text/message and/or purchasing a product: attention (cognitive stage), interest and desire (affective stage) and action (conative stage). Saha (2012) and Hanekom (2006:68) point out that this model was originally applied in the personal selling context when guiding a consumer through the stages to eventually buying a product. It is clear that this is a linear model where a specific progression is indicated: the customer's attention must first be secured (such as shocking statements, attractive models, etc.) before evoking his or her interest in a specific product or service. The degree of interest will then stimulate the desire (such as testimonials of other satisfied consumers) to purchase/own or use the product or service, which will then persuade the consumer to commit and take action (Saha 2012; Perreault et al 2009:440).

Although the AIDA model is basic and uncomplicated, it was deemed unsuitable for this study, because the focus was evidence of the semiotic resources applied in CSR 2.0 advertisements and not the consumer responses or effects of the communication texts.

### 3.6.4.2 Hierarchy of effects (Lavidge & Steiner 1961)

This model is based on the premise that consumers progress through a specific sequence of functions before actually purchasing a product or service (Lavidge & Steiner 1961:59). As such, the model indicates a learning process in that a consumer will only purchase a product or service once he or she has moved through all the stages in the hierarchy. The consumer will typically progress from a stage of awareness and/or comprehension of the message to being interested or convinced in order to progress to a specific action (Wijaya 2012:77). The cognitive dimension of this model comprises the awareness and knowledge phases of the hierarchy, and
according to Heath and Feldwick (2008:38), the cognitive dimension is deemed critical to advertising success.

The liking, preference and conviction stages relate to the affective dimension where the decision-making process becomes active – emotion as an outcome of cognition (Lavidge & Steiner 1961:60; Heath & Feldwick 2008:38). In terms of the functions of advertising, Lavidge and Steiner (1961:60) posit that the stage of knowledge and awareness in the cognitive dimension relates to information or ideas; the stages of liking and preference on the affective dimension relate to positive attitudes or feelings towards the product or service; and conviction on the conative dimension relates to the actual behaviour of the consumer.

Although useful in explaining consumer response processes, this model also indicates a linear progression of the consumer through each stage (Hanekom 2006:72). As such, the hierarchy of effects model was not applicable to this study as the focus was the evidence of the semiotic resources applied in CSR 2.0 advertisements and not the hierarchy of consumer responses to advertisements.

### 3.6.4.3 The innovation adoption model

This model is based on five stages through which a consumer is seen to progress when adopting a new product or service, namely awareness, interest, evaluation, trial and adoption (Hanekom 2006:73). Similar to the models discussed above, the innovation adoption model is also premised on a linear progression of the consumer through the various stages (Hanekom 2006:73). In fact, the innovation adoption model is grounded on the premise that consumers can try out new products before they purchase or reject them – a key difference from the other response models discussed above (Hanekom 2006:73). Claudy, Garcia and O'Driscoll (2015:529) point out that adopting an innovation is seen as a cognitive outcome based on the consumer searching and processing the information.

As such this model is indicated as an improvement on the AIDA and hierarchy of effects models in that consumers' purchase behaviour does not directly result from
the cognitive and affective stages of the response process, but includes a trial phase as well (Hanekom 2006:74). However, the innovation adoption model also depicts a linear progression of the consumer’s purchasing process, and Hanekom (2006:74) asserts that because consumer responses are not typically sequential, these models do not represent the process hierarchically. In addition, Hanekom (2006) states that some phases are omitted from the innovation adoption model.

Similar to the above models, this model also assumes that consumers proceed through each of the phases sequentially. This model was thus not deemed applicable to this study since the focus was the evidence of the semiotic resources applied in CSR 2.0 advertisements and not the hierarchy of consumer responses to advertisements. The final traditional response model in this discussion is the information processing model.

3.6.4.4 The information processing model

The underlying assumption of this model is that the consumer has been exposed to persuasive communication – such as an advertisement (Hanekom 2006:75). This model comprises the following six behavioural steps that the consumer must progress through in the persuasion process: the presentation of the message; attending to the presented messages; comprehension of the messages; yielding to interpreted messages; retention of new behavioural predisposition until the purchase action; and action (Hanekom 2006:75). The uniqueness of this model lies in the fact that it includes a retention state, which influences the consumer’s judgement about the validity and relevance of the information (Hanekom 2006:76).

Similar to the models discussed above, this model was deemed unsuitable for this study because the focus was the evidence of the semiotic resources applied in CSR 2.0 advertisements and not consumer responses or the processing of information in terms of advertisements.
3.7 SUMMARY

This chapter addressed marketing communication and the marketing communication mix elements with a specific focus on corporate advertising. The chapter included a discussion to contextualise marketing communication in the broader field of marketing and the organisational marketing strategy as a whole. This included brief mention of the marketing mix (4Ps and positions marketing communication in this context). A definition of marketing communication was formulated for the purpose of this study, the marketing communication mix was explored, and each of its elements briefly explained.

Chapter 4 focuses on communicating CSR 2.0.
There is no neutral documentation…we are always making meaning rather than just seeing (Machin 2012:24).

4.1 INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

This chapter focuses on how and why organisations communicate about their CSR 2.0 activities, after which a definition of CSR 2.0 communication for this study is adopted. Following the discussion on the link between CSR 2.0, corporate identity and reputation, consumer responses, expectations and attitudes to CSR 2.0 are explored, which leads into a discussion on CSR 2.0 and its role in influencing consumer behaviour. CSR 2.0 communication styles and various CSR 2.0 communication models are then explained.

In order to illustrate the context of the analysis, a discussion on semiotic modes and visual language is presented. In addition, Machin’s (2012) multimodal analysis is addressed, which provides a method for analysing the semiotic resources as well as the underlying meanings contained in CSR 2.0 advertising texts. The chapter concludes with a proposed framework according to which the sampled visual CSR 2.0 corporate visual advertisements were measured.

4.2 CONTEXTUALISING CSR 2.0 COMMUNICATION

The evaluation of an organisation’s activities and performance depends on the quality of information stakeholders receive. It is thus imperative that the organisation’s CSR 2.0 strategy be integrated across all organisational levels and functions (Pomering & Johnson 2009:112) to avoid scepticism and mixed messaging (Du et al 2010:10; Jahdi & Acikdilli 2009:110). This integration of strategy throughout the organisation ensures that messages, symbols, behaviours and actions within and across organisational boundaries are aligned, consistent and continuous (Roper & Fill 2012:229). Organisations cannot simply make claims of social responsibility – they need to demonstrate this through proper means (Ross 2008:3) such as
providing photographic evidence of CSR 2.0 activities and outcomes. The organisation communicates this evidence to all stakeholders, and in so doing, the CSR 2.0 evidence will and should tell the real stories of meaningful impact.

In an era of vast amounts of information being available and consumers being inundated with marketing communication messages, it has become increasingly difficult for organisations to differentiate themselves and capture their target audience’s attention with messages that resonate with them. It would be a reasonable assumption that consumers are more inclined to connect with brands they trust, respect and identify with, and which are sincere in their social activities. Regarding how CSR 2.0 is communicated to stakeholders, Jacobsen (2006:21) indicates that the dilemma organisations are saddled with revolves around building a strong reputation and image to drive profits, or by contrast, if officially communicated, running the risk of stakeholders viewing the organisation’s efforts as “pompous” and “arrogant”.

Added to this, another complication for an organisation is that its communication about its CSR 2.0 activities addresses a diverse target audience, which means that the organisation needs to tailor its messages to suit the stakeholders’ unique characteristics (Jacobsen 2006:21). This relates directly to the communication process discussed in section 3.6.2 (figure 3.3) where the internal and external noise elements that directly affect the encoding and decoding processes were addressed.

In the next section, a definition of CSR 2.0 communication is formulated for this study.

4.2.1 Defining CSR 2.0 communication

As indicated in chapter 2, it is imperative that the organisation’s CSR 2.0 philosophies and activities are entrenched in its structures and processes. Communication enables the organisation to inform its stakeholders of its involvement in social responsibility activities through a myriad channels and media.
Morsing (2006:171) defines CSR 2.0 communication as being “… designed and distributed by the company itself about its CSR efforts …”.

Another definition is proffered by Podnar (2008:75), namely that CSR 2.0 communication is “a process of anticipating stakeholders’ expectations, articulation of CSR policy and managing of different organization communication tools designed to provide true and transparent information about a company’s or a brand’s integration of its business operations, social and environmental concerns and interactions with stakeholders”.

Although the definition by Podnar (2008:75) refers to CSR and not CSR 2.0 specifically, it was adopted for this study in that it takes a stakeholder perspective and indicates that CSR 2.0 should be integrated into the organisational policies. In addition, it demonstrates a holistic approach to communication dimensions, which include organisational brand, operations and social and stakeholder interactions. It is also adopted due to the paucity of CSR 2.0 communication definitions.

The next section focuses on CSR 2.0, corporate identity and reputation and indicates the link between these elements and how CSR 2.0 communication is directly linked to corporate identity and reputation. Since the focus of this study was on corporate advertising, it was deemed important to indicate this link because organisations work on creating a sustainable corporate identity and image by, *inter alia*, communicating to its stakeholders the positive impact it has on society through its CSR 2.0 communication.

### 4.3 CSR 2.0, CORPORATE IDENTITY AND REPUTATION

Further to the discussion in chapter 1, organisations reinforce their role in society and adopt CSR 2.0 as a strategic mechanism in corporate identity building because of its capability for building a credible corporate reputation (Hildebrand *et al* 2011:1360). This promotes corporate image attractiveness and thereby increases competitive differentiation and advantage (Arendt & Brettel 2010:1485; Pomering & Johnson 2009:2, Roper & Fill 2012:121; Pomering *et al* 2013:249; Pollach *et al*...
However, competitive differentiation requires consistent action by the organisation because this indicates the organisation's credibility and fosters customers' trust (Pomerin & Johnson 2009:108; Jahdi & Acikdilli 2009:110), which, in turn, breeds reputational capital (goodwill/brand equity) and credibility (see section 1.3.5).

CSR 2.0 is used as a means to evaluate corporate reputation (Ellen, Webb & Mohr 2006:147). In this regard, by taking responsibility in the environment in which it operates, the organisation reinforces its ethical behaviour and advances its corporate reputation (Roper & Fill 2012:45). Essentially, CSR 2.0 is implemented as an outlet through which organisations build their reputations (Roper & Fill 2012:45). Rossouw ([sa]:7), however, cautions that CSR 2.0 spending cannot “outspend a bad reputation”. Without real evidence to support CSR 2.0 claims in advertisements or any communications, the efforts are futile, resulting in loss of credibility.

Furthermore, depending on the approach (ethical, altruistic or strategic) taken by an organisation to implement/apply CSR 2.0, the outcomes in terms of organisational identification are different (Arendt & Brettel 2010:1486). For example, CSR 2.0 based on ethical responsibilities is viewed as obligatory and therefore highly unlikely to increase corporate image attractiveness and corporate identification (Arendt & Brettel 2010:1486). With a short-sighted outlook on exactly why an organisation is in business and what its core business is, the result is “acute institutional malaise” (Balmer 2011:1330). It means that organisations basically fail to incorporate an institutional, stakeholder and societal CSR 2.0 orientation in practice (Balmer 2011:1330).

In addition to corporate identity, corporate reputation is also a mechanism that organisations build and employ. Corporate reputation relates to the mental associations of the organisation held by stakeholders (see section 3.6.3). The communication provided by the organisation highlights its story in an effort to build a stronger image than that of its competitors (Pomerin & Johnson 2009:109; Hildebrand et al 2011:1356). It is imperative that the organisation's CSR 2.0 strategy
be integrated across all organisational levels and functions (Pomering & Johnson 2009:112; Crane et al 2013:12) to avoid scepticism and mixed messaging (Du et al 2010:10; Jahdi & Acikdilli 2009:110). This integration of strategy throughout the organisation ensures that messages, symbols, behaviours and actions within and across organisational boundaries are aligned, consistent and continuous (Roper & Fill 2012:229).

Corporate image, like corporate identity, is partly seen as a result of perceived credibility (Roper & Fill 2012:250). Credibility relates to what the motives of the source are – the perceived relevance of knowledge held by the source and the degree of trust placed in the source’s message (Roper & Fill 2012:249). To this end, stakeholders evaluate the validity of the claims made by the organisation against their perceived trust in the messages relating to the organisation’s expertise (Roper & Fill 2012:249). Hence, doubt in either of these elements will reduce credibility.

Organisations engage in CSR 2.0 activities, whether these activities involve the environment, cause marketing or staff volunteerism, because being part of the solution and taking responsibility in society fosters trust with the organisation’s stakeholders (which, in turn, elicits stakeholder support and builds organisational reputation) (Rogers 2012:1). For example, Microsoft was named for its best CSR 2.0 reputation for the second consecutive year, and shares the number one spot with BMW, Walt Disney and Google for 2013 (RepTrak® 2014). The obvious question is what makes them the best? Microsoft’s response to this accolade is that serving communities and fulfilling social responsibilities forms part of its DNA (and is a commitment made at all levels of the organisation) (Smith 2012). This approach relates back to the stage of responsibility, with a specific DNA code embedded in the organisation, which indicates a purpose-driven existence (see chapter 2).

In light of the above discussion, the organisation’s CSR 2.0 communications should pay particular attention to message content, channel(s) and understanding the stakeholder context. In addition, the following should also be considered: specific factors impacting on CSR 2.0 communication effectiveness, communicating its
commitment to the cause, its impact on the cause, its motives for being involved, and lastly, the fit between cause and the organisation’s business (Podnar 2008:77; McWilliams et al 2006:7; Du et al (2010:11). By incorporating stakeholder values, motivations, expectations and involvement in CSR 2.0 activities in the organisation’s communications, a more strategically focused marketing and communication approach is applied (Podnar 2008:78; Pomerig & Johnson 2009:106) as well as active and meaningful partnerships between organisations and their various constituencies.

In the next section, consumer responses, expectations and attitudes towards CSR 2.0 in terms of more strategically focused marketing and communication, are addressed. This relates specifically to the congruence between the organisation’s core business and the social issues it is involved in, as well as brand loyalty, advocacy and stakeholder-organisation relationships.

4.4 CONSUMER RESPONSES, EXPECTATIONS AND ATTITUDES TO CSR 2.0

With reference to earlier discussions, by incorporating stakeholder values, motivations, expectations and involvement in CSR 2.0 activities in the organisation’s communications, a more strategically focused marketing and communication approach is applied (Podnar 2008:78; Pomerig & Johnson 2009:106). In addition, active and meaningful partnerships between organisations and their various constituencies are fostered.

Another significant aspect of communicating CSR 2.0 is what is known as the “CSR 2.0 fit”. Du et al (2010:13) state that this is the congruence between the organisation’s core business and the social issues it is involved in. There is an expectation among stakeholders that organisations’ CSR 2.0 involvements should correspond with their core business (Cone Cause Evolution … 2007; Schmeltz 2012:36; Du et al (2010:11). This “fit” could be a consequence of logical cause and brand associations (e.g. rain forest protection by herbal product brands),
correspondence with specific target markets (e.g. Avon fighting breast cancer) or corporate image associations (Ben & Jerry’s environmental protection) (Menon & Khan 2003:318).

Besides the above, stakeholder attributions are also affected by CSR 2.0 fit. Low CSR 2.0 fit might activate stakeholder scepticism and reduce positive responses to the organisations CSR 2.0 activities (Menon & Khan 2003:318). However, there are instances in which low fit CSR 2.0 activities may incur favourable reactions from stakeholders because this could be seen as more sincere interest in the cause and thus increase CSR 2.0 communication effectiveness (Du et al 2010:13; Du et al 2007:224). Negative perceptions are driven by the incongruence between what stakeholders perceive and the organisation’s publicly stated objectives. To this end, the stakeholder operates within a specific mental schema in terms of the organisation’s activities, and when the focus of communication is not on the organisation’s product and services, which tie in with the social cause supported, this leads to suspicion and negativity (Du et al 2010:10). In the event of a low fit, the organisation should then justify its involvement in the particular cause (the underlying link), and in so doing increase the perceived fit (Tonello 2010).

Furthermore, in Schmeltz’s research (2012:33), it is shown that when consumers hold positive beliefs and attitudes towards organisations’ CSR 2.0, this relates directly to brand loyalty, advocacy and stakeholder-organisation relationships. Essentially, this is what organisations aim for in terms of meeting consumer expectations and the needs relating to CSR 2.0 communications. By communicating social and culturally relevant information and concepts, consumers are engaged in the texts by easily relating to the illustrated signs and codes in the communications.

Although organisations may associate with a specific social cause, there are those who operate in terms of a more holistic CSR 2.0 portfolio that is used to position the organisation strategically as a socially responsible brand in the marketplace – thus offering it a competitive advantage (Tonello 2010). This CSR 2.0 positioning then augments the effectiveness of CSR 2.0 communication, and stakeholders are more
likely to notice CSR 2.0 messages that are comprehensive, coherent and perceived as authentic (Du et al 2007:235). Schmeltz (2012) suggests that for CSR 2.0 communications to strike a chord with consumers in terms of their expectations and demands, organisations’ CSR 2.0 communication should be more external and explicitly oriented, where self-centred values are the focus (as opposed to moral and society-centred values).

In research conducted by Ellen et al (2006:147) it was found that, consumers’ attributions are key in their responses to organisations’ CSR 2.0. In this regard, they found that customers perceived organisations’ CSR 2.0 motives as “self-centred motives that are strategic and egoistic and other-centered motives that are values driven and stakeholder driven” (Ellen et al 2006:147). Customers ultimately react more positively to value-driven and strategic motives than egoistic and stakeholder-driven motives (Ellen et al 2006:147). From the organisation’s perspective, organisations are also reserved in communicating their CSR 2.0 activities as they run the risk of being criticised for over-sharing. However, they want stakeholders to be aware of their social contributions (Wanderley, Lucian, Farache & De Sousa Filho 2008:371).

This discussion on consumer responses, expectations and attitudes towards CSR 2.0 raises the question as to how consumer behaviour is influenced. The following discussion attempts to answer this question.

4.5 INFLUENCING CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR

As postulated earlier, an organisation’s positive corporate image derived from the communication of its CSR 2.0 activities assists its competitive differentiation. As such, consumer loyalty and commitment increase if organisations are seen as socially responsible corporate citizens. According to Rahim et al (2011:133), CSR 2.0 directly affects consumers’ purchase intentions and a positive relationship between an organisation’s CSR 2.0 activities and consumer attitudes towards the organisation. Öberseder et al (2013:1840) indicate that consumers’ perceptions of
CSR 2.0 cover the dimensions of responsibilities to employees, customers, the environment, society, the local community, suppliers and shareholders. As such, CSR 2.0 influences consumer attitudes, buying behaviour, consumer-organisation identification and loyalty (Öberseder et al. (2013:1840). By understanding which elements of CSR 2.0 consumers are affected by or notice, the organisation will be better placed to structure its CSR 2.0 programmes in such a way that they elicit the desired response from consumers (Rahim et al. 2011:126).

Furthermore, CSR 2.0 creates a connection between the organisation and the society in which it operates by participating in activities aimed at improving society and establishing a balance between all stakeholders’ interests and increased profits (Hinson & Ndhlouv 2011:333; Du et al. 2010:8). Roper and Fill (2012:119) and Fisman et al (2010:1) further indicate that CSR 2.0 is utilised by organisations as a reputation enhancer, a tool to attract good employees and a key competitive differentiator. As such, Hansen and Kalstrup (2009:6) posit that through CSR 2.0’s contribution to organisation identity and its values, corporate credibility is increased with stakeholders. There has been a shift in the business and social environments in the sense that organisations are now expected to incorporate sustainability and community development into their strategic agendas (Hinson & Ndhlouv 2011:333; Roper & Fill 2012:119). This relates to both social and regulatory compliance. In this strategic CSR 2.0 approach, the primary question organisations would pose is “how then to do well and good simultaneously?” (Hildebrand et al. 2011:1354).

Stakeholders’ identification with the organisation is greatly increased when an organisation’s CSR 2.0 activities evoke positive perceptions. This essentially relates to the congruence between stakeholders’ values and those projected by the organisation. Hildebrand et al. (2011:1358) and Du et al. (2010:225) argue that stakeholder identification with an organisation is more likely defined by CSR 2.0 activities because it defines the soul and value system of the organisation. It is based on this premise that Hildebrand et al. (2011:1359) view an organisation’s CSR 2.0
actions as “the core, defining or the central, distinctive and evolving characteristics of its corporate identity”, which activates stakeholder identification.

The competitive context in which the organisation practises its CSR 2.0 has a direct bearing on the strategy, marketing communication mix and stakeholder perceptions (Du et al 2007:224). This CSR 2.0-based identity is more unique than other identities, which focus, *inter alia*, on innovation and fair labour. This, in turn, gives the organisation more of a human persona, which makes it identifiable (Du et al 2007:225; He & Balmer 2007:769). Research conducted by Du et al (2007:225) shows that CSR 2.0 positioned brands are more successful and stakeholders are aware of CSR 2.0 activities and the organisations’ motivations and objectives to engage in CSR 2.0 (Du et al 2007:225). The more a brand is CSR 2.0 positioned, the more benefits are accrued and there is growing awareness because of more communications (Du et al 2007:226). According to Brown and Dacin (1997:71), these strong perceptions filter through to facets of the organisation that are unrelated to CSR 2.0 and thus produce loyalty and advocacy.

This discussion around influencing consumer behaviour has laid the foundation for delving further into CSR 2.0 communication styles and examines how best to communicate the organisation’s CSR 2.0 messages. This implies careful planning of the communication as it is directly linked to building organisational reputation, fostering trust, signal quality, legitimacy and credibility (Podnar 2008:77; McWilliams et al 2006:7). In the context of this study, this relates to the selection or association of specific semiotic resources in communication because this is pivotal to communicating the right message (see section 1.3.3).

### 4.6 CSR 2.0 COMMUNICATION STYLES

The above discussion has laid the foundation for addressing the specific CSR 2.0 communication styles organisations may apply. Schmeltz (2011:41) and Morsing, Schultz and Nielsen (2008:106) posit that CSR 2.0 communication styles used by organisations are mostly factual (figures, statistics and graphs), but remain user
friendly at the same time, and this underscores the need for organisations to be explicit and factual in their CSR 2.0 communications. The communication style is factual with images and storytelling/narrative structures. This infers that highly specific information is provided in terms of the project description, the beneficiaries, the amounts of money spent and the outcomes for the beneficiaries. Existing models of CSR 2.0 communication are discussed below, but an integrative model was adopted as the theoretical point of departure for this study (see section 4.7.5). In communicating the organisation’s CSR 2.0 activities, the focus should be on message content, channel(s) and understanding the stakeholder context in terms of the specific factors impacting on CSR 2.0 communication effectiveness (Du et al 2010:9). An organisation’s CSR 2.0 communications should ideally contain information relating to commitment to a cause or causes, its impact on the cause(s), its motives for being involved and correspondence between cause(s) and its business (CSR fit) (Du et al 2010:11). In addition to telling the real story, the CSR 2.0 communication process should endeavour to build relationships with stakeholders and mitigate reputational risks (Rossouw ([sa]:10).

With the increased consumer demands, power and sophistication, Podnar (2008:78), Pollach et al (2012:205) and Schmeltz (2012:30) state that CSR 2.0 communication messages will increase consumer awareness and perception of CSR 2.0, and to this end, stakeholders will be more receptive to a different way of communication. The strategic application of CSR 2.0 communications and the use of various techniques and media are crucial to meet stakeholder expectations (Podnar 2008:76). This carefully planned CSR 2.0 communication portrays the organisation’s socially responsible behaviour through material aimed at building organisational reputation and fostering trust, signal quality, legitimacy and credibility (Podnar 2008:77; McWilliams et al 2006:7). Therefore, as stated in chapter 1, the selection or association of specific semiotic resources in communication is pivotal to communicating the right message.
In terms of the specific styles applicable to CSR 2.0 advertising, figure 4.4 indicates that visuals, storytelling/narrative and images are the norm. For the purpose of this study, the view is that the two perspectives are merged because of the organisation’s aim to create an emotional connection with the viewers. At the same time, the use of images provides the evidence of the social activities that the organisation is engaged in. This means that a factual communication style, together with images and storytelling/narrative structures, should be used. This means that extremely specific information needs to be provided in terms of the project description, the beneficiaries, the amounts of money spent and the outcomes for the beneficiaries. This is confirmed when considering figure 4.4, which demonstrates that the organisation’s specific CSR 2.0 focus areas and descriptions of its projects constitute the focus of communications. Furthermore, several platforms are indicated as favourable in Schmeltz’s (2011) research, namely packaging, television, websites, magazines, internal staff communication platforms, sponsorships and word-of-mouth.

The various processes used to communicate the organisation’s CSR 2.0 messages are discussed in the next section

4.7 EXISTING CSR 2.0 COMMUNICATION MODELS

Although Schmeltz’s (2011) research, as briefly discussed above, provides details of communication models and styles, it is limited to a specific context, whereas in this study, specific models were evaluated to ascertain suitability to support the researcher’s theoretical position. Existing best practices to communicate the organisation’s CSR 2.0 messages are discussed below. The most prominent are Morsing et al’s (2008) Expert and endorsed CSR 2.0 communication processes model, Brüggenwirth’s (2006) CSR brand positioning grid and Luff’s (2006) context-driven CSR communication models. The discussion of additional models provides a more holistic view of models used to communicate CSR 2.0 and provide insight into opportunities for a revised theoretical framework, which will help to measure
sampled visual CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements. This study, however, provides an integrated CSR 2.0 communication framework, which combines various components of existing models (see section 4.7.5).

### 4.7.1 Expert and endorsed CSR 2.0 communication processes

In their research, Morsing *et al* (2008:97) developed a CSR 2.0 communication model with two distinct CSR communication processes that essentially target different stakeholder groups. The processes identified are the expert CSR communication process and the endorsed CSR communication process. The aim of this model is to help organisations strategically capture a reputational advantage from their CSR 2.0 initiatives (Morsing *et al* 2008:97). Figure 4.1 below illustrates the two processes of communicating CSR 2.0.

**Figure 4.1: Expert and endorsed CSR 2.0 communication processes**

![Expert and endorsed CSR 2.0 communication processes](source.png)

**Source:** Morsing *et al* (2008:106).

As depicted in figure 4.1, the expert CSR 2.0 communication processes relate to the CSR communication that is directed towards a specific group of experts such as the media, investors, local authorities, politicians and other interest groups (Morsing *et al* 2008:105). In their research, they found that the expert group favoured CSR 2.0 communication that is less bold. CSR 2.0 activities are communicated mainly through corporate websites, internal staff communication platforms, sustainability
reports and face-to-face stakeholder engagements (Morsing et al 2008:105). A factual and informative style is used to convey the CSR information, and Morsing et al (2008:106) indicate that someone not informed about CSR 2.0 issues may find this difficult to understand.

The endorsed CSR 2.0 communication process relates to CSR 2.0 communication directed towards the public and consumers indirectly through “elite readers” who convey the CSR 2.0 messages positively to the broader stakeholder groups (Morsing et al 2008:105). These endorsed CSR 2.0 communication activities are deemed to help organisations avoid the public viewing them as self-complacent and self-serving (Morsing et al 2008:105). Also Morsing et al (2008:106) emphasise that these two processes are in fact interdependent. This means that the endorsed process is reliant on communication to opinion makers (expert process) who, in turn, circulate the messages to the broader public (Morsing et al 2008:106).

Although this model demonstrates how organisations could optimise their CSR 2.0 communication in terms of balancing organisational and stakeholder interests, it is focused mostly on the CSR 2.0 communication process in terms of styles, methods and conduits, and does not particularly offer a holistic approach to CSR 2.0 communication in the organisation. Nor does it focus on the application of visual semiotic resources. In terms of South Africa’s historical context, civil society expects organisations to communicate their contributions to transforming society – as stated earlier in section 2.1.3. To this end, this model is not applicable to this study.

4.7.2 CSR management: the inside-out approach

CSR 2.0 communication to all stakeholders relies on the inside-out approach (Morsing et al 2008:102). The implications of this model are that internally employees should be fully committed to the organisation’s CSR 2.0 before communicating externally. In addition, CSR 2.0 communication activities that relate to employees should also be communicated (Morsing et al 2008:102). This may relate to employees volunteering their time to specific CSR 2.0 projects. Both these
necessitate the involvement of employees in the organisation’s CSR 2.0 activities, because once they are fully committed, they will be the corporate ambassadors in the communities (Morsing et al 2008:104). Although OMSA includes its employees in the CSR 2.0 agenda, they are not the sole drivers of the agenda in the community. This this model was therefore no applicable to this study.

4.7.3 CSR brand positioning grid

The so-called "CSR brand positioning grid" is presented by Brüggenwirth (2006:140) as a tool to assist an organisation to determine the balance between the role of CSR 2.0 and building its brand. According to Balmer and Gray (2003:991), a corporate brand promotes an organisation’s competitive advantage and differentiation from its competitors. Furthermore, the corporate brand offers a way to understand the dynamics around organisation-stakeholder interfacing (Balmer and Gray (2003:991). The CSR brand positioning grid specifically indicates whether CSR 2.0 communication should be explicit or implicit and how this communication integrates with other brand values, thus enhancing competitive differentiation (Brüggenwirth (2006:140). Referring back to the systemic nature of CSR 2.0 as discussed in chapter 2, it is imperative that organisations clearly define their positioning and value proposition, and in so doing integrate the significance of CSR 2.0 in the organisational strategy. Essentially, it is not only about products and services to customers, but also about brands that inspire them (Brüggenwirth 2006:141).
Figure 4.2: CSR brand positioning grid

As depicted in figure 4.2, the organisation decides on a specific quadrant in which to position its brand (Brüggenwirth 2006:142). The stronger a brand becomes the more quadrants it occupies (Brüggenwirth 2006:142). In practice, however, this model helps organisations to define the scope of CSR 2.0 communication campaigns in relation to their brand (Brüggenwirth 2006:142). Step 1 of this model represents the brand creation stage, where the brand values, positioning and value proposition are defined. During the second step, the organisation identifies the specific CSR 2.0 elements that are important to the brand (Brüggenwirth 2006:144). The final step concerns the tactical stage, where the campaign is developed in order to communicate the organisations CSR (Brüggenwirth 2006:144). The key messages of this campaign are vital, and as such, the CSR brand positioning grid helps to find the best strategy to achieve success. It is clear that communicating the organisation’s brand encompasses more than only advertising, because it revolves around building durable relationships (Brüggenwirth 2006:146). This is accomplished by brand behaviour through products, prices, employees, community involvement and communication (Brüggenwirth 2006:146).

Although this is a valuable model in terms of building a brand that has CSR 2.0 at its core, it focuses on the values and underlying drivers, but does not illustrate the CSR 2.0 communication process and the framework of related elements. However, this model is integrated into figure 4.4 as it relates to the balance between the role of CSR 2.0 and the organisation building its brand.

4.7.4 Context-driven CSR communication model

The substance of a brand in modern marketing relates to sustainable marketing with integrity (Luff 2006:214). To this end, Luff (2006:214) sees CSR 2.0 and a brand’s future as the same thing. This implies that the convergence of stakeholder demands and expectations, organisational values and strategy ultimately means a fully integrated, holistic CSR 2.0 approach. However, in order for the organisation to sustain meaningful relationships with its stakeholders, regular and meaningful communication is required. This means identifying and communicating about CSR 2.0 to stakeholders (Luff 2006:214). Luff (2006:214) proposes a model that views CSR 2.0’s role in delivering the organisation’s value proposition from three interconnected contexts, namely law, value add and core values. The law dimension refers to the legal and regulatory obligations of the organisation, the value-add dimension to value add for stakeholders (non-monetary, social, environmental terms) and the core value dimension to the effect of the corporate values on stakeholders (Luff 2006:214). Figure 4.3 below illustrates these interrelated contexts.
Figure 4.3: Context-driven CSR communication model

The model in figure 4.3 is used to design and customise CSR 2.0 content to meet the needs of each stakeholder audience to enable successful stakeholder interaction across the organisation (Luff 2006:215). Fundamentally, this model is based on stakeholder groups requiring different foci of information. The application of this model enables organisational teams to plan, work and communicate jointly, thereby identifying equity and value for stakeholders (Luff 2006:215). Essentially, this model is applied to balance and provide focus for the organisation’s CSR 2.0 communication efforts, based on the three key dimensions of law, core values and value add. The intersection of these three dimensions indicates the core CSR 2.0 content that emerges from these dimensions.

This model only considers three dimensions, which some could argue are umbrella dimensions for the underlying details. Although the what, tone and how of CSR 2.0
communication are indicated to help construct and communicate CSR 2.0 information, the model lacks other elements to render it a complete CSR 2.0 communication model. The CSR 2.0 communication framework discussed in section 4.7.5 below provides a more comprehensive perspective and integrates with the CSR 2.0 framework presented in chapter 2 (see figure 2.3).

4.7.5 An integrated CSR 2.0 communication framework

As explained in chapter 1, the integrative CSR 2.0 communication framework was deemed most relevant to this study in that it integrates elements of a holistic CSR 2.0 approach (as discussed in chapter 2), and as such, also consolidates the elements of the models discussed above. Fundamentally, this integrative communication framework revolves around the core principles of the CSR 2.0 framework presented in chapter 2. All communication should be rooted in the elements underpinning the core of the organisation, that is, value creation, good governance, societal contribution and environmental integrity. This model illustrates CSR 2.0 message content, form, channels and outcomes. The strategic application of CSR 2.0 communications and the use of various techniques and media are crucial to meet stakeholder expectations (Podnar 2008:76). According to McWilliams et al (2006:7) and Podnar (2008:77), carefully planned CSR 2.0 communications enhance brand reputation, foster trust and signify quality. This communication portrays the organisation’s socially responsible behaviour through the presentation of CSR 2.0 images and text.

CSR 2.0 communication can take either a persuasive or an informative form (McWilliams et al 2006:9). The former is aimed at influencing buyers’ intentions and/or attitudes towards the organisation (cause-related marketing is a case in point). Informative CSR 2.0 communication communicates the organisation’s CSR 2.0 activities to stakeholders and acts as a reporting mechanism. The aim of the organisation’s CSR 2.0 communication is to build organisational reputation, legitimacy and credibility, and not only to persuade consumers (Podnar 2008:77). In
addition, there are internal and external elements that the organisation needs to consider in its communication, which are referred to in the framework as the moderators of communication effectiveness. Figure 4.4 illustrates the elements of a holistic CSR 2.0 approach (with reference to chapter 2) and the consolidation of the elements of the models discussed above.

Figure 4.4: An integrated framework for CSR 2.0 communication

The key elements in figure 4.4 are briefly explained below.

Further to the discussion in section 4.7.3, the aspects of CSR brand positioning indicate specifically whether CSR 2.0 communication should be explicit or implicit (Brüggenwirth 2006:140). Furthermore, the way in which this communication
integrates with other brand values, thereby enhancing competitive differentiation, is important (Brüggenwirth 2006:140). As depicted in figure 4.2, the organisation decides on a specific quadrant in which to position its brand, and the stronger a brand becomes, the more quadrants it occupies (Brüggenwirth 2006:142). In practice, this helps organisations to define the scope of CSR 2.0 communication campaigns in relation to the organisations’ brand (Brüggenwirth 2006:142).

4.7.5.1 Message content

In terms of message content, the focus is on the organisation’s involvement in/support of specific social causes, and the elements that are highlighted in communications are commitment to the cause, the organisation’s impact thus far and the extent of correspondence with the organisation’s business (the CSR 2.0 fit) (Tonello 2011). As mentioned in chapter 2, support of various causes can take the form of, inter alia, donations, the time of organisational resources and volunteerism. According to Tonello (2011), in CSR 2.0 communication, this commitment is characterised by the scale, consistency, duration and sustainability of the contributions and relationships/involvement.

As opposed to focusing on the organisation’s input to a cause, it can also communicate the CSR 2.0 impact in terms of its outputs. An example, would be Pampers’ “1 Pack=1 Vaccine” initiative where the social impact is clearly communicated to consumers as well as their contribution to the cause (Tonello 2011). This strategy is effective in that by communicating factual information, the organisation avoids window dressing or bragging and demonstrates its motivation for involvement in the cause (Tonello 2011). Tonello (2011) cites research, which shows that the longer the commitment to a cause (duration and sustainability), the more the organisation is deemed genuine in its commitment to society’s welfare (positive attributions), while shorter-term involvement is seen as using the cause for profits (Webb & Mohr 1998:231) (negative attributions). In South Africa, organisations have been found to communicate their activities more than the actual
outcomes (impact) (Trialogue 2016:44). Figure 4.5 illustrates the dimensions in terms of organisations’ approaches to monitoring and evaluating CSR 2.0 projects.

**Figure 4.5: CSR 2.0 communication focus areas**

![Graph showing CSR 2.0 communication focus areas]

**Source:** Trialogue (2016:44).

In figure 4.5, the Trialogue programme logic model (Trialogue 2016:44) gauges social responsibility in terms of the following dimensions:

- Inputs related to organisational resources such as human, financial and other resources allocated to projects.
- Activities are purposefully designed actions that are converted into specific outputs.
- Outputs relate to the results of the organisation’s activities and are measured in the immediate/short term.
- Outcomes relate to the changes in behaviours, skills, well-being and/or knowledge. These are medium-term results resulting from short-term inputs.
- Impacts are the more comprehensive results of projects such as community, social or system-level change that results from the short- and medium-term results.

Referring back to the organisation’s credibility and CSR 2.0 fit, communication of CSR 2.0 activities conveys specific messages. Hence, the selection of an
association with specific signs and codes in communication is pivotal to communicating the right message. A significant element highlighted by Schmeltz (2012:43) is that consistent and open CSR 2.0 communication is essential to organisational credibility and will not be viewed as bragging/greenwashing. Greenwashing relates to organisations creating the impression that they are in fact making meaningful social contributions, while their impact is negligible (Hinson & Ndlovu 2011:334) (see section 2.2.3).

In addition, Schmeltz’s (2012:43) findings suggest that organisations should be cognisant of the fit between consumers’ expectations regarding media and content of CSR 2.0 communications. Furthermore, Schmeltz’s (2012:40) research indicates that the respondents were more in support of a “factual rather than an impressionistic” style of writing, requiring organisations’ communication to be more factual and explicit when communicating CSR 2.0 activities. Schmeltz (2012:40) further indicates that CSR 2.0 communication is mainly seen on packaging, magazines, advertisements, websites, television, social discourse and sponsorships. This explicit or overtly explicit preference for these channels would obviously present a contradiction to the normal recommended means of subtle and implicit CSR 2.0 communication. The evaluation of an organisation’s activities and performance ultimately depends on the quality of information received by stakeholders and the appropriateness of the channels utilised.

4.7.5.2 Message channels

Organisations use various channels to communicate about their CSR 2.0 activities. This ties in with the marketing communication discussion in section 3.5. In practice, common tools used to communicate CSR 2.0 activities include, but are not limited to the following: websites; social reports; thematic reports; internal channels; prizes and events; cause-related marketing; product packaging; broadcast media (television, magazine or billboard advertisements) and points of sale. Advertising, social reports and websites are the most prominent channels (Birth et al/2008:185; Tonello 2011; Wanderley et al 2008:369). In the ubiquitous environment of digital
media, corporate websites are increasingly becoming one of the main platforms to publish CSR 2.0. These corporate websites offer official endorsement to CSR 2.0 communication (Wanderley et al 2008:370, 371) because they form part of the official online presence of the organisation.

Corporate responsibility and sustainability reporting has indeed become standard business practice (KPMG 2014; Tonello 2011). CSR 2.0 reporting is no longer a voluntary reputational management activity for organisations, and in South Africa, organisations are obligated to comply with various compliance codes and regulatory requirements (e.g., King III annual integrated reporting, the South African Integrated Reporting Committee and so on). These are discussed at length in section 2.2.4. In the KPMG Survey of Corporate Responsibility Reporting 2013, it is reported that 98% of South Africa’s top 100 organisations by revenue report on their CSR 2.0 and/or sustainability (KPMG 2014).

In research conducted by Tonello (2010) and Trialogue’s (2016:47) corporate communication and reporting on CSR 2.0 to stakeholders, it was found that the corporate website and corporate annual reports were mostly used to report CSR 2.0. Figure 4.6 indicates the key trends.

Figure 4.6: CSR 2.0 reporting channels

In addition to the channels illustrated in figure 4.6, organisations also communicate their CSR 2.0 activities through advertisements. A case in point is Anglo American’s television advertisement in which the company specifies the impact of its investments in staff housing and other social initiatives. Advertising was discussed with a particular focus on corporate advertising in section 3.6. Product packaging is also used to communicate CSR 2.0 initiatives – for instance, Elizabeth Anne’s baby products or Pampers, which supports specific initiatives (mosquito nets, vaccinations, etc.). Over and above the traditional channels organisations use to communicate their CSR 2.0 activities, Tonello (2011) also refers to external communicators of CSR 2.0. These are channels that cannot be controlled by the organisation and include, *inter alia*, the media and customers. The extent to which the organisation can control these channels varies, and the organisation can, for example, apply more control over the content of communication by employees (Tonello 2011).

There is said to be a balance between the level of control and credibility of CSR 2.0 communication (Tonello 2011). The less controllable, the more credible the CSR 2.0 communication will be, and *vice versa* (Tonello 2011). Stakeholders respond more positively and identify more when they learn about an organisation’s CSR 2.0 activities from a neutral/independent source (unbiased) (Yoon, Gurhan-Canli & Schwarz 2006:379). According to Dawkins (2004:118), organisations should inspire and support informal but credible communication channels (word-of-mouth) and at the same time appreciate the power and reach of employees as CSR 2.0 communicators. This implies that the organisation’s internal CSR 2.0 communication should be activated and sustained in order to promote advocacy among its employees. The power of consumers as communication channels has grown exponentially in this age of social media. The consumer as a content creator is found on social media platforms such as blogs, Facebook and Twitter. This was briefly discussed in section 3.5.10.
Although consumers are more demanding in terms of an organisation’s engagement in CSR 2.0, they are also uncertain in their views and as such more susceptible to negative rather than positive CSR 2.0 information, which essentially could account for an organisation’s unwillingness to communicate CSR 2.0 activities (Schmeltz 2012:33). Instead, organisations use methods such as reports that are traditionally regarded as credible to communicate subtly and implicitly (Schmeltz 2012:33). Further to the content and channels used for CSR 2.0 communication, there are internal and external factors that may affect an organisation’s communication effectiveness. These are discussed in the next section.

4.7.5.3 Moderators of communication effectiveness

The moderators of effective communication relate specifically to stakeholder-specific as well as organisational factors.

a. Stakeholder-specific factors

The organisation’s CSR 2.0 activities create a connection between the organisation and its stakeholders in the society in which it operates by participating in activities aimed at bettering/improving society and establishing a balance between all stakeholders’ interest (Hinson & Ndhlovu 2011:333). As such, the organisation should customise its CSR 2.0 communication to the particular needs of each stakeholder group. There are different stakeholder types that relate to an organisation and these may potentially affect the effectiveness of CSR 2.0 communication. These stakeholders include, inter alia, legislators, business press, investors, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), local communities, consumers and employees (Dawkins 2004:110). The expectations and information needs differ from one group to the next, and these groups may react differently to the CSR 2.0 messages and channels (Tonello 2011).

Issue support, defined as “the extent to which stakeholders support the focal issue of a company’s CSR initiative”, also has an impact on the effectiveness of
the organisation’s CSR 2.0 communication (Tonello 2011). It is further indicated that information acknowledged as self-relevant stimulates voluntary attention (Petty, Cacioppo & Goldman 1981:853). The level of support and preference towards a specific company is directly linked to the extent of identity with an organisation, where personal values are supported by the organisation’s values and behaviour (Aspara & Tikkanen 2011:1459). Hence, information on CSR 2.0 that stakeholders consider personally relevant or important is more likely to rise above the media clutter (Tonello 2011). Furthermore, Tonello (2011) states that active stakeholder engagement in the organisation’s CSR 2.0 and eliciting their input in various causes will increase issue support. For example, consumers can swipe their MySchool card at various partner businesses (such as Woolworths), to support their chosen cause: schools, animals and the environment. Every time the consumer swipes his or her MySchool card, a donation is made to his or her cause of choice (MySchool MyVillage MyPlanet 2016). Another example is Nedbank’s Affinity Programme, where clients can support causes relating to the environment, children, sports or the arts. These causes are linked to specific banking and investment products, and Nedbank makes donations on behalf of its clients (Nedbank 2014).

At the risk of stating the obvious, an organisation’s long-term success is dependent on stakeholders’ awareness, support of, and identification with it. Tonello (2011) posits, however, that both internal and external stakeholders’ awareness of organisations’ CSR 2.0 activities is low, which poses obvious challenges for the organisation. This leads to the logical conclusion that the organisation’s CSR 2.0 communication to its various stakeholder groups is vital in building and sustaining their awareness. Through the organisation’s CSR 2.0 communication, its character/soul is made manifest, which is different from the traditional marketing of products or services (Hildebrand et al 2011:1358; Du et al 2010:225). CSR 2.0 communication exposes facets of the organisation’s corporate identity and is mostly explicit in revealing the qualities of the
organisation (egalitarian employment policies, specific sponsorships and environmental concerns) (Du et al 2010:10).

Although stakeholders want to be informed of organisations’ CSR 2.0 activities, Tonello (2011) found that excessive/hard-lined promotion activated scepticism. Reference was also made earlier to Ellen et al’s (2006:147) research findings pertaining to the organisation’s CSR 2.0 motives. Referring back to the discussion in section 4.3, Du et al (2010:10) state further that these identity-revealing features of CSR 2.0 communication are directly related to the levels of positive attributions by stakeholders. The challenge for organisations, however, is communicating about CSR 2.0 to minimise or prevent stakeholder scepticism and rather communicating the underlying reasons of the organisation’s CSR 2.0 efforts (Du et al 2010:10). However, if stakeholders perceive the organisation’s motives to be self-serving and profit-chasing, their attributions will be negative (Yoon et al 2006:379).

The effectiveness of an organisation’s CSR 2.0 communication is directly linked to the reputation it holds with stakeholders (Du et al 2010:14; Fombrun & Shanley 1990:235). Reputable organisations are deemed to have higher source credibility, with the converse also being true (Du et al 2010:14). Another key factor in the organisation positioning itself through marketing communication regarding its CSR 2.0 efforts (non-economic activities) is its position relative to competitors’ CSR 2.0 activities (Du et al 2010:15; Du et al 2007:238; Fombrun & Shanley 1990:239; Pomering & Johnson 2009:107). Stakeholder perceptions of these CSR 2.0 efforts, in turn, indicate a mutually beneficial relationship between an organisation and its various stakeholder groups, which enhances the organisation’s sustainability (Fombrun & Shanley 1990:239). This means that the organisation’s brand essentially becomes known/takes on the identity of a CSR 2.0 brand. This would thus imply that CSR 2.0 infuses its entire operations, and as such, would see its CSR 2.0 communication benefits
amplified and the organisation’s CSR 2.0 being viewed as more authentic and sincere (Du et al. 2010:15; Du et al. 2007:238).

b. Organisation-specific factors

By disclosing the character of the communication source, there are specific factors (corporate reputation and CSR 2.0 positioning) which, in all probability, will influence the effectiveness of CSR 2.0 communication (Tonello 2011). The influence of these two factors will be more pronounced for organisation-controlled CSR 2.0 communication than third-party communication (Tonello 2011). The impact of corporate reputation was discussed earlier in section 4.3. Corporate reputation acts as a moderator of CSR 2.0 communication effectiveness in that it serves as a pre-existing framework, which stakeholders use to interpret information about the organisation and its activities. According to Yoon et al. (2006:388), organisations with favourable reputations and high-source credibility will experience positive effects around their CSR 2.0 communication, and vice versa. The industry in which the organisation operates will also moderate CSR 2.0 communication effectiveness (such as tobacco and oil companies) (Yoon et al. 2006:378).

An interesting consideration is that because of the changes in stakeholder expectations, demands, values and motives, it has become more challenging for organisations to customise their CSR 2.0 communication (Schmeltz 2012:31). This challenge arises from the lack of understanding of modern stakeholders’ expectations, demands, values and motives. For example, in South Africa, the diverse cultures and socioeconomic landscape of the country could complicate matters for organisations when it comes to communicating CSR 2.0 activities and the form, style and content of symbols/signs and the codes used in CSR 2.0 communications. Furthermore, Schmeltz (2012:32) makes an interesting point that the common approach to CSR 2.0 and its communication is from the organisations perspective. Ellen et al. (2006:155), however, see things from the consumer’s perspective in terms of organisation’s CSR 2.0 activities, and
describe specific motives that consumers assign to organisations. This indicates that consumer perceptions of CSR 2.0 go beyond only the expectations of organisations to be involved in CSR 2.0 in order to ease their corporate consciences.

Mark-Herbert and Von Schantz (2007:4) see CSR 2.0 communication as a vital strategic component of an organisation’s brand management. In taking the motivations, expectations and values of stakeholders into consideration, the organisation has to ensure that the right messages are being communicated through the visual imagery chosen to represent its CSR 2.0 activities. CSR 2.0 communication and actions are viewed as interrelated functions, as opposed to independent activities (Chaudhri & Wang 2007:235). Communication with stakeholders should be interactive to ensure that CSR 2.0 communication efforts are aligned with stakeholder values, expectations and motivations. This interaction could be facilitated by corporate websites, for example, where “multi-stakeholder dialogue” (Chaudhri & Wang 2007:235) is enabled. Schmeltz (2012:36) identifies one of the challenges of CSR 2.0 communication as the issue of creating awareness of organisational activities – how likely are consumers to notice, process and accept CSR 2.0 communication?

Having addressed the message content, channels and specific moderators of communication effectiveness, the implications for organisations are addressed in the next section.

4.7.5.4 Implications for organisations/management

Apart from knowing who their stakeholders are, it necessary for organisations to know what issues they support and what concerns them, in order to engage the stakeholders in the CSR 2.0 activities. By aligning the organisation’s activities with stakeholder issues, concerns and values, the organisation places itself in a favourable competitive competition. However, the choice of CSR 2.0 issues should balance with respect to CSR 2.0 fit and impact (Tonello 2011). Benefits include
organisational identification, positive reputation and so forth. This environment should be continuously monitored as social priorities change (Tonello 2011).

Communicating CSR 2.0 is not as simple as it seems. Lack of clarity on the organisation’s CSR 2.0 commitment, doubts about the effectiveness of initiatives or lack of CSR 2.0 fit can lead to scepticism and negative attributions (Tonello 2011). Bearing in mind the substantial investments that support many CSR 2.0 programmes, it is vital that in preparing its CSR 2.0 communication strategy, all the elements, as elaborated on in the CSR 2.0 communication framework in figure 4.4, as well as the context, should be carefully considered and integrated. In summary, Tonello (2011) makes the following recommendations regarding the implementation of effective CSR 2.0 communication strategies by organisational management:

- Seek CSR 2.0 activities that fit in with the business strategy. Elaborate on the rationale for a low fit in communication.
- Emphasise CSR 2.0 commitment and impact to foster consumer advocacy.
- Seek credibility through the support of independent, external communication sources.
- Encourage and sustain word-of-mouth (both internal and external).
- Choose CSR 2.0 initiatives with high issue support amongst stakeholders.
- Be conscious of stakeholder perceptions of industry.

As mentioned earlier, given the fact that organisations are more receptive to stakeholder demands and expectations as well as its influence on stakeholder opinions and attitudes towards the organisation, the organisation’s CSR 2.0 communications are essential. In addition to Tonello’s (2011) recommendations above, Birth et al (2008:183) posit that in order to be considered effective CSR 2.0 communication, these should comprise relevant communications (issues and audience), consideration of the cultural context and clear, coherent and integrated objectives.
The preceding discussion focused on specific aspects of communicating CSR 2.0, thus laying a theoretical foundation on which organisations can base their best practice regarding CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements. This foundation as well as the discussions in the preceding chapters anchor the analysis of the empirical part of the study. In the next sections, the context of the analysis that defines the boundaries and particular focus of this study are explicated.

4.8 SEMIOTIC MODES AND VISUAL LANGUAGE

This discussion contextualises CSR 2.0 communication in semiotic modes and visual language, which serves to clarify the specific theoretical position for the empirical part of this study. As pointed out in chapter 1, semiotic modes and visual language were deemed vital considerations for this study because CSR 2.0 communication at OMSA contains images. The CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements are aimed at generating specific meaning in the South African context in which they are applied and convey specific messages to the reader through these images and text. When looking at semiotics from a grammar (language) perspective, it is essential to consider semiotic signs in terms of their meaning potentials in various applied combinations (Machin 2012:2). Therefore, when addressed from a visual language approach, images take on their meaning through the grammar applied (combinations of signs) as opposed to signs in the images holding fixed meanings (Machin 2012:2). Machin’s (2012) work is the main lens through which the visual analysis was addressed in this study because the multimodal analysis toolkit provides a holistic analysis framework.

In the same way as grammar and syntax rules apply to spoken and written language, so too do visual texts have an underlying grammatical structure. Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006:3) define visual grammar as “... an account of the explicit and implicit knowledge and practices around a resource, consisting of the elements and rules underlying a culture-specific form of visual communication”. In this study, the emphasis was on the explicit and implicit knowledge and practices as well as the
culture-specific rules that underlie the visual communication of CSR 2.0 communication. South Africa’s culturally diverse society has been raised several times in earlier discussions and could pose specific challenges for organisations/designers in creating their CSR 2.0 communications. To this end, Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006:7) posit that the key question in the analysis of any visual text concerns its representation criteria. This criterion relates to the following question: What makes an image as a whole or the signifiers used an acceptable representation of a signified? The signifiers used in representations result from the specific cultural, social and psychological history and experiences of the representer/creator/sign-maker, and this is directly linked to the specific context in which the representation is produced (Kress & Van Leeuwen 2006:7).

Furthermore, Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006:8) are aware of the sign-making process, where the form (signifiers) and the meaning (signified) are independent in their significance and only generate meaning when they are combined. Signs are motivated and conventional and produced by the creator in a specific context, with a specific intention to express specific meaning (Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006:8). This was extremely relevant to this study in that the visuals applied to OMSA’s CSR 2.0 communication generate meaning in the context in which they are applied and convey specific messages to the reader. The forms used are regarded as appropriate instruments available for the intended meaning and thus contain the specific representation criteria for the creator to communicate the message.

Although drawing on certain aspects of linguistics, Kress and Van Leeuwen’s (2006:19) approach to visual design differs from the linguistics approach because linguistic theories and methodologies are not applied to visuals. Furthermore, Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006:19) argue that both the visual and linguistic systems can accomplish similar meaning systems, which are culture specific, but in doing so, they are independent of each other and their respective forms.

In order for any semiotic mode to be classified or function as a representational or communicative/language system, there are three fundamental requirements stated
by Machin (2012:17), which he draws from the work of Kress and Van Leeuwen (2001) and Halliday (1973):

- **Ideational metafunction.** The semiotic system must have the ability to represent ideas beyond its own confined system of signs (Machin 2012:17) – essentially, explaining a complex construct as a more familiar and simpler term. An example would be using green on a map to indicate nature reserves, greenbelts and the like.

- **Interpersonal metafunction.** The semiotic system must enable a connection between the producer and receiver (Machin 2012:17). An example would be speech that indicates a person making a demand or merely providing information, or the significance of the colour red to create a mood of caution or romance (Machin 2012:17).

- **Textual metafunction.** The semiotic system must have the ability to form coherent wholes so that information flows coherently and that there are other resources available in language for creating texts (Machin 2012:18). Because there are cohesive devices, which include conjunction, substitution and reference, available for language texts, in visual communication, the colour red may be applied as the colour of text headings, which then indicates their functional similarity in texts (Machin 2012:18).

Furthermore, Machin (2012:3) indicates two specific semiotic systems, namely simple and complex. With regard to the former system, a sign carries a specific meaning. A signifier, which represents a word, image or sound, has a specific signified, which relates to the referenced object (Parsa 2004:847; Machin 2012:3). For example, a picture or word of a tree (signifier) simply means a tree (the signified) as depicted in figure 4.7.
Figure 4.7: Simple semiotic system

![Simple semiotic system diagram](image)

**Source:** Adapted from Machin (2012:3); Tree image ([sa]).

Figure 4.7 depicts a simple semiotic system, which emphasises that meaning is fixed and direct because signs are read individually (Machin 2012:5). Although this study does not focus on the simple semiotic system, this information is nevertheless included in this discussion to present a holistic picture of semiotics and visual language and provide a point of contrast for the relevant complex semiotic system discussed below.

In the complex semiotic system, grammar is situated between the meaning and substance, which means that the link between the signifier and signified is not direct (Machin 2012:3). Essentially, the signifier has meaning potential as opposed to a fixed meaning, as demonstrated in the simple system image above. The meaning potential of the signifier is triggered with grammar, which contains systems of choices that render meaning to the signs (Machin 2012:3). In the context of this study, the creative designers/organisation would make choices in terms of the images used in their CSR 2.0 communication to convey specific meaning. However,
depending on the context and specifically the culture of the reader, the image may offer varying meanings. Therefore, in applying this to visual semiotics, a signifier’s meaning lies in it belonging to a particular system that underpins the available choices. In the depiction in figure 4.8 below, the colour red has various meaning potentials, based on it belonging to a specific system of colours. Its meaning is derived purely in relation to convention, but also its relation to other colours in the system (Machin 2012:3).

Meaning is basically drawn through the use of language and signs in a particular context, and not only through signifiers, thus making it necessary to disclose the system of meaning possibilities (Machin 2012:3-4). To this end, Machin (2012:4) indicates that (1) in addition to simple signs, grammar also gives meaning; and (2) there are predictable combinations that signs tend to appear in. However, according to Machin (2012:4), meaning does not exist in a single sign or the grammar; instead, the semiotic system that exists between the signifier and the signified is called lexicogrammar. This relates to the system of possible choices, which we use to create visual or linguistic deliveries (Machin 2012:4), as depicted in figure 4.8 below.

**Figure 4.8: Complex (multimodal) semiotic system**

![Diagram of Complex (multimodal) semiotic system]

**Source:** Adapted from Machin (2012:3).
With reference to figure 4.8, in the complex (multimodal) semiotic system, the emphasis is on meaning potentials created through combinations of signs and their relation to a specific system of choices (Machin 2012:5). Although reference to visual language in the context of visual texts is applied purely as a metaphor to indicate similar patterns (Machin 2012:159-160), semiotic resources and accompanying patterns nonetheless provide analytical value in analysing the application of visual semiotic resources. Therefore, in adopting a multimodal approach, it is not only necessary to create a typology/catalogue of the available choices and the governing patterns of these choices, but also to have a finite system of rules for combining elements and a lexicon of elements to create meaning (Machin 2012:5, 162).

This discussion focused on the key theoretical aspects of a semiotic system, but more importantly, indicated how creative designers/organisations may use visual texts to convey specific meanings intentionally or unintentionally. Machin’s (2012) multimodal toolkit is discussed next to provide the specific tools that were used to analyse OMSA’s visual texts in the context of this study.

### 4.8.1 Machin’s (2012) multimodal analysis toolkit

The multimodal visual semiotic analysis toolkit comprises the modes of metaphorical associations, iconography, modality, colour, typography, representation and page composition and layout. For the purpose of this study, only iconography was applied, as explained in chapter 1. The other elements in the toolkit are briefly discussed to provide context and completeness.

#### 4.8.1.1 Iconography

Iconography relates to the underlying meanings of images, and these meanings are formed in cultures over time (Machin 2012:21). As such, iconography reveals the meanings of the associations in terms of ideas, values, discourses, people, settings and objects (Machin 2012:22). The meanings assigned to signs are in fact arbitrary, which means that there is no natural relationship between the signified and the signifier (Machin 2012:22). Similarly, cultural representations of ideas and objects
exist, and include icons, words, letters and numbers (Machin 2012:22). However, visual icons may represent ideas and objects in varying degrees of resemblance, but still carry meaning – for example, the word “lion” does not look like a lion, whereas a drawing or picture of one does (Machin 2012:21). Culturally rooted associations are shared and applied to convey meaning (Machin 2012:21). If, for example, the meanings accompanying CSR 2.0 advertisements are not obvious or messages are misinterpreted, incongruent decoding and restricted attention are given to the advertisements (Delate 2001:15), and the intended meanings are lost. One would expect in a multicultural society such as that of South Africa, that various meanings and associations could be generated from specific semiotic resources used in CSR 2.0 advertising because visual texts are open to a range of interpretations, depending on the icons applied and the contexts in which they are viewed.

Designers apply various techniques to convey myriad meanings such as the compositional elements discussed later in this section. For example, typography could be used to communicate characteristics such as durability, luxury and so on. As such, the chosen elements applied in texts are used to communicate through established associations, such as which people are used, settings, photographic or compositional styles (Machin 2012:22). It is important to note that the latent meanings of texts are viewed in terms of meaning potentials rather than having fixed meanings (Machin 2012:22). Meaning is created only by people who share the cultural associations to whatever is represented in an image. This means that if different people from different cultures view the same image, the meaning potentials may vary, based on the cultural associations referenced by the viewers. Another significant point raised by Machin (2012:23) is the associated discourses underlying meaning in visual texts, such as the values, ideas, ideologies, people and so forth, represented in texts. Attention is also paid to how these specific elements have grown to convey particular discourses (Machin 2012:23). In terms of the hidden and obvious meanings of images, Machin (2012:23) applies Roland Barthes’ semiotic approach relating to the denotative and connotative meaning of images.
a. Denotative level

At the denotative level of semiotics, the visual text denotes a specific event, people, setting or object (Machin 2012:23) – in short, the text documents reality as a report of what would have been seen in person. According to Hall (2001:170), denotation is simply the literal, universally recognised meaning of a sign. Although this serves as a practical explanation of denotation, it is in fact an oversimplification because, according to Machin (2012:23), images are not really viewed in as neutral or one-dimensional fashion as this. There are still choices of representation at play as specific settings, people, objects or contexts are chosen for the image (Machin 2012:24).

An interesting point raised by Machin (2012:24) is that at a denotative level, a visual image can define the subject, say, representing a person in a group as a type or alone. For instance, if one views a girl alone in a photograph, this could denote that she is an orphan or neglected, whereas if the same child is viewed with a group of people, one might assume that she is part of a family. Visual texts therefore hardly represent reality as neutral, and techniques such as camera angles, perspective and context have a direct effect on how the texts are viewed (Machin 2012:25). Du Plooy (2009c:149) states that an image contains modified meanings to suit the communicator’s specific intentions. A case in point is advertising, which aims to create or enforce associations between products and abstract meanings Du Plooy (2009c:149). It stands to reason then that because representations in images are not always authentic, the visual representations become re-presentations of reality, which means that reality is mediated by the producers and the various techniques used to compose the visual texts. However, Hartley (2007:203) states that it is worthwhile to understand the discourses that support the image as opposed to looking for accuracy only.

This leads to the second level of meaning, namely connotative meaning which Machin (2012) bases on the seminal work of Barthes (1973).
b. *Connotation*

At the connotative level of semiotics, people, places, contexts, objects, events, *inter alia*, are depicted to convey either general or abstract ideas and values (Machin 2012:25), or as Hall (2001:171) simply puts it, connotation is the associative meanings of texts. This relates to what and how the representations are done. Similar to the metaphorical association discussed below, the connotative level of meaning concerns meaning elements from one domain applied to others in order to convey meaning. Both culture and context play a vital role in the meaning potential of the elements used in texts, and as such connote specific discourses or worldviews, kinds of people, problems and solutions (Machin 2012:25). Furthermore, Machin (2012:26) posits that abstract visual texts serve mostly a connotative purpose, but where creators aim to communicate a specific message, they employ recognisable connotators, which they believe the audience will recognise or identify with to “carry” connotations. Again, the earlier point made about South Africa’s diverse cultural context, poses challenges to creators/marketers in this regard.

c. *Carriers of connotation*

The specific elements that are used as connotative devices in visual texts include poses, objects, participants, settings and photographic style (photogenia) (Machin 2012:27).

i). *Poses*

As with other cultural artefacts and social references, poses are some of the references that have specific meanings or meaning potentials, where the connotations are derived from association (Machin 2012:27). For example, the upright and stern stance of soldiers carries with it the metaphorical associations of discipline and adherence to authority (Machin 2012:27). Designers have at their disposal caches of possible images in image banks to use in their visual texts, depending on the values and messages they wish
to convey (Machin 2012:28). In research conducted by Machin and Thornborrow (2003), poses are indicated as conveyors of values and as such are a significant part of branding. In essence, the poses used in the units of analysis in their research indicate specific types of people, values and lifestyles, and through visual mode depict the mood, as opposed to depiction through verbal language (Machin & Thornborrow 2003). Hence, because a semiotic resource poses specify meaning potentials, one needs to be extremely careful when attempting to understand exactly what is being depicted in visual texts (Machin 2012:31).

ii). Objects

Specific objects, on their own, and in combination with other objects and semiotic resources, carry a variety of connotations. Machin (2012:33), for instance, refers to the clock that accompanies news bulletins, which conveys the meanings of regularity, order and importance. In addition, the desks that news presenters are seated at connote authority (Machin 2012:33).

iii). Settings

The specific settings in which images are photographed also carry meaning potentials, and together with other objects and semiotic resources, could connote specific ideals, values and contexts and load the object in question with specific qualities through association (Machin 2012:34). This is in fact how branding works, where products are linked to specific values (Machin 2012:34). Therefore, by using or associating with a product, these values are connoted, and consumers then show that they are associated with a specific discourse (Machin 2012:33). Similarly, the lack of setting also speaks volumes in meaning in that the participant’s role in the image and the other objects are drawn to the forefront (Machin 2012:35). The intention is thus symbolic meaning in terms of conveying specific ideas or concepts (Machin 2012:35). According to Machin and Thornborrow (2003:459), this
decontextualisation indicates images as more abstract and idealises representations of actual reality. As mentioned earlier in section 4.8.1.5, modality relates to how close an image resembles reality, and therefore the higher the levels of concealment, subtlety or exaggeration, the more unrealistic or styled the image is perceived to be (Machin 2012:45).

iv). Participants

Machin (2012:36) postulates that children, old men, mothers and beautiful women are mostly found in visual images. Children carry specific meaning in Western ideology and are seen as innocent, vulnerable, pure and closer to nature, and they need to be protected from corruption (Machin 2012:36). Old men are used in contrast to what children represent and may connote peacefulness, gentle paternity and simplicity, whereas mothers are representative of a universal human value despite the differing socioeconomic and political contexts (Machin 2012:37). Participants in visual images can be used to connote a variety of ideas and values. Examples are the hero and villain characters, where the hero will be handsome and have integrity, morality and decency, whereas the villain is usually unattractive and lacks the qualities of the hero (Machin 2012:37).

v). Photographic style (photogenia)

Connotation is also conveyed in the artistic style of photographic techniques such as framing, lighting, focus and distance (Machin 2012:38). Framing refers to the relatedness of elements in an image with regard to the connection or flow of elements in the image (Machin 2012:150). Focus relates to whether specific details or areas of the image are sharpened or faded, and it is used to create salience, which sees either the background or foreground being highlighted or diminished. Depending on where the focus lies, salience is brought to the objects in focus.
Distance indicates physical proximity and intimacy, which relates directly to social relations (Machin 2012:116). In visual images, distance is derived through the size of frame such as close, medium or long shots, resulting in a specific proximity to the viewer (Machin 2012:116). Closeness and intimacy are conveyed through participants’ appearing closer to the viewer, which in itself represents daily life.

vi). **Iconographic symbolism**

Visual elements can also represent specific ideas or concepts, in and of themselves, and not through associations from other domains (Machin 2012:39). Iconography relates to abstract shapes taking on symbolic value such as religious symbols and corporate logos (Machin 2012:39). Iconographic symbolism therefore relates to gestures, objects, poses or specific elements, which represent values, ideas or people, and Machin (2012:40) asserts that the historical origin of symbolic references is an important consideration. Furthermore, photographs/visual images can also take on symbolic roles in terms of representing specific ideas and values (Machin 2012:41). For instance, the iconic Hector Pieterson image has come to symbolise the resistance against the brutal apartheid government in South Africa during 1976, but also serves to honour the youth who were victims during the uprising.

4.8.1.2 **Metaphorical association**

This element relates to a communicative mode drawing from one domain in order to understand another. Essentially, it means that qualities or associations from one domain are transferred to another because they are understood to share similarities (Machin 2012:8), and this allows multiple understandings and meanings to be created (Walton & Lloyd 2011:4). The use of metaphors underscores how reality is constructed or defined (Lakoff & Johnson 2008:157) and can therefore be regarded as symbolic and iconic (Parsa 2004:852). The meanings conveyed by these
metaphors underlie everyday meaning creation in different modes of communication in society (Machin 2012:8). However, according to Machin (2012:11) and Lakoff and Johnson (2008:7, 10, 245), in metaphorical association, certain elements of one domain are highlighted, while others are hidden. A case in point is the phrase “time is money”, which refers to the value of time, and by squandering this commodity, it is viewed as wastage.

4.8.1.3 Colour

Colour meaning is categorised by establishing regularities and patterns in the use of colours and colour qualities (Machin 2012:63). The use of colour is deliberate in visual communication and relates, inter alia, to the elements of hue, saturation, modulation, luminosity, colour differentiation and patterns (Machin 2012:63). The ideational function of colour (the ability to represent ideas beyond its own system of signs) relates to its ability to denote specific people, places and objects and the various classifications of each (Machin 2012:65). Examples are racial classifications, corporate colours, which denote identity (e.g. ABSA’s red, First National Bank’s shade of blue and Old Mutual’s green) and various national flags, to name but a few.

In terms of the interpersonal function of colour (connecting the producer and receiver), colours may be used to draw attention (such as red font type in a document or a red sign to signal a warning) (Machin 2012:66). Finally, the textual function of colour (formation of coherent holes) serves to provide consistency – for instance, all main headings in a document are in capital and bold black typeface, thereby serving as a coherence device (Machin 2012:66). Other examples include colour being used to categorise themes or ideas. One should note that these metafunctions are not necessarily used independently, but may be combined (Machin 2012:67).

Apart from these metafunctions of colour, colour may also relate to association and features for making meaning (Machin 2012:69; Kress & Van Leeuwen 2002:355). Association has to do with the cultural associations of colour, such as blue representing water, the sky or purity (Kress & Van Leeuwen 2002:355). However, in
a multicultural society such as that in South Africa, one would probably find differing associations to colours. The features of colour relate to gradation qualities such as light-dark, saturated to desaturated or any combination of these, and present meaning potentials as opposed to only a set of values (Kress & Van Leeuwen 2002:355). In addition, the dimensions of colour as a semiotic resource, which are available as schemes and combinations, are also viewed as meaning potentials. These dimensions include brightness, saturation, purity, modulation (shades or real colours), differentiation (full range or monochrome scale), luminosity (opacity or light shining through), hue (warmth and coolness of colours) and colour harmony (Machin 2012:70–81; Kress & Van Leeuwen 2002:455–458).

4.8.1.4 Typography

These meaning potentials are strongly linked to metaphorical association and the conveyance of meaning (Machin 2012:83). Typeface and design relate to the boldness or curvature of the font, which in itself relays meaning such as adding emphasis or gentleness and femininity (Machin 2012:86). As a semiotic system, typography fulfils the ideational metafunction by representing a particular context, and in terms of its interpersonal function, typography can be expressive through size (Machin 2012:92). In terms of the textual function, typography functions as coherence where links between textual elements are created such as similar typeface for headings (Machin 2012:92). Typography components contributing to meaning potential include weight, expansion, slope, curvature, connectivity, orientation, regularity, flourishes, line spacing and alignment (Machin 2012:93–107).

4.8.1.5 Modality

Modality refers to the evaluation of how true of real visual representations are (Machin 2012:61). To this end, visual representations are evaluated on the basis of being either high and/or low modality, which refers to the levels of concealment, subtlety or exaggeration in images. This has a particular bearing on how images are
to be viewed – for example, styled or unrealistic (Machin 2012:45). When images
document “truthfully” or closely resemble reality, they are deemed to have high
modality. This means they represent what the viewer would have seen had he or
she been there personally. Modality thus operates on a continuum, and is reliant on
how far from or close to reality the image is. It therefore communicates how literal a
representation should be taken and not how true or real it is (Machin 2012:46).
Based on the work of Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996), Machin (2012:48) indicates
the modality scales highlighted below, which can be applied in evaluating the
modality configuration of images.

Degree of articulation of detail relates to the degree of detail displayed in the text,
which can range from maximum detail to minimum abstraction (Machin 2012:48). He
(2012:48) further posits that in advertisements, one might find certain details reduced
or removed to enhance the quality or message of the image/subject, thereby
idealising the subject of the image. Depending on the intention of the communicator,
articulation of detail is used to represent a specific idea or concept instead of
documenting specifics, thereby generating a variety of meaning potentials (Machin
2012:49–50). In addition, the background of photographs/images may also be
reduced or enhanced, which is referred to as degree of articulation of background
(Machin 2012:50). This may serve to contextualise or decontextualise images, or
even convey various ideological messages (Machin 2012:50). By reducing modality,
the rules of reality are changed, which makes things appear reasonable and thus
acceptable to readers (Machin 2012:52).

Another modality marker is articulation of depth, which relates to perspective scaled
from complete absence to deep perspective – for instance, three-dimensional
images scaled to two-dimensional images (Machin 2012:52). Degree of illumination
is another modality marker relating to the articulation of light and shadow, that is, the
amount of light in the image with ranges in intensity. This has a direct bearing on the
mood conveyed in the image. For example, darkness or shadows can convey
moodiness or indicate concealment, while light and a lack of shadow may convey,
say, optimism (Machin 2012:54). Articulation of tone also contributes to modality, and runs on a scale ranging from dark to bright (Machin 2012:54). The same can be said of colour modulation, which runs on a scale of monotone to full colour, as well as the degree of colour saturation, which concerns the fullness and richness of colours used (Machin 2012:55).

In concluding the discussion on modality, Machin (2012:61) indicates three modality orientations (based on the work of Kress and Van Leeuwen 2006), namely naturalistic, abstract and sensory modality. In naturalistic modality, the truth of perception is materialised, which means that the image conforms to a specific context and perspective conditions of illumination (Machin 2012:61). Abstract modality fulfils the criterion of abstract trust, in the sense that an image conveys a deeper meaning of its actual denotation (Machin 2012:61). In diminished articulation of the criterion discussed above, modality increases and is used in scientific visuals and modern art (Machin 2012:61). Finally, sensory modality, the criterion of sensory truth, relates to the effect of pleasure or its converse created by visual images (Machin 2012:61). Sensory modality is high when the visuals’ effects are emotionally charged, and this is conveyed through amplified articulation that is above natural and more than real (Machin 2012:61).

### 4.8.1.6 Composition and page layout

The placement of elements in a text and how they interact with each other are relevant to the meaning potentials of texts in terms of coherence, order and hierarchies of importance (Machin 2012:129). This particular mode is therefore related to the connection of visual elements on a page. Referring back to the earlier discussion on visual language, the compositional mode relates to the spatial/structural relationship of elements on a page, and is characterised by either salience, information value or framing (Machin 2012:13). Salience relates to elements that are used to attract the viewer’s attention. The choice of elements is based on principles of culture, which include the size of elements in
composition, choices of colour, tone (in terms of lighting and brightness) and the focus of elements in the background or foreground.

In addition, information value relates to the relationship between elements and the relationship to the viewer/reader (Machin 2012:13). Framing has to do with the use of devices that connect, relate, group or separate elements in the text. These characteristics contain meaning potentials, not only of individual elements in a text, but also the text as a composed whole. There are four specific kinds of composition pertaining to the organisational patterns that convey meaning to the elements applied in them, and these can be used individually or in combination (Machin 2012:138). Page compositions can be on a left/right axis, a given/new opposition, a top and bottom composition and/or triptych and centre composition.

4.8.1.7 **Representation of social actors**

This represents the specific characteristics of the actors in images and includes the following: gaze (contact and engagement); angle of interaction (horizontal, oblique and vertical) and distance (social relations); kinds of participants; agency (who does what) and action (what gets done); and how specifically meaning is carried in the image as opposed to only participants as actors (Machin 2012:110–127).

The preceding discussion about the multimodal toolkit provided a basis on which the analysis framework for this study could be created. The discussion below focuses on a theoretical framework to measure visual CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements.

**4.9 PROPOSING A MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORK TO EVALUATE VISUAL CSR 2.0 CORPORATE ADVERTISEMENTS**

The discussion in this section outlines how the analysis of the sampled visual texts of CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements in this study was approached (see section 1.6). It thus details the specific corporate advertising messages that were considered, the appropriate CSR 2.0 communication styles, relevant corporate advertising media and the specific visual semiotics strategy fitting the context of this study.
4.9.1 Format of CSR 2.0 communication in corporate advertising

Corporate advertising takes the shape of reporting accomplishments (such as the CSR 2.0 reports indicated in section 2.3.5), positioning the organisation in the market, communicating change in identity and improving employee morale and corporate image (Arens 2006:358; Moriarty et al 2012:501; Farache & Perks 2010:236). These CSR 2.0 advertisements serve as identity cues, show how the organisation wants to be seen and serves as a means to legitimise its behaviour (Farache & Perks 2010:236). The media predominantly used to deliver corporate advertising include, *inter alia*, print (newspapers, magazines and journals), digital (corporate websites, blogs, videos and television) (Roper & Fill 2012:274), social media such as LinkedIn and Facebook and mobile phone marketing. It is evident that corporate advertising is applied using the standard media discussed in section 3.6, but the content and context differ from standard product and service advertising. Essentially, it is about the message that the organisation wishes to communicate to its audience to build its brand and strengthen relationships and its reputation with stakeholders.

Referring back to the dimensions identified by Dahlsrud (2008:4) in chapter 2 (as depicted in figure 2.5 and table 2.2 respectively), the images selected for this study were classified according to Dahlsrud’s (2008:4) defined dimensions (economic, volunteerism, environment, stakeholders and social). The images are indicated in table 5.2. This is relevant in that it indicates the focus of OMSA’s CSR 2.0 corporate advertising as well as the organisation’s CSR 2.0 spending. In addition to the focus on the specific dimensions, the types of CSR 2.0 messages analysed in this study relate to OMSA communicating its involvement in the specific areas of its support framework.

Although OMSA has social and empowerment initiatives under its “responsible business” philosophy, many of these are driven as investment vehicles that are essentially mechanisms applied to transform society and at the same time provide investors with returns on investments. In addition, some initiatives are managed and
governed independently of OMSA (e.g. the Old Mutual Education Trust). The sample for this study comprised pure CSR 2.0 visual texts in which the organisation invests specific/designated resources in empowering and transforming society and classifies these as its corporate social responsibility. Projects directly linked to investors, external stakeholders or return and profit generation were excluded. The data analysis linked the sampled texts to the key indicators mentioned above.

As shown in table 4.1 below, the main purpose of each portfolio of the OMF has five key focus areas, each with a specific set of goals, and these are linked to specific message types.

**Table 4.1: Old Mutual Foundation key focus areas with linked message focus**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OMF CATEGORY</th>
<th>MESSAGE FOCUS/TYPE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enterprise development</td>
<td>SMMEs in agriculture, commercial and manufacturing sectors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills capacity building</td>
<td>Support accredited skills training programmes for the unemployed which lead to permanent job placement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Focused on developing maths and science and provides learners with opportunities to access tertiary studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff volunteerism</td>
<td>Financial support to OM staff volunteers to aid organisations at which they volunteer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vulnerable communities</td>
<td>Helps protect and provide for vulnerable children, disabled and the empowerment of women</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The visuals accompanying the texts relate to the specific area of support and are linked specifically to each portfolio.

**Source:** About Old Mutual Foundation (2017).
4.9.2 Corporate advertising media used for CSR 2.0 communication

With reference to the various corporate advertising media discussed in section 3.6.1.7, the focus in this study was the OMF’s printed texts. This relates to corporate advertisements, which fall in the specific CSR 2.0 dimensions of economic, volunteerism, environment, stakeholders and social, and are found in OMF’s annual reports, outdoor banner advertisements and staff brochures. In addition, although OMF communicates its CSR 2.0 projects through its corporate website, these are replicated in hard copy. While the latest annual report, Journey 2012, has been printed in a coffee table book format, many if not most of the images in the annual report are used across media within OMF and adapted to suit the medium in which they are applied, and subscribe to a specific CSR 2.0 communication style.

Hence, the relevance of drawing the sample from printed texts was justified in that many of the texts are published in hard copy, and the visual semiotic theory that was applied relates more specifically to printed texts.

4.9.3 Relevant CSR 2.0 communication style for this study

In chapter 2 it was stated that retail and product advertising is focused on informing and persuading consumers to buy a specific product or use a certain service. It was also shown in section 4.6 that organisations’ CSR 2.0 communication should focus on the message content, channels and understanding the specific contexts of the stakeholders. This relates to showing commitment to a cause or causes, the impact of the organisation’s efforts on the cause/issue and what the CSR fit is (Du et al 2010:11). These considerations thus lead to carefully planned CSR 2.0 communication, which portrays the organisation’s socially responsible behaviour through material aimed at building organisational reputation and fostering trust, signal quality, legitimacy and credibility (Podnar 2008:77; McWilliams et al 2006:7). Consequently, the selection or association of specific semiotic resources in communication is pivotal to communicating the right message.
Corporate advertising organisations focus on deliberately endeavouring to create a sustainable corporate identity, brand and image, say, by communicating to their stakeholders the positive impact they have on society through their CSR 2.0 communication (Moriarty *et al* 2012:39; Roper & Fill 2012:274). As indicated in chapter 2, corporate advertising covers the reputational and image elements of the organisation. Advertisements relating to the organisation’s CSR 2.0 activities are important as they function as an identity cue and express how the organisation wishes to be seen and understood (Roper & Fill 2012:273). They also concern how organisations work to create goodwill among their stakeholders (see also the corporate identity discussion in section 3.6.1.7).

If organisations communicate CSR 2.0 activities that are in line with their core business activity, consumers may respond favourably to organisation’ efforts to transform society. Despite profit being the ultimate goal, consumers do not expect organisations to operate in society out of the goodness of their hearts, but they do expect “socially responsible” behaviour in terms of the environment, employees and society as a whole. Figure 4.4 indicates that CSR 2.0 message content relates to the organisation’s commitment, the impact in its social context and the fit in relation to its goals, purpose and underlying philosophy.

As shown in section 4.6, a factual style of writing is preferred in the context of Schmeltz’s (2011:41) research. Figure 4.4, however, indicates that visuals, storytelling/narrative and styles are the norm. However, in the context of this study, the view was that the two perspectives converge, because the aim of the organisation is to create an emotional connection with the viewers. This means that a factual communication style, together with visuals and storytelling/narrative structures, should be used. This infers that highly specific information should be provided in terms of the project description, the beneficiaries, the amounts of money spent and the outcomes for the beneficiaries. This is confirmed in figure 4.5, which indicates that the organisation’s specific CSR 2.0 focus areas and descriptions of its projects constitute the main focus of communications.
4.9.4 An appropriate visual semiotics strategy fitting the context of this study

As explained in chapter 1, this study fell within the multimodal sphere of visual semiotic research and applied the iconographic mode of Machin’s (2012) multimodal analysis toolkit. This served as a deconstruction tool in order to understand the underlying meanings in the images.

The researcher’s decision to focus on iconography was based on the fact that CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements always include visuals as a means of documenting, and iconography is concerned with analysing and understanding the elements that comprise visuals in terms of values, ideologies, contexts and the like. Further to the discussion in section 4.5 regarding CSR 2.0 influencing consumer behaviour, the CSR 2.0 communications influence consumers in terms of their perception of the organisation (see section 4.3). To this end, if the underlying messages are contrary to fostering a positive corporate identity, the organisation will fail in its attempts to build positive relations, a strong corporate brand and goodwill among its stakeholders. As indicated earlier, advertising as a specific language of visual imagery, functions as a system where the underlying meanings are dependent on the combination of its signs (Chauhan 2008:2). Advertisers thus deliberately work to produce the maximum impact (Chauhan 2008:2). To this end, visual semiotics analyses how the visuals communicate together with the underlying meanings contained in these texts.

Furthermore, Belch and Belch (2009:148) underscore the importance of semiotics in marketing communication because products/services gain meaning in the underlying messages associated with the advertised product. Herein lies the true value of visual semiotic analyses, which reveal the underlying meanings in these texts. These meanings extend as associations to what is being denoted in the images. Images are used in CSR 2.0 corporate advertising as part of the organisation’s corporate identity management strategies and by analysing these visual texts, specific representations become evident. Essentially, it is about more than the overt representations of these visual texts – it is about exposing the deeper
meanings underlying the texts through the understanding of what the objects, people, contexts and ideas represent. These underlying meanings convey what is actually being said/depicted in the image, such as specific myths and ideologies.

As indicated earlier, culture is central to semiotics in that certain things are depicted and understood in a certain way. As such, visual semiotics helps to deconstruct the cultural meanings associated with various texts. These include cultural representations of ideas and objects and comprise icons, words, letters and numbers. In a multicultural society, such as that of South Africa, various meanings and associations are generated from specific semiotic resources used in CSR 2.0 advertising (visual texts are open to a range of interpretations). Analysis of the visual texts involves examining the elements chosen to represent, through established associations, specific ideas, values, discourses, people, settings and objects. Of huge significance to visual text analysis are the associated discourses such as the values, ideas, ideologies and people that underlie meaning and representation.

The levels at which the visual texts are analysed include the denotative, connotative (mythical) and ideological levels. The denotative analysis renders the reality reported in the text in terms of the specifics of the event, people, setting or objects in the text. At this level, attention is paid to the choice of images, settings, people, objects or contexts depicted in the visual texts. The next level of analysis is connotative in the sense that people, places, contexts, objects, events and so on are depicted to convey general or abstract ideas, and values (ideologies).

The analysis identifies how meaning from elements in one domain is applied to others in order to convey meaning. Culture plays a key role at this level of meaning, and the analysis evaluates how specific discourses or worldviews, kinds of people, problems and solutions are connoted. The analysis also aims to identify recognisable connotators, which are recognisable in a specific cultural context and the connotations they carry. Furthermore, the connotative analysis focuses on the connotative devices used in images – poses, objects, settings and photographic
style (photogenia). The analysis looks at the specific poses in the images and what they convey (e.g. values, people and lifestyles).

In terms of objects contained in images, the analysis identifies specific objects, either in isolation or in combination with others, and their specific meanings. The specific settings that are represented in the visual texts are analysed to identify the ideals, values, symbolism, contexts and associated qualities. This is specifically relevant when linking these associations back to the organisation’s identity. The participants in the visual texts are included in the analysis to identify the representative meaning in terms of values and ideas. In addition, the artistic style of the visual texts (photogenia) is also analysed in terms of framing, lighting, focus and distance. Each of these elements connotes specific meaning to the visual text. Iconographic symbolism also forms part of the analysis to identify what gestures, objects and poses or specific elements representing values, ideas or people are used. See also table 5.2 in chapter 5, which indicates the iconographic data collection matrix.

4.10 SUMMARY

This chapter focused on why organisations communicate about their CSR 2.0 activities. A definition of CSR 2.0 communication was then formulated. The discussion also revolved around consumer expectations and their responses and attitudes to CSR 2.0, as well as how organisations influence consumer behaviour through their CSR 2.0 activities and communication. Semiotic modes and visual language were outlined to suggest a theoretical lens through which to consider the analysis in this study. This included a discussion of Machin’s (2012) multimodal analysis toolkit, which provides a comprehensive toolkit for analysis of the semiotic resources as well as the underlying meanings contained in CSR 2.0 advertising texts. The chapter concluded with a proposed theoretical framework within which to measure visual CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements. This framework provided the basis for the analysis of the sampled visual texts.

Chapter 5 explains the methodological approach adopted in this study.
CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND OPERATIONALISATION

Truth has nothing to do with the conclusion, and everything to do with the methodology (Stefan Molyneux 2017).

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapters provided the theoretical basis for this study, while this chapter presents the research methodology and operationalisation of the study. Essentially, this chapter includes a discussion of the research paradigm and approach, sampling, data collection and analysis methods. In order to achieve the goals and answer the research questions formulated for this study, the methodological approach adopted for this study was qualitative. It was deemed appropriate to achieve the main aim of understanding the hidden meanings, ideologies and myths underlying OMSA’s CSR 2.0 corporate advertising.

As indicated in chapter 1, this study was addressed from an interpretivist perspective, which relates to a subjective epistemology and an ontological belief that reality is socially constructed. The main data collection technique was a multimodal visual semiotic analysis. However, only the mode of iconography was analysed in this study, as this provided the focus for the study. The next section deals with the research paradigm underpinning the research methodology, viewed through the lens of semiotics.

5.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

From an interpretivist perspective, a more subjective approach (Terre Blanche et al. 2011:6) was adopted in order to explore the hidden meanings, ideologies and myths underlying OMSA’s CSR 2.0 corporate advertising. As a basis for qualitative research, an interpretivist approach illuminates the underlying meanings in these visual texts. Essentially, interpretivism relates to exploring meaning in a specific context in order to "interpret and construct the qualitative aspects of communication experiences" (Terre Blanche et al. 2011:274; Du Plooy 2009a:30). Generally, one of
the key features/benefits of the interpretivist perspective is that it takes a subjective/insider look, thereby revealing underlying meanings and patterns (Rosile, Boje, Carlon, Downs & Saylors 2013:561).

As indicated in chapter 1, semiotics, falls within the interpretivist paradigm, with the focus of analysing meaning in texts (Du Plooy 2009a:220; Stathakopoulos et al 2008:632–633). A semiotic analysis reveals meanings at various levels (connotative – implicit, denotative – explicit), and to this end, Stathakopoulos et al (2008:633) indicate that because consumer behaviour is driven by consumers’ perceptions of various marketing stimuli, semiotics promotes an understanding of the semiotic resources applied in advertising texts. By applying the multimodal visual semiotic analysis technique to this study the semiotic perspective served as a lens through which the research would expose the layers of meaning.

According to Thanh and Thanh (2015:25), this qualitative research method is consistent with the interpretivist paradigm. The reason for this is that social contexts are in continual flux, and qualitative methods enable deep and rich understanding of a topic. To this end, Echtner (1999:50) posits that semiotics provides deeper insight past the obvious to expose the indirect, unintentional meaning potentials. The semiotic theory discussions earlier provided the theoretical grounding for this process, while the multimodal framework provided the parameters in which to base the analysis of the visual texts.

Nevertheless, this in itself proved useful in analysing the CSR 2.0 texts to gain a clearer understanding of the underlying meanings, myths and ideologies in these texts. Joniak (2003:6) posits that the qualitative paradigm holds the ontological belief of reality being socially constructed and is unique from a contextual interpretation perspective. In the context of this study, the ontological belief that reality is socially constructed had a bearing on the study, making it possible to capture and gain insight into the context of the design of OMSA’s CSR 2.0 corporate advertising artefacts. In addition, meaning is specific to particular social conventions and contexts, and is learnt because it is linked to culture (Echtner 1999:50). By examining
the hidden meanings, myths and ideologies in the CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements, through a multimodal visual semiotic analysis, the researcher identified which messages underlie these visual texts. Hence, epistemologically, the aim was to examine and understand the meaning potentials of the visual texts by peeling back the layers of meaning to gain insight into the indirect and unintentional meanings as well as the obvious (Echtner 1999:50).

Misalignment between the senders’ encoding and receivers’ decoding process inevitably results in misinterpretation of the intended message. The implication is that in a multicultural society such as that of South Africa, the sender and receiver’s frames of references are culturally constructed, where misaligned references in marketing communication may lead to translation problems. The subjective interpretation of messages in CSR 2.0 corporate advertising is thus based on these diverse cultural constructions.

In CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements disclosing the organisation’s social involvement activities, Perks et al (2013:1881) indicate that they are “an approved, formalized and official representation of CSR about how the organization wants to be perceived”. These perceptions are based on the audience’s frames of reference, which in a South African context, are culturally diverse. In figure 3.4, reference was also made to factors that influence the audience’s perception process. Cultural diversity in South Africa may influence the receiver’s associations, memories and understanding of the message content and how they relate to and integrate this in their interests and contexts. Linking back to section 3.6.3, in terms of persuasion, consumers form opinions of the messages on the basis of their attitudes, emotions and convictions (Wells et al 2003:157) as a direct outcome of the cognitive stage. Should this stage be misinterpreted in relation to the sender’s intention, the specific response behaviours will be contrary to the sender’s original intention.

Therefore, in following a qualitative approach in a study, the findings are descriptive, allowing for a variety of data to be collected and thematically arranged based on the multimodal framework presented earlier. As such, the complexity and context
dependence (Joniak 2003:4) of the textual descriptions are best handled through a qualitative approach. Although findings are not generalisable to the target population, the data collected is real, rich and based on the researcher’s insight where meaning is the central concept (Joniak 2003:4). An inductive process is followed where specific data is collected to answer the study’s research questions, followed by observations being made and the presentation of findings to answer research questions either affirmatively or negatively. To this end, Leedy and Ormrod (2013:19) state that occurrences or instances in a specific sample lead to conclusions about an entire population of a group, object or event.

In looking at the nature of the artefacts and how readers could interpret meaning from these texts through an interpretivist lens, the subjectivity of this study becomes clear, given its exploratory nature. This background then provides the foundation to discuss the research methodology and design of this study.

5.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design of this study is discussed with regard to the research problem, the sample method and sample size, as well as the data collection and analysis processes. Dependability and credibility in terms of reliability, reflexivity and verification are also addressed. This section essentially addresses the process of the research project and the tools and techniques applied (Babbie & Mouton 2011:75).

The context of this study was OMSA, one of the top three organisations in the financial services industry. At the time of conducting this study, the researcher was a full-time employee of the organisation, and this provided a convenient setting for her in the sense that the CSR 2.0 texts of the organisation could be easily accessed. A specific theoretical framework was provided in chapter 4, which guided the study, the collection of data and the analysis of findings. As such, the theory provided the grounding for the review and discussion of these findings.
5.3.1 Formulating the research problem

With reference to the earlier discussion in chapter 1, a research problem forms the central core – “the heart of the research project” (Walliman 2011:29). According to Babbie and Mouton (2011:71) and Walliman (2011:282), a research problem is expressed as either a research hypothesis, proposition, research question or statement of intent. Research problems are derived from gaps in the literature containing published, theoretical and empirical work, personal experiences and interests or issues of importance to communities and/or organisations (Terre Blanche et al 2011:19). A clearly defined research problem is accompanied by a specific goal, which indicates the broader research outcome and the objectives that help to achieve the goal (Du Plooy 2009a:50).

To recap, the aim of this study was to examine the hidden meanings, ideologies and myths underlying the OMSA’s CSR 2.0 marketing communication. Essentially, these underlying meanings, ideologies and myths are what the viewer perceives when exposed to the marketing communication, and interpretations could be contrary to what OMSA intended with the visual texts – given that meanings are polysemic (refer section 1.2). Iconographic analysis of the visual texts made it possible to determine what these underlying meanings, ideologies and myths are.

To recap the problem statement formulated in chapter 1, the purpose of this qualitative cross-sectional visual semiotic study was to analyse images of OMSA’s corporate advertisements for its CSR 2.0 communication in order to understand hidden meanings, ideologies and myths.

5.3.2 Research questions

The research questions as indicated in chapter 1, are repeated here for the sake of convenience:

Research question 1: What does the literature reveal about the role of visuals in corporate advertisements for CSR 2.0 communication?
Research question 2: What are the underlying meanings in the visuals of OMSA’s CSR 2.0 corporate advertising consistent with Machin’s (2012) iconographic element?

5.3.3 Research objectives

Du Plooy (2009a:50) identifies four types of objectives, namely exploratory, explanatory, descriptive and predictive. Explanatory objectives specify the direction of cause-and-effect relationships between independent and dependent variables (Du Plooy 2009a:52). Du Plooy (2009a:52) holds that explanatory research can be done as predictive research as well. Descriptive objectives describe the characteristics of occurrences or relationships between variables and can be found in qualitative and quantitative research (Du Plooy 2009a:51). Exploratory objectives explore an unfamiliar area of research, and in the context of this research, the visual semiotic analysis of CSR 2.0 marketing communication.

As stated in chapter 1, extensive research has been conducted in advertising and CSR 1.0 as a concept in general, but the specific area of CSR 2.0 marketing communication is still underresearched (Pollach et al. 2012:204; Ngobeni 2011:iii; Weigel 2011:1; Basu & Palazzo 2008:22; Birth et al. 2008:182; Mark-Herbert & Von Schantz 2007:4; Maignan & Ferrell 2004:17; Murray & Hazlett [sa]:1). Furthermore, research conducted in South Africa covers approaches that include general CSR 1.0 frameworks and their development and impact in different South African economic and social spheres. As such, research into the semiotics of CSR 2.0 marketing communication has not been conducted, and this therefore afforded the researcher an opportunity to explore this unknown territory. The aim of this research study was to explore this area in an attempt to clarify the current practices in terms of the applications of various semiotic resources, particularly in a multicultural society such as that in South Africa, and in so doing to stimulate further research.

The objectives of this study were as follows:
Objective 1: To explore, through the literature review, how CSR 2.0 is communicated visually by organisations and the application of visual texts in CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements.

Objective 2: To explore the underlying meanings in the visuals of OMSA’s CSR 2.0 corporate advertising in terms of Machin’s (2012) iconography element.

The methodological orientation of the study is depicted in table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Summary of the methodological orientation of this study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Technical decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Philosophical assumptions</td>
<td>Interpretive paradigm: subjective epistemology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Socially constructed ontology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasoning</td>
<td>Inductive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research design</td>
<td>Qualitative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical framework</td>
<td>Semiotics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measuring instrument</td>
<td>Multimodal visual semiotic analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation/research context</td>
<td>OMSA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data collection and analysis technique</td>
<td>Semiotic data collection and interpretation process (adapted from Leedy &amp; Ormrod 2012:159; Petty et al 2012:381); Echtner 1999:50–52)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Units of analysis</td>
<td>CSR 2.0 corporate advertising texts that contain images, namely social artefacts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.3.4 Sample method and size

The selected sample was based on the measurement framework outlined in chapter 4 through the non-probability purposive sampling technique. As stated in section 1.6.4, a purposive sample refers to units selected for a specific purpose, based on the researcher's knowledge of the population and relevance to the study. The selection of the visual texts was purposive in that the researcher had knowledge of the content of the texts in the population, and was able to judge the applicability of artefacts, based on the criterion that visual texts must relate to and contain CSR 2.0 images. According to Terre Blanche et al. (2011:139), purposive sampling is not only reliant on availability, but that the selected units or cases typical of the population are also selected. In addition, sampling for proportionality was not a primary concern except that the sample should meet the specific needs and criteria (visual texts that relate to and contain CSR 2.0 images).

These texts were selected based on the advertising medium relating to corporate advertising (see chapter 4). Furthermore, the selection of purposive sampling was based on the researcher’s direct access as an employee of the organisation, and the primary data contained visual images in the form of CSR 2.0 marketing communication visual texts. Owing to the fact that this study focused on a specific organisation only and that such a study had never been conducted before, the use of a non-probability sampling method meant that findings might not be generalisable to the target population, but would give an indication of specific trends in the organisation, thereby stimulating further research and broader generalisability.

Based on the definition of CSR 2.0 corporate advertising, the sample was sourced from various OMF documents such as archived brochures (OMF 2008; 2011), banner advertisements displayed at the Mutual Park campus in Pinelands, Cape Town, South Africa, as well as the 2012 OMF annual report (Journey). The sample size was determined to be eight visual texts. The justification for this sample size was that because of the qualitative nature of the study, the sample contained specific visual texts relating to CSR 2.0. A smaller sample can be drawn when working within
the qualitative perspective (Terre Blanche et al 2011:49). In addition, the sample was sufficient to allow for in-depth analysis in accordance with the purpose of this study. Table 5.2 below indicates the sample, together with the specific characteristics of each image. A thumbnail represents the images in this chapter, but the full sized images are displayed and interpreted in chapter 6 (also see addenda A through H).

Table 5.2: Sample characteristics and description

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Mamma’s folded hands | Image description: Black female hands folded across the lower abdomen. Culturally dressed with beads, wristwatch, “do great things” (OM) wristband and gold ring on right ring finger, white or off/white cape/shawl and beaded bracelet. Woman is anonymous and decontextualised.

Also used on OMF website on rotating banner on About Us.
Posters displayed on OM head office campus.

Years of application: 2012 and 2016

CSR 2.0 dimension: social
Refer addendum B |
| 2. Skills capacity development | Image description: Black female smartly dressed in a red blouse adorned with matching red beaded necklace and a black cap, smiling into the camera. The caption in the top right-hand corner of the image gives the image context in terms of the specific project. The woman is clearly identifiable as her face is shown and is set in a specific context. |
| 3. Habitat for Humanity | **Image description:** A construction site of a small house in the Habitat for Humanity low-cost housing programme is depicted in the image with building materials in the foreground and various people milling about. In the foreground is the Old Mutual branding banner, which identifies the site as its contribution to the project (house number 5).

**Application context:** 2008 OMF brochure.
Many, if not most, of the CSR 2.0 advertisement images are used across media in OMF and adapted to suit the medium in which they are applied, and subscribe to a specific CSR 2.0 communication style. This justifies the use of an image used in 2008.

**Year of application:** 2008 |

<p>| <strong>Application context:</strong> Banner advertisement in OM head office hallway during November 2014 |
| <strong>Year of application:</strong> 2014 |
| <strong>CSR 2.0 dimension:</strong> Economic |
| Refer addendum C |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CSR 2.0 dimension: Voluntariness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Refer addendum D</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. **Education**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Image description:</th>
<th>A banner advertisement displaying male and female learners in a classroom setting engrossed in the work they are doing. These learners are neatly attired in their school uniforms. The desks convey the classroom context.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Application context:</td>
<td>OMF banner advertisement in OM head office atrium during November 2014 and 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year of application:</td>
<td>2016, 2014 and 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSR 2.0 dimension:</td>
<td>Social</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refer addendum E</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. **Growing trees advertisement**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Image description:</th>
<th>A young woman dressed in blue jeans and a pink top with a braided hairstyle. She is holding a silver, metal watering can and watering plants. The caption accompanying the image provides the details of the setting and project, which contextualises the image. In the top right-hand corner, above the main caption, is the word “Entrepreneurs”.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Application context:</td>
<td>OMF advertisement; full-page display on page 63 of Journey annual report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years of application:</td>
<td>2011 and 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSR 2.0 dimension:</td>
<td>Economic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refer addendum F</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 6. Rural huts

**Image description:** This image appears to be a rural context denoted by the background. The house in the foreground is old and appears to be low cost because of the corrugated roof and rough finishing. Forming part of the image is an insert of a farming patch (small scale) with a black adult male in a salmon-coloured overcoat. Below this is an image of seedlings wrapped in black plastic containers. These three images function as one.

**Application context:** OMF brochure, September 2008
OMF banner advertisement 2008

**Year of application:** 2008

**CSR 2.0 dimension:** Economic

Refer addendum G

### 7. Vulnerable communities (aged)

**Image description:** Two women – one old and one young – in what appears to be a living room. This context is denoted by the lounge chairs in the foreground. A painting of Da Vinci's "The Last Supper" is hanging on the wall. The older woman is using a walking stick and wearing spectacles, a green skirt/dress, black jersey and white cap. The younger woman, who seems to be assisting the older, is dressed in a black skirt and jersey with a yellow blouse. The caption further contextualises the image.

**Application context:** Banner advertisement in OM head office atrium during November 2014.
Full A4 landscape page image – Journey annual report (2012), page 43

**Years of application:** 2012 and 2014
### 5.3.4.1 Population

Population relates to the total number of cases – all possible units of analysis – (people, organisations, groups, events or objects) that are subjects of a particular study (Walliman 2011:185; Du Plooy 2009a:108). Babbie and Mouton (2011:173) simply refer to population as “the theoretically specified aggregation of study elements”. A distinction can be made between the target and accessible populations, with the former representing the entire population or group to which the research
findings are to be generalised, and the latter relating to the units of analysis to which a researcher has easy access (Du Plooy 2009a:109).

Referring back to chapter 1, the population in the context of this study related to all the corporate advertisements of OMSA, while the accessible population related to what the researcher had access to. The parameters of the population pertained to CSR 2.0 corporate advertising in the form of visuals in OMSA’s CSR 2.0 reporting, banner advertisements and other staff communications. The application contexts are indicated in table 5.2.

5.3.4.2 Unit(s) of analysis

As stated in chapter 1, the units of analysis represent the object of study – the smallest elements to be investigated (Terre Blanche et al. 2011:41; Du Plooy 2009a:56). In the context of this study, this related to the iconographic elements in the sampled visual texts, comprising CSR 2.0 corporate advertising texts which contained images.

5.3.5 Data collection and analysis

Depending on the nature of the research, the data analysis methods in qualitative research designs vary widely (Leedy & Ormrod 2013:158). By sorting through large amounts of data, the researcher distils the information to reach a point where underlying themes are identified. Furthermore, in qualitative research, the processes of data collection, analysis and interpretation are closely intertwined (Leedy & Ormrod 2013:158). In the context of this study, it was deemed appropriate to use a thematic data analysis method in order to answer the research questions and solve the research problem. This method allowed the researcher to aggregate the data of the sample to extract the underlying meanings, ideologies and myths in OMSA’s CSR 2.0 corporate advertising.

Thematic data analysis involves steps 2 to 5 in the process depicted in figure 5.1 below. Each step in the complete process is discussed in detail in section 5.3.6.1. After classifying the data and each iconography element detailed, the data was
grouped for coding and cross-referencing. After a process of aggregation, key themes and categories were extracted. This allowed meaning potentials to emerge. Next, the relationships between the elements were compared across the sample. Through further distillation across the sample, the key themes were extracted at each level (denotative and connotative) in order to expose the underlying ideologies supporting the myths. By aggregating the emerging themes, meaningful information became available to identify these elements in the sample. The coding of grouped data gave rise to themes and their relationships per layer (denotation, connotation/myth and ideology), as well as the relationships between these themes. The culmination of this process was the extraction of meanings in the different layers of denotation, connotation, ideology and myth.

5.3.5.1 Steps followed during data collection and analysis

The data collection and analysis processes for this study were based on a combination of steps combined from the works of Leedy and Ormrod (2012:159), Petty et al (2012:381) and Echtner (1999:50–52). This process provided a comprehensive approach to this study in that the salient aspects of each work were combined to define the steps in the process. Figure 5.1 below illustrates the data collection and interpretation process.
The steps depicted in figure 5.1 are discussed in more detail below.

**Step 1 – sampling.** This step was described in section 5.3.5.

**Step 2 – data inventory.** This step involved specifying and segmenting the relevant units of analysis. This meant isolating the selected units to be analysed in the CSR 2.0 texts at each of the levels provided in the analysis framework defined in chapter 4 (hereafter referred to as the data collection matrix). The semiotic resource dimensions of the iconography mode of Machin’s (2012) multimodal toolkit formed the matrix against which data was collected. Each of the sample items was listed to create the inventory in which the details of the visual texts were organised into the respective iconographic elements of the data collection matrix. An inventory for the data analysis was created in an Excel spreadsheet with the iconographic elements representing specific columns to form a matrix for the data collection (see table 5.2
below). Each element per image was analysed to identify key themes, which were coded to facilitate categorisation. In addition, each row comprising an image’s elements was highlighted in different font colours to allow traceability later when merging the data for each iconographic element.

**Step 3 – classifying data.** In this step, the iconographic elements in the sampled texts were analysed both in isolation and holistically. For the purposes of grouping, each element was copied to a separate MSWord document. This enabled the researcher to group codes and further code the relationships between the elements, and do a comparison across the sample by using the cross-referencing and comment functions in MSWord. This allowed for codes to be added to different elements in order to highlight themes. The third step comprised each element in the inventory being explored and detailed. For each sample item, the respective iconographic element was explored and detailed under each column header. The denotative analysis rendered the reality reported in the text in terms of the specifics of the event, people, setting or objects in the text. At this level, attention was paid to the choice of images, settings, people, objects or contexts depicted in the visual texts.

The connotative level of analysis focused, *inter alia*, on the people, places, contexts, objects and events depicted to convey either general or abstract ideas and values. Essentially, this analysis identified how meaning from elements in one domain is applied to others to convey meaning (myths). At this level of meaning, culture plays a key role and the analysis evaluated how specific discourses or worldviews, kinds of people, problems and solutions are connoted. In addition, connotative devices were identified and how they are applied to convey meaning. These included poses, objects, settings and photographic style (photogenia). Iconographic symbolism also formed part of the analysis to identify which gestures, objects and poses or specific elements representing values, ideas or people were used in the visual texts.

**Step 4 – examine relationships.** This step comprised the examination of the relationships between the elements, as well as a comparison across the sample. In this study, the detail of each element in the matrix was assigned a code to enable
the researcher to group the themes and identify variations and the relationships across the sample and in the individual texts. According to Echtner (1999:51), the objective of semiotic analysis is to understand the relationship between the elements and the structure as a whole, and not merely the collation of the inventory, as specified above. Meaning potentials become evident by combining the various elements (Echtner 1999:51). On the first pass in reviewing the codes per element, these were grouped together to aggregate themes per element (poses, objects, etc.), myths and ideologies. The final pass saw all the elements aggregated, and through further distillation across the sample, the key themes extracted at each level as well as the underlying ideologies supporting the myths.

**Step 5 – Synthesise data.** This relates to the creation of a taxonomy of elements of analysis and an understanding of how these are combined to create meaning (Echtner 1999:51). This is achieved through synthesising the data and grouping it thematically and according to relationships. Essentially, this step relates to comparing the combinations of elements in each sample item and across the entire sample, the purpose of which is to identify the underlying structures and meanings (Echtner 1999:51). In the context of this study, the aim was to identify the underlying meanings, ideologies and myths governing the sample. Therefore, by aggregating the emerging themes, meaningful information became available to identify these elements in the sample.

Echtner (1999:51) points out that at this point, it might be necessary to re-examine earlier steps in order to regroup them or to add new elements or ideas that have materialised and been passed over in earlier steps. Hull and Nelson (2005:237) suggest the usefulness of re-representing the texts that would reveal alternative and new patterns (among the existing patterns). This semiotic patterning may indeed be the “defining feature of powerful multimodal design” (Hull and Nelson 2005:237). In the context of this study, recurring patterns of objects, settings, participants, ideologies, myths and values emerged, which then led the analysis process into the sixth step, where common themes were identified and their significance questioned.
(Hull & Nelson 2005:237). As indicated in chapter 4, an important aspect of this analysis was the associated ideologies and myths underlying meaning in the visual texts such as the values, people and the like represented in these texts.

The outcomes of this process were the themes and their relationships per layer (denotation, connotation/myth and ideology) as well as the relationships between these themes. By comparing the combinations of elements in each sample item and across the entire sample, the underlying structures and meanings emerged. This taxonomy illustrated the relationships between the different layers of meaning as well as the key themes identified in the analysis.

**Step 6 – extract underlying meanings.** This step involves the extraction of meanings in the different layers of denotation, connotation, ideology and myth. This process is interpretive and is, by definition, not definitive, absolute or subjected to frequency distributions or other statistical inferences (Echtner 1999:51). The ideological and cultural framework in which the researcher functioned in the context of this study was based on a deep understanding of the historical and current cultural and sociopolitical values of South African society. The implication of this framework thus largely influenced the interpretation of the data (Echtner 1999:51) and the conclusions drawn. Table 5.3 below indicates the data collection matrix used in the analysis process.

**Table 5.3: Iconographic data collection matrix (inventory)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample item</th>
<th>Denotative analysis</th>
<th>Connotative analysis (myths)</th>
<th>Applied ideology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Poses</td>
<td>Objects</td>
<td>Settings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mamma’s hands</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills capacity development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habitat for Humanity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growing Trees</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural huts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vulnerable communities (aged)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ceramist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Following the research design discussion, the dependability and credibility of the study is addressed in the next section.

5.4 DEPENDABILITY AND CREDIBILITY OF THE STUDY

As posited in chapter 1, specific factors were considered and processes followed to ensure the dependability and credibility of the study.

5.4.1 Reliability

In the interpretative paradigm, reliability refers to the dependability of the results, that is, “the degree to which the reader can be convinced that findings did indeed occur as the researcher said they did” (Terre Blanche et al 2011:93). This is realised by providing rich and comprehensive descriptions of findings as well as explicit details regarding the data collection and analysis methods (Terre Blanche et al 2011:93). However, in qualitative research, where the researcher is the primary instrument, this speaks to his or her abilities and efforts in the research process (Golafshani 2003:600). This is expressed in the confidence of the rigour in application of the processes by researchers (Graneheim & Lundman 2004:109) and their adherence to their theoretical points of departure and research goals. Owing to the subjective orientation of qualitative research, absolute internal validity is improbable (Tichapondwa 2013:34). However, by ensuring that the appropriate theoretical framework and methodological accuracy were adhered to, the dependability of the research was ensured in this study.

5.4.2 Reflexivity

By following a process of reflexivity, the researcher acknowledges the influence of his or her subjectivity on the research (Petty et al/2012:381). Reflexivity involves the researcher explicitly acknowledging personal biases and considering the effect of these on the study (Leedy & Ormrod 2013:312). To this end, in this study, the researcher indicated her ideological and cultural frame of reference and acknowledged awareness that this would serve as the filter through which the data
would be analysed. At the same time, the fact that she is a full-time employee of OMSA, could have raised questions of bias. However, by rigidly following the research process and being explicit about the subjective influences, the findings could be deemed dependable. By continuously reflecting on preconceptions during the data analysis and interpretation process, the researcher consciously and deliberately challenged biases.

5.4.3 Verification

Verification in qualitative research is the continuous process of checking, confirming and correcting errors at each step to ensure the reliability and validity of the study (Morse et al 2002:17). In the context of this study, the researcher’s processes were iterative in that she conducted continuous checks to ensure congruence between the research problem, the measurement framework, data collection and analysis. This involved ensuring that the sample related to the specific criteria defined in the framework outlined in chapter 4. To this end, the nature of visual texts had to be corporate advertisements relating to CSR 2.0. Whatever the researcher did was always cross-referenced with the literature review and the defined theoretical and analysis framework. Data analysis followed a specific, systematic process to ensure a fit with the conceptual framework for iconography, thus ensuring that the data collected and analysed was valid and relevant to the study parameters. This means that the research has internal validity because the researcher ensures that the measurements and findings are in fact true descriptions and evidence is consistently substantiated. In the current study the comprehensive literature review and measurement framework underpinning it further enhanced the validity of the research.

The choice of a visual semiotic analysis to answer the specific research questions was deemed appropriate in that a specific multimodal model (Machin 2012) was applied to gather and interpret data, thus ensuring methodological coherence. Essentially, there should be a perfect fit between the measure and the conceptual and operational definitions of the constructs to render it useful. In the context of this
study, the measuring instrument proposed in chapter 4 provided a specific framework for how this study was conducted. The detail surrounding the elements of analysis were defined, and this gave the researcher specific direction on how to conduct the analysis. Although the proposed measurement framework only focused on iconography, content validity was ensured through the conceptualisation and operationalisation of the specific ambit of each element, based on Machin’s (2012) toolkit. The sample was deemed appropriate and representative because it formed part of OMSA’s CSR 2.0 marketing communication. The credibility of research was confirmed by ensuring that the correct target population was sampled and appropriate analysis techniques applied.

Therefore, according to Terre Blanche et al (2011:90), the credibility of the research relates to convincing and believable findings. Through the thorough application of specific processes and clarity on the use of these processes (such as sampling, data collection, analysis and the like), the quality of the research is enhanced by generating understanding (Golafshani 2003:601) as opposed to simply explaining what has occurred in the analysis.

5.5 SUMMARY

This chapter explained exactly how this study was conducted in terms of the specific research paradigm underpinning it and the research design. The specific details relating to the data collection and analysis processes were described as well as how the dependability and credibility of the research were ensured. Section 5.4 ties in with the ethical considerations discussion in section 1.8.

Chapter 6 focuses on the data analysis and interpretation of the sampled texts.
If you do not know how to ask the right question, you discover nothing
(W. Edward Deming 2017).

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter addresses the findings and interpretation of the data analysis, based on the measurement framework developed in chapter 4. This framework together with the CSR 2.0 definitional boundary represent the social context of the analysis and interpretation of the visual texts. The focus is on iconographic elements in OMSA’s CSR 2.0 visual images and the underlying meanings of the visual texts derived from the connotative/mythical and ideological applications. The emergent themes are discussed and indicate the relationships between the different layers of meaning as well as the interplay between each element in each layer.

6.2 FINDINGS

The findings for each image are discussed individually below at the denotative and connotative levels, together with the myths and ideologies underlying each image. Thereafter the emergent themes are discussed in section 6.3 followed by an overall interpretation of the research findings.

6.2.1 Mamma’s hands

Figure 6.1 below is a full colour, A4 size, landscape-oriented image of a female wearing traditional African dress as depicted in table 5.2.
At a denotative level, the image, which fits tightly into the page frame, depicts a black female’s hands folded across the lower abdomen. She is wearing a beaded necklace and bracelet, a wristwatch, an OM “do great things” wristband, a gold ring on her right ring finger and a white or off/white shawl. The woman is anonymous but categorised biologically as female and culturally as black. From the dress and hands/skin, one can infer that an older female is the subject in the image. The implications are that she is a mother or grandmother and could therefore symbolise, *inter alia*, wisdom, authority, hard work and maternity. These values can be seen to symbolise women universally.

The image can be seen to serve as representation of the entire group of marginalised communities in South Africa and the women, in general, who work hard to help their
families and societies progress. To this end, Rogan (2014) posits that a large portion of households in poor communities are headed by women who are still significantly worse off than men are, and suffer the most. This is still the case, despite improved education, healthcare, basic services and economic inclusion. It also allows the interpretation that by empowering women in society, the society as a whole is empowered: drawing from the adage: you teach a woman you teach the entire village.

In addition, in the context of South Africa and the struggle against apartheid and its governing laws, the strength of women is recognised. In this regard, this image draws from the contextual references of the strength of women and their persistence in building society. Al-Siyami (2013:42) points out that intertextuality manifests when the viewer calls to memory or attention the primary sources that signify either contextual or textual features – tapping into social, cultural or even political history and identities. For example in the socio-political context of South Africa, the historical event of women who marched to Union Buildings in 1956 is referenced. Through this intertextualisation, credence is added to OMSA’s CSR 2.0 projects. Thus, by drawing on these contextual and knowledge cues, women are highlighted in their role to social change as the viewer accepts what is familiar or known to them (Rea 2017:4).

Consequently, by removing the context, it allows the viewer to think abstractly about the image and what it represents and/or symbolises. The decontextualisation therefore connotes the general success of empowerment initiatives. Machin (2012:26) confirms that abstract visual texts mostly serve a connotative purpose, but where creators aim to communicate a specific message, they employ recognisable connotators, which they believe the audience will recognise or identify with to “carry” connotations – the wristwatch and wristbands are examples of these connotators linked to this progress/upliftment. The mere association with OM, through the wristband, speaks to this progress as well. Therefore, decontextualisation functions to connote more symbolically rather than documentarily (Machin 2012:51), and conveys specific ideas and concepts because the anonymity of the subject in the
image creates the impression that this woman could actually be any (black) woman anywhere in South Africa.

In addition to the decontextualisation of the image, the reduction of the image through cropping to show the hands and lower half of the woman’s body serves to focus more on the objects in the image and specifically what these and the woman represent. According to Machin (2012:49–50), the articulation of detail is used to represent a specific idea or concept instead of documenting specifics, thereby generating a variety of meaning potentials. Nevertheless, the realism depicted in the image symbolises the reality of the change and transformation in which OMSA is involved. By providing fully articulated detail, especially the woman’s hands, the reality of the woman and the beneficiaries is highlighted. This connotes honesty and sincerity on behalf of OMSA in its social engagements. Although there is a sense of distance between the viewer and the participant, there is however, a closer link to OMSA as the benefactor. Through the closeness of the shot of the woman’s hands, the viewer can connect with the image in terms of the beneficiaries it symbolises.

In general, the hands folded across the abdomen gesture, is associated with submissiveness, reverence or contentment. In combination with the OM wristband, this could possibly indicate gratitude for the community assistance/partnership. Another possible interpretation of hands folded over the abdomen gesture also connote the woman’s role in society, such as a leader or someone of higher status, which is connoted by the apparel and hand gesture. Pease and Pease (2016) state that the height at which a person holds/clasps his or her hands reveals the approachability of the person: the lower the hands the easier he or she is to deal with.

This wristband on the woman’s arm symbolises a particular social movement or awareness of a specific cause, where people indicate their support for the cause(s) by wearing the appropriate colour or style of wristband – for instance, the Relate bracelets worn to show support for a host of causes, ranging from *inter alia*, endangered animal protection to healthcare (Relate 2016). These wristbands
symbolise commitment to and support of the cause(s), which in this instance, is change and transformation in South Africa. This serves to draw the viewer closer into the causes that OMSA is supporting and provides perspective on the contexts in which it operates.

By wearing the OM wristband, the woman in the image is endorsing OMSA as an enabler of opportunity in her community, and as such indicating her support for the organisation. At the same time, the organisation also draws attention to itself in showing what it is doing in society – grandstanding in a way. The combination of the wristwatch and OM wristband connotes an acceptance of the organisation’s role in the community, and its role in helping disadvantaged people move forward. In terms of the symbolism of the wristwatch, John and Akinkurolere (2013:68) indicate that the wristwatch signifies wealth and is interpreted in this study’s context as progress/upliftment. This association links OMSA as enabler of the progress/upliftment of the beneficiaries.

The beaded wrist band/bangle and necklace connote traditionalism as well as entrepreneurship, given that beadwork is common and sought after in South Africa. This ties in with the transformation and reparation discourse, which is common to post-apartheid South Africa. Beads are traditionally associated with African culture, connoting specific values and ideas. According to Katsande (2014), beads in African culture are significant in terms of the colours, sizes, materials used and the placement of the beads on the body and other objects or clothing. Varieties of interpretations are possible, depending on which cultural lens the image is viewed through. Although beadwork is used as everyday jewellery, it may still hold traditional representation or authentic African origin and expression and connote different messages. Although the beads may traditionally convey specific meaning, the meaning could be lost on uninitiated viewers however. To this end, it is inferred that the beads serve an aesthetic purpose in this image; the beauty of the beads and colours lends, through positive association, qualities of progress, vibrancy and empowerment.
Moreover, in the context of this image and in the South African context, the beaded wrist band/bangle and necklaces connote entrepreneurship, empowerment and the like, and they have grown in popularity as jewellery. In efforts to redress the plight of disadvantaged communities, cultural arts and crafts are used to help communities make and sell these locally and internationally to help these communities become self-sustaining. Thus, through building and sustaining relationships in its operational context, the organisation defines its long-term sustainability and survival (Branco & Rodriguez 2007:13; Figar & Figar 2011:2; Duncan & Moriarty 1998:3).

Underlying the myth of progress and entrepreneurship is the transformation and reparation ideology common in post-apartheid South Africa. The arts and crafts of South African entrepreneurs are sought after and deserving of international acclaim. So much so, that South African Tourism (2017) actively markets this aspect of the country to potential visitors. In the context of the image, it contextualises who and where CSR 2.0 is related to. In addition, helping communities become more sustainable ties in with the theoretical perspective discussed in chapter 2, namely that organisations are driving their sustainability through their involvement with their communities.

Furthermore, Low (2013) states that essentially, it is about the “why” of the organisation’s existence – its higher purpose as it were, purpose-driven business, which ties in with sustainability and business leadership. This represents organisations’ awareness of the state of society (D’Anselmi 2011:34). As shown in section 3.2, modern marketing is underpinned by consumers being supreme, that is, satisfying their needs and wants and building sustainable relationships. Marketing essentially serves as a connective link between the organisation and the consumer.

Finally, the position of the image in the Journey annual report – besides the list of contents – speaks more on the connotative (mythical) and ideological levels. Within the cultural and historical context of South Africa, OMSA draws on representational tropes and visual stereotypes to represent CSR 2.0 and are thus able to communicate its intended message of transformation and progress without textual
anchors and context. This is evident in the fact that this image was replicated over a number of mediums and over a number of years (table 5.2). It becomes apparent that in its various forms as posters, a website banner and in the annual report, this image was never contextualised in terms of a specific CSR 2.0 project. In this regard, it can be regarded as a generic carrier of meaning or a motif of CSR 2.0 values.

### 6.2.2 Skills capacity development

Figure 6.2 below is a full colour, portrait-oriented banner advertisement of a female, as depicted in table 5.2.

**Figure 6.2: Skills capacity development**

![Image of a female in a banner advertisement](image)

**Source:** Banner advertisement in OM head office (2014).

At a denotative level, the image depicts a smiling black female smartly dressed in a red blouse adorned with a matching red beaded necklace, earrings and a black cap. The style in which the woman is dressed connotes professionalism and sophistication, which is inferred from the accessories and clothing. This woman is
identified personally in that her name is provided in the caption, indicating her involvement as a beneficiary in the programme. The image also shows her face while she is gazing directly into the camera from a high camera angle. By contextualising and identifying the woman, attention is drawn more to the individual, specifically as a named beneficiary, as well as what and whom she represents. This woman represents the other women party to this project and other similar initiatives. She symbolises South African women who are trying to progress through the upliftment opportunities offered to them.

This translates into the dominant role women, and in particular black women, play in their respective households and communities in general, in an effort to provide a sustainable life for their families and the community at large. By extension, OMSA is presenting itself as the enabler in this context. Therefore, by providing the details of the skills development initiative, OMSA grounds itself firmly as the benefactor responsible for enabling this project. With the subject in the image being captured close up, she assumes an identity, unlike the anonymous woman and decontextualised setting in figure 6.1.

Furthermore, when looking at the depiction of distance, the closeness of the shot is associated with closeness in real life, which creates intimacy between the viewer and the subject and individualises the former because the viewer can clearly see her face and expressions (Machin 2012:117). Through the interaction created between the viewer and the subject, the woman is, displaying the project as it were. This image is therefore associated with intimacy and physical proximity (Machin 2012:116) through the closeness of the shot as well as the direct gaze of the participant towards the viewer. The woman is smiling into the camera and making eye contact with the viewer, drawing him or her in and simulating connection with the reader/viewer. According to Suler (2013) this connection is made through the high camera angle emphasising the woman’s eyes. This closeness/intimacy is associated with OMSA in relation to its CSR 2.0 projects and the values of transformation and empowerment that it engenders in the community.
CHAPTER 6: FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION

It is clear that the woman is posing for the photo as her eyes are directed at the camera. She is displaying the beadwork created for the wine bottles with raised hands and palms stretched outwards. The woman’s open palms and outstretched hands connote the receiving of opportunities, but also an invitation into her world to see what and how they are contributing to South Africa’s economy and reputation with OMSA’s help. Thus connoting inclusion, economic growth and national pride. Pease and Pease (2016) state that palms displayed openly show openness and honesty. This underscores the credibility of OMSA’s involvement through communicating the projects. In addition, the invitation is interpreted to relate to showing the progress the communities are making because of this project. This translates directly into OMSA’s contribution to enabling this progress and the upliftment of the disenfranchised communities.

The beadwork in the woman’s hands shows that the primary colours of the South African flag are used predominantly for the wine bottles, which ties in with the fact the wine is exported internationally. This in itself connotes a sense of patriotism, but at the same time commercialisation of the South African brand – the Rainbow Nation, which now includes the previously disadvantaged in the economy. The reference to the flag is loaded with meaning in terms of symbolising the young democracy in South Africa, a new national identity, freedom, unity and social and economic inclusion of the previously marginalised communities in apartheid South Africa. To this end, Epstein (2015:26) states that the flag affirms the new South Africa. This reference to the South African flag also provides context in a national sense, and symbolically conveys meaning and not only the context to the specific CSR 2.0 project.

Furthermore, in terms of objects functioning together with the settings to convey meaning (progress and empowerment), the style in which the woman in figure 6.2 is dressed connotes professionalism/sophistication, which is inferred from her accessories and clothing. The bright red of her blouse connotes energy, leadership and even determination, which further serves to energise the image and its meaning.
Colour persuades at a subliminal level and is culturally linked (Hynes 2009:545). Christophe (2011:140) posits that, depending on the cultural context, colours are symbolic and affect feelings. Associated with drawing attention, stimulation, excitement and passion, the colour red also imbues the image with a highlighting effect in order to draw out more the participant and thus the project, for the viewer.

The connotations of leadership and determination are signified through red being culturally accepted as a colour of dominance (Lidwell, Holden & Butler 2003:202). In the words of the poet, Alice Meynell, and echoed by Hynes (2009:546), the true colour of life is red. This implies that the energy connoted in this image relates to the improvement of the beneficiaries’ lives – the giving of life to them through the new opportunities offered by OMSA. When looking at the connotation of determination, it can be related to drive and action, which when linked back to the analogy of blood as the human life force, speaks to the persistent and rhythmic action of the heart pumping this blood through the human body.

The high articulation of background places the woman in a specific context, and together with the caption, places the reader mentally exactly where the organisation intended regarding the context of the project. When reading the caption in the top right-hand corner of the image, it becomes clear that the wine bottle forms part of the work area. The Bayede! wine bottles are decorated with traditional beadwork created by rural woman who are skilled, which indicates the creation of job opportunities. To this end, the participant is shown in a specific context resembling a workplace (denoted by the packets of coloured beads on a table) or area for sales or even a celebration that was held (inferred from the wine bottle in the foreground). Without the background or caption, this image is open to various interpretations, thus missing the mark of the intended message.

Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006:18) confirm that the textual component identifies and interprets the image for the viewer by “burdening it with a culture, a moral, an imagination”. This interplay between text and image reinforces the factual yet impressionistic communication style discussed in section 4.9.3. By providing the
textual information in combination with the visual, the style depicted in figure 4.4 indicates that visuals, storytelling/narrative and styles are the ideal, which in turn aims to create an emotional connection with the viewers. The Trialogue (2016:44) research, as shown in figure 4.5, makes it clear that the organisation’s specific CSR 2.0 focus areas and descriptions of its projects constitute the focus of communications.

Although the image is reduced through cropping to show enough detail for the banner advertisement, the details are fully articulated. By providing fully articulated detail with no airbrushing of her face or hands, the realism of the woman and the project beneficiaries are highlighted. Again, this connotes honesty and sincerity on behalf of OMSA in its social engagements. The focus, however, is more on the woman and the beads in her hands and what they represent. Essentially the association is about female entrepreneurs, women becoming independent and working with their hands (as they probably do not have schooling).

Therefore, in the case of figure 6.2, it can be argued that OMSA also draws on generic representational tropes in this image to represent CSR 2.0, which enables it to communicate its intended message of transformation and progress in post-apartheid South Africa. The focus on the arts and crafts which are common in South Africa, together with the commercialisation of the South African brand – the Rainbow Nation – loads the image with meaning in terms of symbolising the young democracy and social and economic inclusion of the previously marginalised communities in South Africa.

### 6.2.3 Habitat for Humanity

Figure 6.3 below is a full-colour image, which forms part of other images relating to OMSA’s Habitat for Humanity project. It is a displayed as portrait-oriented in an A5 brochure, as depicted in table 5.2.
At a denotative level, the image depicts a construction site with building materials in the foreground and various people milling about. The context of the image can be inferred from the low-cost township setting, which, in turn, can be derived from the dusty and informal neighbouring plots and shacks in the background as well as the size of the house and the materials being used.

The context of the project is indicated as more important, and as such positions this specific initiative in relation to this context and serves to give an impression in general, as opposed to focusing on specific details in the shot. The long shot also serves to highlight OMSA’s advertising banner in the foreground for the message to be clear that OMSA is contributing to someone’s home as a participant in this initiative. The salience of the OM banner in the foreground is significant in conveying the organisation’s role in the project, especially set in contrast with the low modality. Thus giving the sense that it is more about its participation and about the beneficiaries in general. This detaches the viewer from the beneficiaries *per se*, but serves instead to create a connection between the viewer and OMSA.
In terms of the articulation of detail, the size of the image in the advertisement makes it difficult to view specific details in the image – such as the participants’ faces. The building materials in the foreground connote the momentum of the project, and grouped together in close proximity with the OM banner, the organisation is closely identified as the benefactor of this house. As stated in chapter 3, corporate advertising takes the form of outdoor advertising. In this context, the banner identifies OM as the site benefactor and at the same time provides its CSR 2.0 positioning in terms of social focus. This relates back to the CSR 2.0 dimensions identified in table 2.2.

Almost two-thirds of the image are blue sky, which denotes a clear sunny day, which according to Machin (2012:35), also has specific connotative value, such as the association with freedom, which is derived from the lack of confinement and the open space. This is clearly inspired by the ideology of post-apartheid freedom of South Africa – the possibilities for all its citizens. The link to OMSA thus associates it with this freedom and creator of possibilities. In addition to the blue sky, the lighting is extremely bright, which gives the added effect of optimism.

Although the participants/actors in the image are not shown close up, they are nevertheless identifiable culturally and biologically in this context. Four of the people are identifiable as OMSA staff by the green T-shirts. These staff members have volunteered their time to work on the project as part of the volunteerism pillar of OMSA’s CSR 2.0 involvement. One of these staff members is identifiable as white, while two others appear to be black. The other people in the image could be the project contractors.

One of the OMSA staff members in the foreground is photographed in forward motion, which connotes energy and drive in this high-energy environment, which then speaks to the ideology of transformation through progress, expectation and momentum. Although the larger group of people in the image are stationary, the viewer still has the sense that things are in motion, which is connoted by the individuals in the building structure as well as the two people on the right-hand side.
of the shot. This gathering also speaks to the consolidation and oneness ideology of the new South Africa in reaching its transformation goals, connoting OMSA’s part in this change and oneness with the community.

As stated in chapter 2, CSR 2.0 should be integrated as a reputation management strategy, which drives business growth, stakeholder loyalty and alignment (Rogers 2012:1). However, doing well is not only a simple action – it should be entrenched in the organisation’s brand value system (Roper & Fill 2012:186). In striving to be a good corporate citizen (in words and deeds), OMSA couples its CSR 2.0 with its aim of establishing a brand that resonates with stakeholders. OMSA’s involvement in Habitat for Humanity is a key example where staff are involved in the project as well.

In the case of figure 6.3, it becomes apparent, that the generic representations in this image to represent CSR 2.0 draws on frequently used volunteerism and social upliftment. This conveys the intended message of transformation and progress in post-apartheid South Africa – and inclusive and united approach to social upliftment of previously disadvantaged communities in post-apartheid South Africa.

6.2.4 Education

Figure 6.4 below is a full-colour, portrait-oriented banner advertisement of learners, as depicted in table 5.2.

Figure 6.4: Education
At a denotative level, the image displays black learners dressed in school uniforms, with a boy being the focus of the advertisement. Each learner is sitting at a desk engrossed in their in what appears to be a large classroom – denoted by the desks and the number of learners visible. The learners are mostly leaning forward into their books, connoting their concentration and dedication to their education. Each of these learners is quietly engaged, which conveys a sense of discipline and control, thereby indicating the importance of education. Similar to figure 6.1, this image has been presented over numerous visual platforms from 2008 to 2016 (table 5.2). This means that the image has an extended currency, which serves as a generic carrier of meanings pertaining to education.

The learners are dressed in similar school uniforms, which appear clean and neatly pressed. This again reflects discipline and commitment. The myth of the possibilities
of and prospects for youth is exploited in this image. As young minds, these learners are moulded and taught to be responsible citizens, focused on a specific field of study in order to contribute to the economy and South African society one day, as the next generation. The ideology underlying the myth of youth connotes innocence and vulnerability (Machin 2012:36), but also the pliability of youth to be moulded into the successful citizens.

Linking the children in the image to the transformation and development ideology serves to connote that these young minds are moulded to transform the country. According to UNESCO (2016), the power of education is a means through which economically and socially marginalised people can rise above poverty and become participants in and contributors to an economy. As a powerful benefactor and corporate power in South Africa, OMSA demonstrates its support in this process of shaping and transforming South African society as change agents making a difference in society.

The learner further back in the image is using a calculator, which is interpreted as learners focused on either science or mathematics in the attempt to produce more learners in scientific and mathematical fields. The calculators and the desks signify the availability of resources for the learners, made possible through OMSA as a benefactor of the school. The South African government devised a strategy to improve the results of mathematics and science in South African schools in an attempt to raise the levels of high quality skills (Department of Education 2001). To this end, OMSA’s education project aims to meet this requirement by focusing on these two subjects in its secondary school education projects. This is confirmed on the OMF website (About Old Mutual Foundation 2017), where the goal of the project is to increase grade 12 learners’ bachelor passes who have both mathematics and science in their subject combinations.

The profile, close-up of the shot personalises the learner in the foreground. Although the rest of the learners are slightly out of focus, they are clear enough to give context and substance to the image. This generalises the rest of the learners. Through this
generalisation, the learners represent all the learners touched by OMSA’s involvement in education projects throughout South Africa. This close-up of the learner in the foreground creates closeness and individualisation between the viewer and the participant (Machin 2012:116), in spite of the lack of direct gaze in the image and profiled view.

Although the learner is not making contact with the viewer, it is assumed that he is engrossed in his school work and should not be disturbed. This focus and dedication are what draws the viewer in. The “good student/learner” demands to be left alone through his focus and discipline. The ideology underlying the myths in the images is linked to capitalism, but more importantly to transformation and socioeconomic inclusion, underscored by reparation in post-apartheid South Africa. The gestures of concentration/focus and open palms connote not only openness to the opportunities, but also the self-empowered future.

The articulation of detail in the image is high despite the slight blurring of the background. The lightness of the image connotes the optimism and promise of and for the youth in terms of the opportunities now afforded them by OMSA. In addition, the viewer is placed as a witness to OMSA’s contribution to the education of previously disadvantaged youth in South Africa. This conveys the underlying ideology of corporate power in terms of “look what we have done/are doing as an organisation to transform post-apartheid South Africa”. At the same time, the social and economic transformation ideology also features because the caption provides the context to what has been achieved and how it contributes to South Africa’s growth and change. This ties in with the education pillar of OMSA’s CSR 2.0 involvement.

At first glance, the viewer is unaware of the physical/geographical location of the learners, but the caption functions as a guide to the viewer. The caption functions as a guide to the viewer regarding the physical/geographical location of the learners. Without this caption, the context could be anywhere in South Africa. This advertisement might serve a dual purpose in doing just that – for the passer-by to
interpret the banner as OMSA’s contribution to education in South Africa as a whole, and for those who stop to read the caption, it provides the specific detail. The ideology of change, transformation and equal opportunities underlies this image and again links OMSA to this school achieving its merits through infrastructure upgrades and exposure to various opportunities.

The raised hand with a partially open palm of the boy in figure 6.4 conveys focus/concentration, which can be associated with change and holding one’s future in one’s hands. Suler (2013) confirms that this posture relates to concentration and attention. In addition, the blurred background specifically connotes this focus, in the sense that OMSA turns the focus towards its educational activities. The effect of the blur in figure 6.4 complements the focus of OMSA placing the emphasis on its educational activities as opposed to contradicting it (Suler 2013). Thus, by reducing modality, the rules of reality are changed, which make things appear reasonable and thus acceptable to readers (Machin 2012:52).

6.2.5 Growing trees

Figure 6.5 below is a full colour, A4 size, landscape-oriented image of a young female watering plants, as depicted in table 5.2.

Figure 6.5: Growing trees
At a denotative level, the image is a full-colour, A4 size, landscape-oriented low-angle shot of a young girl dressed in blue jeans and a pink top with a braided hairstyle. She is holding a silver, metal watering can and watering plants. In the background are a thatched rondavel and other informal structures with rusted corrugated sheets serving as a make-shift fence, which together denote a rural setting. To the right of the shot are trees, which form part of the landscape. This high articulation of background/setting places the girl in a specific context, and together with the caption, places the reader exactly where the organisation intended.

The narrative text accompanying the image provides the details of the setting and project, which contextualise the image. The combination of text with the image functions to provide coherence between the image and the narrative of the girl on the opposite page. It also serves to provide context to the image and the project it is
linked to. As posited earlier, Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006:18) confirm that the textual element identifies and interprets the image for the viewer.

The full articulation of detail of the foreground, the background and natural light in this image gives it high modality, which creates a realistic feel for the viewer of the context and provides a sense of promise and optimism. The naturalistic modality where the truth of perception is materialised, indicates that the image conforms to a specific context, perspective and conditions of illumination (Machin 2012:61).

Almost two-thirds of the image are blue sky with tiny specks of cloud, a perspective caused by the low camera angle of the shot, which denotes a clear sunny day, but also has specific connotative value, according to Machin (2012:35) – such as the association with freedom, which is derived from the lack of confinement and the open space. Hümeric and Biçakçi (2015:294) suggest that the blue sky connotes positivity. In this context, this is clearly inspired by the ideology of post-apartheid freedom of South Africa, that is, the possibilities for all its citizens, especially its youth. This ties in with the OMSA brand as the contributor to this freedom and the creator of possibilities.

Representing the myth of youth, the girl represents a specific segment of South African youth - a group that is in line with OMSA’s CSR 2.0 activities, namely previously disadvantaged communities. The action of watering the plants can be proverbially linked to watering future opportunities for these groups of youth. Shot from a low angle, the participant's face is directly in front of the camera. This angle also augments the girl, which connotes not only the power of the youth in change and the transformation of South Africa, but also all the opportunities available to them. This perspective is almost in reverence to the youth as future leaders of South Africa. Because the viewer is looking up at the girl and the watering can, a metaphorical association of a higher importance is created. Suler (2013) confirms that this low camera angle creates a sense of height, power, dominance or authority. The upward camera perspective in this image could be seen to dislodge the patriarchal principle of women’s lowered status in society.
The use of a female in this image in the context of economic empowerment, ties in with the previous discussion about women being more marginalised in post-apartheid South Africa. Thus, by empowering the (female) youth, attempts are made to decrease or eradicate this marginalisation for future generations. As pointed out earlier by OMSA, taking responsibility to empower the disadvantaged/marginalised in society, shows the organisation’s commitment to social transformation in post-apartheid South Africa. The responsibility can then directly be associated with the water in the image. As confirmed by Rossi and Brei (2008:1) and Van Houweling, Hall, Sakho Diop, Davis and Seiss (2012:658), water is a basic human need and relates to its primary function of hydrating the human body, which, in turn, represents life and nourishment.

The watering can connotes the youth’s future in their own hands, nurturing the possibilities of the future. The camera angle allows for the water and watering can to appear much larger, thereby emphasising this object and its symbolism. This myth is inspired by the need for self-responsibility, ambition and social transformation. OMSA can be seen as being represented by the water – the “waters of life” for the youth as the leaders and entrepreneurs of tomorrow. It signifies OMSA’s importance in this process of transformation and contribution to the lives of the disenfranchised youth of South Africa. To this end, Manca, Manca and Pieper (2012:33) confirm that water mirrors potential and symbolises regeneration and nourishment.

Furthermore, the camera angle allows the watering can to appear much larger (Suler 2013), thereby emphasising this object and its symbolism/mythical value. This exaggeration is focused on the myth of self-responsibility, ambition and social transformation. In addition, the close-up of the water pouring from the watering can symbolises action and energy and speaks to the available opportunities and nurturing the environment to realise these possibilities.

The low-angle close-up shot augments the tree seedlings in the foreground as well. This could be symbolic of the young democracy that is post-apartheid South Africa, which is also vulnerable, inexperienced and ravaged by inequality, social and
economic exclusion/marginalisation. Similarly, the seedlings are representative of the opportunities and promise that OMSA’s intervention holds for the youth and society as a whole. They also signify growth and new beginnings. Furthermore, the seedlings being nurtured by her are linked to the myth of growth and prosperity that then draws from the ideology of social and economic transformation enforced through OMSA’s corporate power. These young trees also signify the growth from youth to adulthood and function to inspire action and promise in this image. To this end, Tracy (2016:ii) posits that trees are applied as inspiration imagery.

The symbolism relating to trees draws from them as representing networked structures such as the leaves and root systems (Tracy 2016:4). In spite of harsh environmental challenges at times, the roots only strive to anchor the tree more firmly in these conditions (Tracy 2016:4). Although the tree is solitary, it is connected to and dependent on insects and birds for pollination (Tracy 2016:4) and provides shelter to all who seek it. This symbolism of the tree carries through and is confirmed in the narrative accompanying the image in the Journey 2012 annual report with the words, “growing trees, growing children” (Journey 2012:63).

6.2.6 Rural huts

Figure 6.6 below is a full-colour image, which comprises three images combined to form a single unit. The image is displayed portrait oriented in A5, as depicted in table 5.2.
At a denotative level, the image appears to be a rural context denoted by a rondavel in the background, the open area surrounding it as well as the participants in the images. Three images make up the story – a main image with two additional images. These three images function as one. In the main image of figure 6.6, a long shot serves to provide a specific context and scope for the viewer. In the distance towards the horizon are hills dotted with a few trees, set against a skylless backdrop. The first insert in the top right is an insert of a farming patch (small scale) with a full field of crops and an identifiable black, adult, bespectacled male in a salmon-coloured overcoat and visibly greying hair. The second insert contains seedlings arranged in rows.

The lack of sky in the image connotes the confinement and restraint of the community brought on by their situation – lack of opportunities, poverty and so forth. Machin (2012:35) and Manca et al (2012:39) confirm that blue sky in an image
connotes lack of confinement, restraint and limitation, while Hümeric and Biçakçı (2015:294) state that blue sky connotes positivity. The opposite can therefore be inferred for this image. Thus, the “as is” depiction connotes this hopeless situation, while the juxtaposition with the smaller image, which comprises medium shots, with a bit of blue sky, suggests that freedom, positivity and opportunities are associated with OMSA enabling the farming initiative. This setting could also represent any disadvantaged rural community in South Africa.

In the main image, the viewer is not able to connect with the participant. The person sitting in the main image is black, barefoot and dressed in blue pants, a top, jacket, and a red cap. Given the long shot, it is difficult to categorise the person as male or female. This creates distance from both the participant as well as the context being shown. The top right-hand image, however, allows the viewer a bit more interaction with the participant through the closer shot and ability to make eye contact. Although the man is not displayed as friendly, the viewer is still drawn in by being able to make contact. This creates intimacy between the viewer and the participant as well as the project being advertised. This highlights to the viewer what OMSA is doing/has done in this community – inspired by the corporate power and transformation ideologies.

The house in the foreground is old and appears low cost because of the corrugated roof and rough finishing. This foreground area of the image is unkempt. Also in the foreground of the main image is a green catchment tank with OM branding or a notice on it, namely “Old Mutual – investing in the country's success”. This indicates that, regardless of where in South Africa this is, OMSA is creating opportunities for communities to become self-sufficient and integrated into the economy and thus promoting self-sustainability. Furthermore, the latter feeds from the ideology of transformation and economic integration/equal opportunity for all South Africans. The green water catchment tank connotes the harnessing of resources, but also relates to the OM corporate colour, which is green. The green colour of the tank connotes hope (Kress & Van Leeuwen 2002:1) and speaks to the possibilities available to the community through OMSA’s involvement.
In addition, it relates to greening of the environment through saving water, but can also be extended to the growth of new possibilities as well as hope. This associates the brand with the values of harnessing natural resources, sensitivity to the environment and the like, which form part of OMSA’s responsible business philosophy. These images/stories tie together perfectly the green of the crop patch and the seedlings below with the large green catchment tank bearing the OM branding.

As stated in section 4.3, according to Roper and Fill (2012:45), by taking responsibility in the environment in which it operates, the organisation reinforces its ethical behaviour and advances its corporate reputation. Essentially, CSR 2.0 is being implemented as an outlet through which organisations build their reputations (Roper and Fill 2012:45). As posited earlier, the reference to Visser (2010d:20; 2011:33) serves to confirm that environmental integrity relates to environmental sustainability.

The person in the main image is just sitting outside the house in the foreground facing the camera. This inactivity, together with the derelict surroundings, lends an emptiness and lethargy to the image. In addition, the inactivity also speaks to possible unemployment in the area, as this context is poor, rural with possibly low employment rates and little opportunity. The header of the page on which this image is found is titled “Local Economic Development: Investment in Enterprise Development”. This accompanying text affords the viewer further context to this image. By anchoring these images with accompanying text, the full context is provided.

Through its transformation activities, these CSR 2.0 projects are part of building a better South Africa. This speaks directly to the responsible business philosophy as the overarching driver, which as such is entrenched in the organisation’s core values, with the four DNA values (value creation, good governance, societal contribution and environmental integrity) and their corresponding goals steering the organisation in terms of the desired outputs in the form of the key indicators. Manoiu et al (2016:377)
concur that an organisation’s actions should be grounded in CSR 2.0 and not merely an act of philanthropy or a fad.

The seedlings in the bottom right-hand image speak to various myths. The seedlings symbolise the temporariness or transitioning to a different state, which is enabled by OMSA – success through growth. These seedlings also represent the intended economic possibilities for the community and at the same time new beginnings for those involved. The top right-hand image ties in with this to represent the growth of new beginnings and possibilities. This symbolises the partnership with the community and the community’s acceptance of OMSA’s involvement. This endorses the perpetuation of the commercial/economic ideology as well as the partnership to change and transformation ideology. Transformation in South Africa is not a one-way process, but demands that the benefactors and beneficiaries be party to the process.

In the top right image, the close-up shot, the man gazes directly towards the viewer. He is looking at the viewer over his spectacles. The male’s overcoat and posture symbolise him taking charge of his situation and growing his possibilities through the crop patch/farming initiative. The top right-hand image also symbolises order and systematic progress and process, which is conveyed through the orderly arrangement of the boundary fencing of the crop patch as well as the crops arranged in rows and sections. The seedlings in the bottom image are also arranged in rows. This is in contrast with the main image, in which things are random. The dereliction in the main image is juxtaposed with the two smaller images that indicate change and possibility. By juxtaposing the images, progress is inferred, and the action that has occurred from the old to the new. This juxtapositioning can also be linked back to the above discussion on OMSA providing evidence of its activities in the community.

As mentioned in the discussion above, by providing evidence of the CSR 2.0 projects, OMSA proves its activities and spend in transforming South Africa, thereby positioning itself as a key contributor to the overall transformation and social change
agenda through eradicating poverty and reducing inequalities. Through its contribution, OMSA reinforces its role in society and adopts CSR 2.0 as a strategic mechanism in corporate identity building owing to its capability for building a credible corporate reputation (Hildebrand et al 2011:1360). Relating back to previous discussions, the bond between an organisation and its stakeholders is what galvanises its reputational capital (Roper & Fill 2012:119; Fisman et al[sa]:1; Skinner & Mersham 2008:248). Linking back to sections 4.3 and 4.4 where Podnar (2008:78) and Pomering and Johnson (2009:106) concur that by incorporating stakeholder values, motivations, expectations and involvement in CSR 2.0 activities in the organisation’s communications, a more strategically focused marketing and communication approach is applied, as well as active and meaningful partnerships between organisations and their various constituencies.

In contrast to the myth of youth, Machin (2012:37) states that old(er) men represent the values of peacefulness, gentle paternity and simplicity. In the context of this image, it could be argued, however, that the values of authority, hard work and progress are displayed because the man is shown as being active in the crop patch. These values can be attributed to the dominant patriarchal formations prevalent in South Africa. When comparing figure 6.5 to this one, it becomes apparent that in the former image the female (girl) is presented growing small-scale crops (in spite of the use of a low camera angle), while the male is represented in a more structured, larger scale farming context. This too may reveal the presence of the dominant patriarchal myth entrenched in South African society. Although the myths of progress and transformation are conveyed through the visual texts, the change and transformation applies to the economic contexts of the individuals/communities, but not these dominant patriarchal formations.

6.2.7 Vulnerable communities (aged)

Figure 6.7 below is a full-colour, A4 size, landscape-oriented image of two females in a room, as depicted in table 5.2.
Figure 6.7: Vulnerable communities (aged)


At a denotative level, the image depicts an elderly woman being supported by a young one – in what appears to be a living room setting. The lounge chairs and the Da Vinci “The Last Supper” painting hanging on the wall denote this context. The older woman is using a walking stick, wearing spectacles, a green skirt/dress, black jersey and white cap. The younger woman is dressed in a black skirt and jersey with a yellow soccer/sports t-shirt. The accompanying text adjacent to the image contextualises the image to provide the viewer with information about OMSA's contribution to the Elim Hlanganani Care Centre for the Aged. Similarly, by anchoring these images with accompanying text, the full context is provided.

In the context of this image and the socio-political context of South Africa, women are marginalised in South Africa, enforcing the need for intervention by both OMSA and society. Furthermore, in the context of this image, when observing the
interaction between the participants, the myths are more focused on the aspect of caring. OMSA associates itself with this value, which symbolises that it cares for and nurtures those disenfranchised members of society, as stated on the OMF website (Old Mutual Foundation 2016): “Through this portfolio, the Old Mutual Foundation seeks to alleviate the distress of the vulnerable and defenseless. We provide relief and care to those in our society who are in need of compassion, disenfranchised or have been rendered voiceless …”.

The two participants are making eye contact with each other, indicating connectedness and a level of intimacy between them. The younger woman’s hand holding the elderly hand connotes the support and care for the aged in the community, but also points to OMSA’s association as a support to the community. This serves to draw the viewer into this intimacy, which, in turn, also points to OMSA’s association with and support to the community. These values thus testify to OMSA’s involvement in society and imbue it with meaning. These values are espoused in the community as well, which then provides synchronicity between OMSA and its stakeholders in terms of communications. This bond between an organisation and its stakeholders strengthens its reputational capital (Roper & Fill 2012:119; Fisman et al. [sa]:1; Skinner & Mersham 2008:248).

When viewing the image, the viewer is unaware of the physical/geographical location of the participants, but the adjacent text in the Journey annual report functions as a guide to the viewer. This provides coherence in terms of context. The room the participants are in is clean and neat, which speaks to the institution being supported – Elim Hlanganani Care for the Aged – and association links this to OMSA. As indicated above, the myths connotated by this image are care for the aged and each other, enforced by Christian ideology, which is linked to the symbolism of “The Last Supper” painting on the wall.

Leonardo Da Vinci’s iconic “The Last Supper” painting connotes and associates the beneficiaries in a Christian religious environment, but also enforces the myth of “brotherly” love in this Christian context (especially if they are senior). This painting
is a religious artefact found in homes and churches, which represents the last supper Christ had with his disciples before being betrayed. Despite the negative connotation regarding the Last Supper, relating to Jesus Christ's betrayal by Judas Iscariot, it is nonetheless a revered artefact. Panofsky (1970) in Van Leeuwen and Jewitt (2001:101) states that an analysis of the underlying meaning would reveal the basic attitudes of a nation, class, religious or philosophical persuasion.

When looking at the image, the two participants are framed within the shot, directly in front of this painting. Whilst loading the association, at the same time it creates a more “homely” atmosphere in the context of the home for the aged, together with the other furniture in the image. This “homely” atmosphere connotes comfort, care and acceptance. The walking stick the older woman is leaning on connotes the support from or dependency on OMSA, as well as the dependency on the younger woman for assistance. The myth of youth responsibility is also reinforced by the intimate relationship denoted through the image where the participants are making close eye contact.

The image is captured with a long shot and level on both the vertical and horizontal angles. This shot provides more focus on both the participants as well as the context of the home for the aged. When looking at the depiction of distance, the closeness of the shot is associated with closeness in real life, which creates intimacy between the viewer and the subject and individualises them by clearly seeing their faces and expressions (Machin 2012:117). This creates a connection between the viewer and the project directly through the participants acting as agents for the home. Hence, this image is associated with intimacy and physical proximity through the realism depicted, as well as the underlying values conveyed. For example, the values of caring for the disenfranchised in society underlies this image. Fourie (2009:329) refers to realism as art trying to imitate reality as closely as possible. This realistic perspective is what creates the intimacy and emotional closeness with the viewer.

The high modality connotes the realism in this context because no specific details have been obscured or disproportionately accentuated in either the foreground or
background. The deep perspective, lightness of the image and colour add to this realism as well. In addition, the participants in the foreground stand out to focus the viewers’ attention. This realism of the image speaks to the authenticity of OMSA’s involvement in and intentions with the project and at the same time communicates its “real” involvement with this project.

Through association, the above values are symbolically linked to OMSA in terms of it “caring” for the society in which it operates to uplift the disenfranchised. As pointed out earlier with reference to Delate’s (2001:15) research, through application of obscure values and meanings in the visual texts, incongruent decoding results and the intended associations are lost. To this end, Aspara and Tikkanen (2011:1459) state that the level of support and preference towards a specific company is directly linked to the extent of identity with an organisation – where personal values are supported by the values and behaviour of the organisation.

When asking why women specifically are represented as vulnerable and carers of the vulnerable, the choice of participants is relevant in this image. It was argued in 6.2.1 and confirmed by Rogan (2014) who posits that a large portion of households in poor communities are headed by women who are still significantly worse off than men, and suffer the most. Therefore, the myths of maternal care and/or nurturing are conveyed through the visual texts.

### 6.2.8 Ceramist

Figure 6.8 below is a full-colour image, displayed in an A5 brochure, as depicted in table 5.2.
At a denotative level, the image depicts a black, adult male holding a ceramic pot in his hands. Behind him is a work bench with an array of ceramic pots in different sizes and shapes. The assumption is that he is in fact the ceramist because his hands are covered in a white substance – either the paint or clay residue.

The man is sitting and intently examining/working on the clay pot in his hands. This is indicative of action in the image, which lends a certain energy to the viewer, which, in turn, creates a connection to the man/project in the image. Although the participant is not making eye contact, the camera shot is close enough for the viewer to connect with the man and draw the viewer into the action portrayed in the image. The tactile nature of this action also connotes the tangibility of the project, and when read in conjunction with the text, places the man in a specific context. The accompanying text provides a description of the project and the beneficiaries.

Furthermore, the tilt of the ceramist’s head connotes the intense interest in/focus on his creation. The slightly open mouth and visible front teeth connote appreciation and approval of the outcome of his creation as well as happiness/contentment in the
process of creation. By raising the ceramic pot with both hands, the connotation is gratitude and dedication to the benefactor, namely OMSA. The underlying myth is related to OMSA displaying its CSR 2.0 activities – boldly, but with humility, here drawing from the symbolism of the potter and his clay. The ceramic pots in the image are loaded with mythical meaning, mostly from biblical/religious references, but also in this context.

The underlying myth relates to OMSA displaying its CSR 2.0 activities, drawing here from the symbolism of the potter and his clay. This metaphor is drawn from the biblical parable in which God is referred to as the potter and humans as the clay (Gorléé 2012:10). In the context of this image, this can be interpreted as the man moulding his life through opportunities created by OMSA to empower him and raise his standard of living and inclusion in the economy. At the same time, the ceramist is also exercising control over his creations because he moulds them to the specifications, and this can be associated with his part in shaping his own life and circumstances.

As indicated in the Science Learning Hub (2010), ceramics is inorganic non-metal material shaped and hardened at extremely high temperatures to produce hard but brittle artefacts. The association with this myth extends to OMSA having been around for more than 170 years (Old Mutual South Africa 2017), drawing from the durability of the above analogy and enduring various conditions in the market, speaking to the hardening through high heat. Gosselain (1999:207) references Barley (1994) who indicates the symbolism of pottery and states that pottery takes a variety of shapes and materials and is transformed through extremely high heat processes into what the creator plans. In addition, Gosselain (1999:208) points out the symbolic significance of pottery in Africa, which is interpreted as a cultural signifier.

Furthermore, the body language connotes satisfaction, pride and pleasure. These attributes can be linked to OMSA, who is associated with this initiative and affords opportunities to these entrepreneurs. Although no specific reference in the image is
made to OMSA, by means of either branding or any other objects, this association is still strong. However, when the image is placed in the context of the page heading (Local economic development: investing in skills capacity building), it provides details of the initiative, where OMSA is helping arts crafts initiatives become sustainable and more marketable. The underlying myth is that of economic inclusion and development, which is inspired by the ideologies of capitalism as well as change and transformation in South Africa.

Without any contextual clues, this workshop could be based anywhere in South Africa, thus representing all the arts and crafts initiatives OMSA is involved in. The community can be likened to the ceramic pot – moulded, designed and shaped by the potter, who is OMSA (with reference to the above myths). However, this power translates more into an outcome loaded with pride and pleasure in the creation of opportunities for the community. This therefore enforces or reinforces the corporate power and capitalist ideologies through enabling transformation and equal opportunities.

The image is a medium shot and level on the vertical angle, but slightly angled on the horizontal plane. Although the angle of interaction is slightly profiled, it nevertheless creates closeness between the viewer and the participant. This places the viewer as a witness to OMSA’s contribution to the creation of entrepreneurial opportunities for arts and crafts initiatives of previously disadvantaged people in South Africa. This conveys the underlying ideology of corporate power – “look what we have done/are doing as an organisation”, as well as the change and transformation ideology linked to the Rainbow Nation ideology. By providing focus on the man, the salience of these ideas and values is pronounced.

To this end, the background is slightly blurred, but observable, which serves to highlight the ceramist in the foreground. This serves to contextualise this image symbolically as a representation of the various arts and crafts projects that OMSA is involved in to assist communities in terms of skills building and entrepreneurship. This focuses the viewer’s attention on the man as the beneficiary instead of the
pottery. The ceramist therefore represents all the beneficiaries in these contexts as conveyed by the obvious monochromatic tones of the image, associated with timelessness and dedication to the cause.

As mentioned earlier in section 4.9.2.4, articulation of background relates to how the background of photographs/images is reduced or enhanced (Machin 2012:50). This serves to contextualise or decontextualise images or even convey various ideological messages (Machin 2012:50). Hence, by reducing modality, the rules of reality are changed, which make things appear reasonable and thus acceptable by the readers (Machin 2012:52). Similar to previous discussions, the focus is on the ceramist – depicting real people in the CSR 2.0 projects. This relates to the earlier discussion about OMSA providing evidence of its activities. In addition, it also corresponds with OMSA’s perspective of real people and real change.

The next section addresses the dominant themes emerging.

6.3 INTERPRETATION

As indicated in section 4.8.2.1 and the discussion above, the denotative layer relates to a specific depicted event, people, setting or object, as if the viewer were there in person (Machin 2012:23). The connotative layer conveys either general or abstract ideas or values (Machin 2012:25), or as Hall (2001:171), simply puts it, connotation as the associative meanings of texts. As stated in chapter 1, the contexts discussed all relate to the post-apartheid dispensation of South Africa, where large organisations engaged in social and economic transformational projects, to try and right the wrongs of the apartheid era (Hinson & Ndlovu 2011:333), which were predominantly inflicted on non-white South Africans (Masina 2010:23). This was discussed in detail in chapter 2. It is also important to note that given the shared knowledge and historical context of the country, South Africans are all aware of and more than likely share the ideology of transformation, economic and social inclusion as well as accepting organisations attempting to make a difference in society.
It was found that specifically categorised people are displayed in specific contexts, and that the people mostly represented are culturally categorised as black. As indicated in section 6.2.1, this is underpinned by political ideology in that some groups were promoted and others marginalised, and thus draws on the racial stereotype that black previously disadvantaged South Africans represent the sector of society in need of corporate assistance. Busacca (2013:12) confirms that government policy during the apartheid era stipulated that non-whites should be marginalised and thus excluded from politics, respectable jobs, good education and healthcare. Therefore, in redressing this in post-apartheid South Africa, the focus of CSR 2.0 is in the areas of, *inter alia*, education, job creation, healthcare and entrepreneurial development. This can be confirmed by referring to the OMF’s key focus areas as indicated in table 4.1. The depiction of the beneficiaries in specific contexts from these marginalised communities in the images highlights the ideology of transforming South Africa. This relates back directly to the earlier point about organisations reinforcing their role in society, and CSR 2.0 providing a strategic mechanism to build its corporate identity and thus a more credible corporate image and reputation. In addition, it can be argued that OMSA aims to ensure the intended meaning of their CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements are decoded by the viewer by adopting standard established generic representations of CSR 2.0 that have been repeatedly applied/adopted elsewhere. Education, for example represents a dominant trope of representing CSR 2.0 in South Africa.

The literal depictions of the denotative layer are underscored by specific myths (connotations), which in turn, are driven by specific ideologies. It is important to note that these levels do not function independently, but rather feed into and from each other. The dominant themes as well as the relationships between the various themes are explained in more detail below.
6.3.1 Theme 1: Context of where and how change is effected

Essentially, generalised contexts are depicted to represent all CSR 2.0 projects in order to facilitate the positioning of OMSA as the benefactor. OMSA positions itself dominantly either overtly or through association to indicate its role in the change. Referring back to the scalability principle of CSR 2.0 in section 2.4.4.2, OMSA communicates using general representational tropes and visual stereotypes such as education, rural contexts, arts and crafts, amongst others, in order to depict its social impact in South Africa. As pointed out above, CSR 2.0 interventions are predominantly in the areas of education, rural community upliftment, skills development and the like. To this end, the various objects in focus relating to the various projects symbolise traditionalist entrepreneurship – traditional arts and crafts and agriculture that are mostly associated with rural and black communities. Thus, by applying generic representational mechanisms, the intertextual references are easily activated (Al-Siyami 2013:54).

The majority of the images display objects of a traditional/rural nature and the prominence of the OMSA brand, which, while representing capitalist ideology, also represent traditionalism. These represented contexts and people are indicative of the racial and wealth inequalities prevalent in South Africa. Costandius (2008:5) posits that cultural stereotyping is still dominant in that black people are generally classified as poor.

The dominance of the OMSA brand, representing modernity, can be seen to be positioned as the remedy to this perceived lack of modernity. With reference to organisations engaging in social and economic transformational CSR 2.0 projects in an effort to right the wrongs of the apartheid era, OMSA positions itself as a key contributor to the overall transformation and social change agenda through eradicating poverty and reducing inequalities, by providing evidence of the context of these CSR 2.0 projects. Gumede (2013:12) confirms that poverty and inequality are critical development areas that plague post-apartheid South Africa.
As discussed in section 6.3.2, organisations are expected to incorporate sustainability and community development into their strategic agendas (Hinson & Ndhlovu 2011:333; Roper & Fill 2012:119). Together with the understanding of the legacy of apartheid regarding non-white South Africans, there is an assumption that these are the beneficiaries in need of the support. Thus, by providing the evidence of the context of these CSR 2.0 projects, OMSA proves its activities and spend in transforming South Africa, thereby drawing on the common understanding of society’s need to contribute to the overall transformation and social change agenda through eradicating poverty and reducing inequalities. In order to facilitate understanding of the visuals, OMSA provides explicit cues to the reader (such as captions, stories, images, representational tropes, visual stereotypes, etc.).

To confirm this approach, it is clear from Delate’s (2001:15) research, that in the South African context, if the meanings of the advertisements are not obvious, or messages are misinterpreted, incongruent decoding and restricted attention are given to the advertisement and the intended associations are lost (see figure 3.3). In the context of this study, this would mean that congruence in the sender and receiver’s terms of reference, would render a more effective message (understanding the customer’s field of experience) (Perreault et al 2009:377; Kotler & Armstrong 2012:414). See section 3.6.2, which dealt with message effectiveness and the alignment of the message of the sender and receiver.

As explained in section 3.6, organisations are deliberate in advertising their CSR 2.0 activities to their stakeholders, as well as persuasively communicating about their products and services. To this end, OMSA is deliberate in its corporate advertising and contextualising its images using text in headings and captions as well as the representational tropes and visual stereotypes, which enforce its role as the dominant change partner in these contexts/communities. Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006:18) posit that the textual component identifies and interprets the image for the viewer by “burdening it with a culture, a moral, an imagination”. In addition, as explained in section 3.6.2, the selection of words, symbols, images, sounds and so
forth, is a method the organisation employs to symbolically transmit a specific message (Kotler & Armstrong 2012:415).

As is the case with several of the images above, accompanying captions and text contextualise the images for the viewer. The viewer is therefore guided to view and interpret the image in a specific context. Similarly, the images lacking contextual clues (figures 6.1 and 6.8), connote that these settings could be based anywhere in South Africa, thus representing all the related initiatives in which OMSA is involved. However, in the case of figure 6.8, when the image is placed in the context of the page heading (Local economic development: investing in skills capacity building), it provides details of OMSA’s objective in helping arts crafts initiatives become sustainable and more marketable. The interplay between text and image reinforces the factual yet impressionistic communication style discussed in section 4.9.3. By providing the textual information in combination with the visual, the style depicted in figure 4.4, which indicates that visuals, storytelling/narrative styles are the ideal, creates an emotional connection with the viewers. Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006:18) assert that the textual component identifies and interprets the image for the viewer.

In the contextualised images, the accompanying captions and text/narratives also provide details around the geographic locations and personal contexts of the beneficiaries. Trialogue (2016:44) research as shown in figure 4.5, confirms that the organisation’s specific CSR 2.0 focus areas and descriptions of its projects constitute the main focus of communications. To confirm this approach, the OMF’s Journey 2012 annual report contains subtext, which states that the stories of people and places are captured and displayed in beautiful images and accompanying stories. This demonstrates the “transformative power of hope, compassion, hard work …” (Journey 2012).

After the interpretation of theme 1 it is clear that the initiatives are overlaid on the myths of equal opportunities for all South Africans, transformation and economic
inclusion, which are not only inspired by capitalist ideology, but also by the ideology of an inclusive Rainbow Nation. By contextualising the images and showing where the change is effected, the organisation makes the projects real, more tangible to the viewer by displaying the varying contexts in which it is a benefactor. OMSA patently positions itself as the benefactor that enforces its corporate power to promote possibilities and change. By empowering the community with transferable skills, one could go as far as to assume that by implementing these initiatives in these communities the organisation is in fact practising corporate imperialism – the focus on a captive market in the communities that are being supported, and a basis for future employees, clients and brand ambassadors. This refers back to the discussion in section 4.5, which cites Hildebrand et al (2011:1354), namely that in the strategic CSR 2.0 approach, the primary question for organisations would be, "how then to do well and good simultaneously?"

6.3.2 Theme 2: People are always represented

The second theme identified across the sample was that people are always represented, categorised and in action. It is clear from the above discussion of theme 1 that the contextualised images applied by OMSA always contain identifiable people (i.e. beneficiaries) and represent these beneficiaries set in the specific contexts. It is evident that specific people are depicted and represented through cultural and biological categorisation. With reference to the earlier point regarding the disenfranchised/marginalised communities in post-apartheid South Africa, the beneficiaries are black communities. Machin (2012:119–120) confirms, by identifying the participants in the images, they are categorised in terms of gender, physical appearance, clothing and culture. The categorisation of the participants clearly denotes who the beneficiaries of OMSA’s benevolence are – black South Africans.

Furthermore, Machin (2012:24) asserts that at a denotative level, a visual image defines the subject, such as representing a person in a group, as a type or alone.
One could infer that by depicting the black South Africans in the poor communities, reference is made to the national understanding that they were previously disadvantaged. As posited in the previous section, there is a common understanding about the socioeconomic needs of previously disadvantaged communities, given South Africa’s historical context. Therefore, meaning is created only when people share the cultural associations to whatever is represented in an image, and to this end, Cilliers (2014:132) posits that connotations have the status of social consensus. Gee (2008:12) confirms that the producers, in this instance, OMSA, and consumers, are part of the same society and therefore are in agreement on these values.

As discussed in section 4.5, there are societal and regulatory compliance actors/parties that expect sustainability and community development be incorporated into strategic agendas (Hinson & Ndlovu 2011:333; Roper & Fill 2012:119). Thus, by providing the evidence of the beneficiaries of these CSR 2.0 projects, OMSA proves its activities and spend in transforming South Africa, thereby positioning itself as a key contributor to the overall transformation and social change agenda. This personalises the beneficiaries for the viewer and quantifies OMSA’s efforts. The Journey 2012 annual report subtext captures this perfectly: while CSR 2.0 factual information is important in the boardroom, it is equally important to show the “real people” who are impacted by the projects.

In all the images, except figure 6.1, the participants are active in their specific contexts. This indicates their ownership of the project and commitment to the progress that underlies the CSR 2.0 programmes. As posited in section 4.5, CSR 2.0 creates a connection between the organisation and the society in which it operates by participating in activities aimed at bettering society and establishing a balance between all stakeholders’ interests and increased profits (Hinson & Ndlovu 2011:333; Du et al 2010:8). Depicting the participants as identifiable and active serves to further legitimise the organisation’s activities through a reciprocal basis by showing the beneficiaries active in the contexts in which the benefactor is active. This again relates back to the above discussion on credibility and corporate
reputation. Through categorisation and identification of participants, the viewer connects with the image (Machin 2012:119).

The derived connotation of connection speaks to the myth of intimacy to beneficiaries as well as the connection with the OM brand. As mentioned in the preceding discussion, CSR 2.0 advertisements serve as identity cues, showing how the organisation wants to be seen (Farache & Perks 2010:236). Hence, by providing the identifiable beneficiaries, there is evidence of the positive impact it has on the communities and in which communities/contexts it is active. For stakeholders to identify with the organisation, it is essential that the organisation makes stakeholders aware (through its communications) of its impacts on specific issues or areas in the social context (Maignan & Ferrell 2004:14; Morsing & Schultz 2006:323).

Referring back to the above discussion on OMSA providing evidence of the specific contexts in which the organisation is involved, and tying in with the discussion in section 2.2, this evidence of the beneficiaries in these contexts represents the positive impact it has on the communities. Maignan and Ferrell (2004:14) and Morsing and Schultz (2006:323) confirm that for stakeholders to identify with the organisation, it is essential for the organisation to make them aware (through its communications) of its impacts on specific issues or areas in the social context. Roper and Fill (2012:272) were also cited in the above discussion in order to underscore the fact that this evidence serves as the identity cues in terms of corporate identity, increasing brand recognition, establishing goodwill and/or generating a link between the organisation’s identity and its mission (and its value proposition). As such, the chosen elements applied in texts are used to communicate through established associations such as the type of people used, the settings and the photographic or compositional styles (Machin 2012:22). It is important to note that the latent meanings of texts are viewed in terms of meaning potentials rather than having fixed meanings (Machin 2012:22).
6.3.3 Theme 3: People are always engaged in action with their hands

There is always action by the represented beneficiaries in their contexts, which symbolises the momentum, sustainability and efficiency of the organisation’s CSR 2.0 efforts. The consistent communication of OMSA’s CSR 2.0 activities represents the momentum of the organisation in its social change and transformation efforts. To this end, Schmeltz (2012:43), who is cited in section 4.7.5, asserts that consistent and open CSR 2.0 communication is essential to organisational credibility and will therefore not be viewed as bragging/greenwashing.

This theme is derived from the participants in most of the images engaging in some sort of activity with their hands or actively displaying something. As discussed in section 4.8, in the same way as grammar and syntax rules apply to spoken and written language, so too do visual texts have an underlying grammatical structure. Chauhan (2008:2) asserts that advertising as a specific language of visual imagery, functions as a system in which the underlying meanings are dependent on the combination of its signs, and advertisers deliberately work to produce the maximum impact (see section 4.9.5). This means that the energy connoted through actions represents the “verbs” of the images as applied in spoken language. Machin (2012:2) points out that when addressed from a visual language approach, images take on their meaning through the grammar applied (combinations of signs).

Concerning poses in the sampled images, curvature is emphasised as opposed to angularity (Machin 2012:29), and do not occupy much space, which connotes submission, gratitude and conformity to opportunities presented and the power of the benefactor. According to Bertamini, Palumbo, Gheorghes and Galatsidas (2016:157) and Palumbo, Ruta and Bertamini (2015:2), curvature is perceived as less threatening as opposed to angular representation, which signifies a threat or negativity. Similarly, Gomez-Puerto, Munar, Acedo and Gomila (2013:2) confirm the universality of the preference for curvature. By adopting this approach, OMSA applies the universal preference, which speaks to it knowing its audience and the impact of images. In addition, by applying standard, generic representational tropes.
and visual stereotypes ensures that the intended meaning of the advertisements are decoded as it intended by the viewers.

As previously stated in section 1.3.2, an organisation’s stakeholders are pivotal in its relationship with society (Ross 2008:11), and interactive communication between the organisation and its stakeholders is essential to ensure that CSR 2.0 communication efforts are aligned with stakeholder values, expectations and motivations, in order to build its brand reputation (Podnar 2008:75; Hinson & Ndlovu 2011:333; Roper & Fill 2012:121). This integrative approach ensures a more strategically focused marketing and communication approach is applied, as well as active and meaningful partnerships between organisations and their various constituencies (Podnar 2008:78; Pomering & Johnson 2009:106).

As a means of tying up the above discussion and consolidating the various elements of analysis and interpretation, it is obvious that the interactions between the different layers of meaning are what imbues the images with meaning. The next section focuses on a holistic interpretation of the findings.

6.3.4 Overall interpretation

It was stated in chapter 2 that an organisation’s stakeholders are pivotal in its relationship with society. Arvidsson (2010:340) confirms that stakeholders and the organisation are mutually dependent and society as a whole sets the social responsibility agenda. To this end, interactive communication between the organisation and its stakeholders is essential to ensure that CSR 2.0 communication efforts are aligned with stakeholder values, expectations and motivations in order to build its corporate reputation (Podnar 2008:75; Hinson & Ndlovu 2011:333; Roper & Fill 2012:121). This occurs through the realistic representation created by emotional intimacy, and the establishment of an interactive relationship with OMSA.

This was underscored above by referring back to the discussions in sections 4.3 and 4.4 where Podnar’s (2008:78), Pomering’s (2009:2) and Pomering and Johnson’s (2009:106) state that the incorporation of stakeholder values, motivations,
expectations and involvement in CSR 2.0 activities in the organisation’s communications, results in the establishment of active and meaningful partnerships between organisations and their various constituencies. As stated earlier in section 2.4.2, the systemic approach sees this transformative and responsible approach applied to everything the organisation does and is. However, the organisation should not tackle this alone, but should rather collaborate with society, other organisations and government to inventively find solutions and effect change (Visser 2010d:14).

By being specific about the depicted contexts and participants in the images, OMSA creates a connection between itself, the viewer and the beneficiaries. As pointed out earlier, OMSA’s adoption of established tropes of CSR 2.0 and repetitively using them over several different platforms and over a number years, can be seen to firmly entrench the intended messages to the viewer/reader. Through symbolising energy and momentum, the ideology of transformation is embedded in the viewers’ interpretations, which creates a positive association with OMSA. Such actions thus go a long way to allow stakeholders to identify with the organisation. Maignan and Ferrell (2004:14) and Morsing and Schultz (2006:323) posit that the inclusion of CSR 2.0 visual texts in communications and sharing concerns around specific issues important to both stakeholders and the organisation, can enhance stakeholder identification with the organisation. Low (2013) asserts that consumers are more inclined to connect with brands they trust and respect – brands are aligned with their corporate values and are seen to be sincere and authentic in their social engagements and play a positive role in society. Hence, an organisation truly aligned to its own and its stakeholder values and purpose, produces and motivates advocates and clients that neither money nor advertising can buy. This has been proven through the emergent themes of this study (as discussed above).

As substantiated by Aguinis and Glavas (2012:941), this intimate connection between OMSA and its stakeholders, through the engagement in CSR 2.0 activities, improves OMSA’s accrual of reputational capital and stakeholder loyalty. It was found that OMSA positions itself strongly as the dominant change partner, and this
was evident in most of the connotative devices analysed – for example, settings, objects and photogenia. This connectedness is what galvanises OMSA’s reputational capital (Roper & Fill 2012:119; Fisman et al [sa]:1; Skinner & Mersham 2008:248) and sees organisations contribute meaningfully to the improvement of society through an integrated reputation management strategy.

This reputation management strategy is partly driven by its CSR 2.0 programmes and used by organisations as a tool to attract good employees and essentially create a connection between the organisation and the society in which it operates (Hinson & Ndlovu 2011:333; Roper & Fill 2012:121). By positioning its CSR 2.0 positively in terms of change and transformation, progress, realism and equal opportunities for all citizens, OMSA is fostering stakeholders’ brand loyalty, advocacy and stakeholder-organisations relationships, as indicated in the research conducted by Schmeltz (2012:33). Furthermore, as shown in section 4.5, Hildebrand et al (2011:1358) and Du et al (2010:225) argue that stakeholder identification with an organisation is more likely defined by CSR 2.0 activities, because through the organisation’s CSR 2.0 communication its character/soul is made manifest and exposes facets of its corporate identity. This is based on Hildebrand et al’s (2011:1359) premise, which views an organisation’s CSR 2.0 actions as “the core, defining or the central, distinctive and evolving characteristics of its corporate identity”, which activates stakeholder identification.

In the South African context, the change and transformation, progress and equal opportunities for all citizens’ values can be said to be ideologically and culturally shared, and therefore relevant. This means that consumers are more engaged in and easily relate to the signs and codes in the images that convey these underlying values. According to Rahim et al (2011:126), this places the organisation in a better position to structure its CSR 2.0 programmes in such a way to elicit the desired response from consumers.

It is also evident that the images represent a specific process in place, which speaks directly to the change and transformation agenda in post-apartheid South Africa.
being a process. This implies achieving change and transformation through hard work, dedication and nurturing. In Visser’s (2012a; 2010b; 2011:35) deconstruction of the CSR 2.0 concept, he relates sustainability (S) to the organisation’s destination (the challenges, vision, strategy and goals) and responsibility (R) (solutions, responses, management and actions) to how it gets there – the journey. It is apt that OMSA’s CSR 2.0 annual report is called “Journey”, which also represents a process.

The processes relevant to the images include the following:

- Education is a 12-year process through which learners progress (figure 6.4).
- The building of a house represents a specific process that is followed, based on the building plans (figure 6.3).
- The images containing agricultural contexts relate to the process of plants growing from seedlings to a crop of vegetables or mature trees (figures 6.5 and 6.6).
- The ceramics process relates to the process of converting the raw clay into an array of containers/artefacts (figure 6.8).
- The overall process of social change and transformation is inferred from figures 6.1 and 6.2, in the sense that the process of change/empowerment generally comprises specific steps.

It was argued in chapter 2 that CSR 2.0 is characterised by an embedded philosophy or value set underpinning the organisation’s practices and the values that form the core of its CSR 2.0 engagements. The values identified in the sampled images of trust, respect, sharing, freedom and progress relate back to OMSA and can thus be linked to its corporate identity. These are some of the values that stakeholders would associate with the organisation and form a bond with it (or not – depending on the stakeholders’ own value sets). Furthermore, it was found that consistent application of values (represented by the themes above) lends itself to integration of messages in OMSA’s CSR 2.0 communications. To this end, as discussed in chapter 2, it is imperative that the organisation’s CSR 2.0 strategy be integrated across all
organisational levels and functions (Pomering & Johnson 2009:112) to avoid scepticism and mixed messaging (Du et al. 2010:10; Jahdi & Acikdilli 2009:110). This integration ensures that messages, symbols, behaviours and actions within and across organisational boundaries are aligned, consistent and continuous (Roper & Fill 2012:229).

As stated in chapter 4, social responsibility engagement reporting should tell the real stories of meaningful and quantifiable impacts. This was found in OMSA’s realist approach to the images in its CSR 2.0 reporting. The process of fully articulating detail, contextualising settings and participants and depicting the beneficiaries in their contexts and categorising them, tells the real stories, and together with the text in captions and accompanying texts in the annual report, shows the quantifiable change it is making. This presentation of the real stories about real people, fosters credibility, which relates to what the motives of the source are – the perceived relevance of knowledge held by the source and the degree of trust placed in the source’s message (Roper & Fill 2012:249).

For example, the format of the Journey 2012 annual report is styled to tell the stories of the various beneficiaries in the first person voice of the authors as well as quoting the beneficiaries. This style captures a more factual style and provides explicit and factual information on OMSA’s CSR 2.0 engagements. In addition, this style also provides positive testimonies from the beneficiaries on the benefits reaped and change made by OMSA. Despite OMSA positioning itself dominantly as the change partner and being explicit in communicating the engagements in the texts, it does not come across as pompous or arrogant.

To this end, Schmeltz (2012) suggests that for CSR 2.0 communications to strike a chord with consumers in terms of their expectations and demands, organisations’ CSR 2.0 communication should be more external and explicitly oriented, where self-centred values are the focus. As confirmed in the discussions above, this is because of the styling and focused representation in the images and the specific meanings conveyed through the various iconographic resources applied to communicate
specific messages. Similarly, the personal stories of beneficiaries in the Journey (2012) annual report and images with captions, add credibility to the CSR 2.0 communication.

When looking at semiotics from a grammar (language) perspective, it is important to consider semiotic signs in terms of their meaning potentials in various applied combinations (Machin 2012:2). Therefore, when addressed from a visual language perspective, images take on their meaning through the grammar applied (combinations of signs) as opposed to signs in the images holding fixed meanings (Machin 2012:2). To this end, Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006:7) postulate that the key question in the analysis of any visual text revolves around its representation criterion: What makes an image as a whole, or the signifiers used an acceptable representation of a signified? The polysemic nature of texts was address earlier in chapter 1.

Despite South Africa’s culturally diverse society, it is expected that viewers will hardly misinterpret the messages conveyed owing to the common ideological and mythical undertones of the images (based on post-apartheid reparation). Thus, South Africans are accepting of organisations’ efforts to make a difference in society. Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006:7) state that the signifiers used in representations result from the specific cultural, social and psychological history and experiences of the creator, and are directly linked to the specific context in which the signifiers are produced. In the context of this study, OMSA is a dominant corporate power in South Africa and shares the social and political history of South Africa. As such, by creating congruence between the stakeholders’ values and those conveyed through the CSR 2.0 images, these stakeholders’ identification with the organisation is greatly increased. As posited by Hildebrand et al (2011:1358) and Du et al (2010:225), this identification is more likely defined by CSR 2.0 activities because it expresses the soul and value system of the organisation.
6.4 SUMMARY

This chapter provided the research findings for each of the eight images and explored the denotative, connotative/mythical and ideological levels of meaning in the visuals. The interpretation was presented based on the three dominant themes identified. In conclusion, in direct relevance to OMSA’s CSR 2.0 strategy, it was evident from the emerging themes discussed above, that CSR 2.0 in OMSA is aimed specifically at reparation. This was derived from the emergent themes, as well as the myths and ideologies underpinning the visual texts.

The concluding chapter draws conclusions, summarised according to the stated research questions. This provides a perspective of the value of the study. Specific recommendations are made and the implications for the organisation discussed.
In the absence of information, we jump to the worst conclusions (Myra Kassim [sa]).

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The conclusions relating to this study are summarised by focusing on the problem statement and related research questions. In this chapter, the contribution of this study is discussed in order to underline the significance of investigating how OMSA uses various semiotic resources in its CSR 2.0 corporate advertising and how they function in these texts. The research provided indications of how iconography is applied, based on an analysis framework, to the CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements and the mythical and ideological meanings underlying CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements. In this chapter, the limitations of the study are discussed and specific recommendations formulated. The research findings presented in this chapter are aimed at answering the research problem statement and the related research questions formulated in chapter 1.

7.2 THE ROLE OF VISUALS IN CORPORATE ADVERTISEMENTS FOR CSR 2.0 COMMUNICATION

As stated in chapter 1, there is a paucity of research on the specific role of visuals in CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements. It is therefore hoped that this study will contribute to this body of knowledge in that the benefit of conducting a visual semiotic analysis offers opportunities for investigating the formulation and specific messages contained in CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements. Referring back to the introductory discussion, this study should help to explain how the application of particular visual semiotic resources, specifically those relating to the iconographic mode, applied to CSR 2.0 corporate advertisement elements, convey specific meanings.
Research question 1 was only partially answered in that it draws on the findings of this study. In answering research question 1, CSR 2.0 communication is used to present CSR 2.0 principles and practices to stakeholders. Organisations communicate their CSR 2.0 principles, activities and achievements to different stakeholders to create a favourable image, hoping that this, in turn, will lead to more investment and clients. In addition, organisations engage in CSR 2.0 communication to maintain and increase their credibility and legitimacy and to communicate their corporate values to key stakeholders.

Garcia and Greenwood (2015:180) point out that visuals linked to CSR 2.0 messages are persuasive in that they stimulate attention and support for the cause(s) the organisation is advertising. By using images in their CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements, organisations are able to frame perceptions through a medium that stakeholders accept as a true reflection of reality (Garcia & Greenwood 2015:180). As stated in chapter 1, advertising is dominated by images (Kress & Van Leeuwen 2006:17) and used predominantly to tell stories, sell products and services and build organisational reputations (Parsa 2004:846).

As discussed in chapter 6, by depicting the specific contexts and beneficiaries from the organisation’s support areas, the reader is provided with evidence of the organisation’s CSR 2.0 activities. In South Africa particularly, marginalised communities are mostly depicted in the images. Furthermore, in relation to the post-apartheid socio-economic transformation objectives of South Africa, the images include details of the focus areas, which include, inter alia, education, job creation, healthcare and entrepreneurial development. By providing this evidence, the organisation highlights its role in change and transformation in South Africa and at the same time helps to build its corporate identity and enhance its credibility and reputation. Belch and Belch (2009:148) point out that products/services gain meaning in the underlying messages associated with the advertised product.
By providing the “evidence” of its activities, the organisation is legitimising its efforts in society, and at the same time associating the brand with this caring persona. By being specific about contextualising the images, the “truth” is provided to the viewer of the organisation’s activities. Ross (2008:3) maintains that CSR 2.0 actions are reported on in the organisation’s communications to all stakeholders, and these communications of its CSR 2.0 activities will and should tell the real stories of meaningful contribution to change and development. As stated in chapter 1, the use of images in CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements relates to more than the overt representations of the visual texts. In fact, it is about exposing the deeper meanings underlying the texts through the understanding of what the objects, people, contexts and ideas represent. This is discussed in detail in section 7.3.

In relation to the earlier discussion on CSR 2.0 corporate advertising disclosing the organisation’s social involvement activities, Perks et al (2013:1881) indicate that they represent how the organisation actually wants to be perceived. These perceptions are based on the audiences’ frames of reference, which in a South African context are culturally diverse. As indicated in chapter 4, the bond between an organisation and its stakeholders is what galvanises its reputational capital (Roper & Fill 2012:119; Fisman et al [sa]:1; Skinner & Mersham 2008:248). This, in turn, drives business growth, stakeholder loyalty and alignment with stakeholders (Rogers 2012:1; Taken-Smith & Alexander 2013:158).

As posited in section 2.3.3, the result is that organisations contribute meaningfully to the improvement of society through an integrated reputation management strategy linked to their strategic CSR 2.0 communication. This reputation management strategy is partly driven by CSR 2.0 programmes. Organisations use the integrative strategy as a tool to attract good employees and essentially create a connection between the organisation and the society in which it operates (Hinson & Ndhlovu 2011:333; Roper & Fill 2012:121).
Furthermore, as stated in chapters 1 and 3, Farache and Perks (2010:236) argue that CSR 2.0 advertisements serve as identity cues, showing how the organisation wishes to be seen by conveying its corporate values and as a means to legitimise its behaviour. The provision of specific contexts in which the organisation is involved in its corporate advertising, is evidence of the positive contribution it has made to the communities and in which communities and contexts it is active. Moriarty et al (2012:39), Roper and Fill (2012:274) and Osman (2008:59) state that through corporate advertising, the organisation communicates to its stakeholders the positive contributions it has made to society through its CSR 2.0 communication, in an effort to create a sustainable corporate identity and image.

In addition, through its corporate advertising the organisation attempts to increase recognition of its name (brand), establish goodwill for the organisation as a whole or generate a link between the organisation’s identity and mission (and its value proposition) (Roper & Fill 2012:272). As such, advertisements relating to the organisation's CSR 2.0 activities are crucial because they function as an identity cue and express how the organisation wishes to be seen and understood (Roper & Fill 2012:273). For example, the positive contribution can be inferred from the image in figure 6.6, where the grouping of the images shows the disadvantaged community and the situations in which OMSA is involved, providing opportunities and benefits to the communities.

Pomering and Johnson (2009:107) assert that stakeholders’ perceptions of the organisation are essentially contingent on the communication they receive from the organisation. In the context of this research therefore, contextualisation provides truth, and truth creates reality. However, as pointed out in section 4.8.1.1, reality is always mediated, thus negating an “absolute” reality. Parsa (2004:854) states that images, especially in advertising, functions as a perfect ‘re-presentation’ of life. As shown in chapter 6, through the selection and combination of specific participants, contexts, settings and objects in its CSR 2.0 corporate advertising texts, OMSA
represents a specific reality to the viewer. Essentially, existing shared social codes or social patterns are drawn upon to create meaning structures (Fourie 2009:149;211).

In addition, as mentioned in section 2.3, regarding stakeholder theory, sustained stakeholder engagement is a vital aspect of managing ethics in an organisation (Rossouw & Van Vuuren 2003:400). The organisation links its moral interactions to stakeholders as part of its identity, and this engagement involves two-way communication in which the organisation reveals its economic, social and environmental performance. Thus, by providing the evidence of the context of these CSR 2.0 projects, the organisation proves its activities and spend, thereby positioning itself as a key contributor to social change. According to Hildebrand et al (2011:1360), organisations reinforce their role in society and adopt CSR 2.0 as a strategic mechanism in corporate identity building because of their ability to build a credible image and corporate reputation.

Hence, the role of visuals in corporate advertisements for CSR 2.0 communication is that these visuals serve to generate a link between corporate identity and mission, and this provides evidence to stakeholders of the organisation’s CSR 2.0 activities. The analysis of visuals in OMSA’s CSR 2.0 corporate advertising could serve as a heuristic for visual CSR 2.0 communication as part of an organisation’s corporate identity, image and reputation strategy development.

7.3 MEANING THROUGH MYTHS AND IDEOLOGY

In order to answer research question 2, the iconography in OMSA’s CSR 2.0 was analysed to uncover the latent meanings conveyed through myths and the associated ideologies driving these meanings. The most dominant ideology identified in this study was that of post-apartheid transformation and reparation in South Africa. The meanings in these images could not be formed without this specific
ideology underpinning them. As mentioned in section 6.3, the contexts of the images all relate to the post-apartheid reparation of South Africa, where large organisations such as OMSA have engaged in social and economic transformational CSR 2.0 projects. As posited in chapter 1, the transformation ideology is underpinned by the fact that some groups were promoted and others marginalised during the apartheid era. Therefore, in redressing this in post-apartheid South Africa, the focus of CSR 2.0 is in the areas of education, job creation, healthcare, entrepreneurial development and so forth.

Regarding post-apartheid reparation in South Africa, there is a national consciousness of the need to empower previously disadvantaged communities in terms of economic and social inclusion. Given South Africa’s historical context, there is a common understanding of the socioeconomic needs of previously disadvantaged communities who more than likely share the ideology of transformation, economic and social inclusion, and accept the corporate powers’ attempts to make a difference in society. The underlying myths and ideologies attached to the connotative devices applied to convey meaning are understood in this context of a shared understanding. In spite of the interpretation variables/meaning potentials in terms of individual semiotic resources such as the body language and objects depicted in the images, the underlying transformation ideology transcends culturally. The researcher therefore believes that the shared transformation ideology serves as the mechanism through which the organisation conveys meaning.

In enforcing this ideology, the findings suggest that specifically categorised people are displayed in specific contexts and that the people mostly represented are culturally categorised as black. OMSA is thus providing evidence of its activities in marginalised communities, thereby proving its activities and spend in transforming South Africa. In this way, OMSA is positioning itself as a key contributor to the overall transformation and social change agenda. This confirms Ross’s (2008:3) view that
an organisation that reports its CSR 2.0 activities tells the real stories of its meaningful and quantifiable accomplishments. Contextualisation therefore aims to create reality for the viewer in a specific context. Hence, by providing evidence, the transformation ideology is enforced and this gives meaning to OMSA’s CSR 2.0 activities in the post-apartheid South Africa context.

In terms of what makes an image as a whole or the signifiers used an acceptable representation of a signified (Kress & Van Leeuwen 2006:7), the signifiers used in the CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements in this study, are seen as representations stemming from the specific South African cultural, social and psychological history and experiences of apartheid South Africa. This therefore enforces the transformation ideology through the specific semiotic resources/devices used. As stated in section 6.3, OMSA is deliberate in its CSR 2.0 corporate advertising in the context of post-apartheid South Africa, and as such, is motivated and conventional in expressing a specific meaning.

OMSA builds a bond with its stakeholders by enforcing this transformation ideology, which confirms Rogers’ (2012:1) and Taken-Smith and Alexander’s (2013:158) opinion that business growth, stakeholder loyalty and corporate identification are derived directly from the reputational capital. This further confirms Hildebrand et al’s (2011:1360) contention that organisations reinforce their role in society and adopt CSR 2.0 as a strategic mechanism in corporate identity building because this builds a credible corporate reputation. CSR 2.0 communication exposes facets of the organisation’s corporate identity and is mostly explicit in revealing the qualities of the organisation (Du et al 2010:10).

This relates directly to Roper and Fill’s (2012:273) view that advertising CSR 2.0 activities is important as they function as an identity cue and express how the organisation wishes to be seen and understood. The values identified in the sampled images of trust, respect, sharing, freedom and progress relate back to OMSA, and are thus linked to its corporate identity. These are some of the values that
stakeholders would associate with the organisation and form a bond with it (or not, depending on the stakeholders’ own value sets). Furthermore, it was found that consistent application of values (represented by the themes above) lends itself to the integration of messages in OMSA’s CSR 2.0 communications.

Thus by enforcing the transformation ideology through its CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements, OMSA positions itself as a key player in post-apartheid South Africa transformation and imbues its identity with these values. In addition, by enforcing the transformation ideology, OMSA positions itself as a dominant player in society – responsible business, and caring for the community and South Africa as a whole in order to promote transformation and progress. This confirms Du et al’s (2007:225) arguments that show that CSR 2.0 positioned brands are more successful and stakeholders are aware of CSR 2.0 activities and the organisations’ motivations and objectives in engaging in CSR 2.0.

Referring back to figure 2.7, and confirming Visser’s contention (2010d:20; 2011:33), large organisations and, in this instance, OMSA, clearly see value creation as more than mere profits. This relates to economic development and sustainability in terms of improvements in the economic context and includes infrastructure investment, job creation, skills development and the like. This was evident in the specific activities and projects depicted in OMSA’s CSR 2.0 images (see the themes in section 6.3). These activities and projects essentially contribute to the empowerment of disadvantaged communities. Not only does this value creation relate to CSR 2.0, but also to the fact that the responsible business philosophy is entrenched throughout the organisation, as seen in the volunteers participating in the annual Habitat for Humanity projects (figure 6.3). Legal and compliance responsibilities aside, in the researcher’s opinion, OMSA is not greenwashing, because a consistent ideological theme infuses its CSR 2.0 corporate advertising and does not merely create an impression of social development in post-apartheid South Africa.
By symbolising energy and momentum (relating to the analogy of a journey), the ideology of transformation is conveyed to viewers, which creates a positive association with OMSA. This confirms Maignan and Ferrell’s (2004:14) and Morsing and Schultz’s (2006:323) arguments that the inclusion of CSR 2.0 in visual texts in communications and sharing concerns around specific issues important to both stakeholders and the organisation, enhance stakeholder identification with the organisation. In terms of consumers linking the CSR 2.0 values communicated in the images directly to OMSA, reference is made to Wells et al’s (2003:157) model, as discussed in section 3.6.3 (see figure 3.4) and is integrated as follows. When viewing the advertisement, consumers associate and memorise based on their understanding of the content of the message and relevance to their interests, emotions, beliefs and situations. Given South Africa’s historical context, there is a common understanding about the socioeconomic needs of previously disadvantaged communities, and society expects organisations to communicate their contributions to transforming society – as posited in section 2.1.3.

Hence, the presumption is that OMSA’s CSR 2.0 image content is of relevance and interest to the viewers, and general connotative devices (generic representational tropes) are applied to convey these messages. Meaning is created only by people who share the cultural associations to whatever is represented in an image. This understanding of the content is associated with the learning (cognitive) node of the model. As stated in section 5.2, the implication is that in a multicultural society such as that of South Africa, the sender and receiver’s frames of references are culturally constructed, and misaligned references in marketing communication could lead to translation problems. The subjective interpretation of messages in CSR 2.0 corporate advertising is thus based on these diverse cultural constructions.

Based on the outcome of the cognitive stage, consumers form an opinion of the message based on their attitudes, emotions and convictions (persuasion). The real evidence provided in the images of the specific projects in which the organisation is
involved influences this persuasion. Following the persuasion, specific response behaviours ensue (Wells et al’s (2003:157) or attitudes and opinions are formed. This confirms Öberseder et al’s (2013:1840) contention that CSR 2.0 influences consumer attitudes, buying behaviour, consumer-organisation identification and loyalty. Understanding which elements of CSR 2.0 the consumers are affected by or notice places organisations in a better position to structure their CSR 2.0 programmes in such a way that they elicit the desired response from consumers (Rahim et al 2011:126). To this end, Machin (2012:22) confirms that the chosen elements applied in texts are used to communicate through established associations.

One should note that literal depictions of the denotative layer are underscored by specific connotations (myths), which, in turn, are driven by specific ideologies. These layers function in combination and feed into and from each other in order to create meaning. The myths underlying the change and transformation ideology are summarised below.

- The myth of youth is representative of the possibilities of and prospects for South Africa. As young minds, the youth are moulded and taught to be responsible citizens, focused on specific skills and their education to become meaningful contributors to the economy and South African society one day as the next generation;
- The myths of growth and transition are present and represent the transitioning from a state of want and need and dependency to self-sustainability, education and skills empowerment. The seedlings, agriculture and trees connote these myths.
- Finally, the myth of brotherly love and caring for society are evident in the context of this ideology – both at a level of OMSA caring for the society/communities in which it operates and relaying this to the viewer.
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study was conducted in a single context, namely that of OMSA, and not all financial services organisations in South Africa. The sample for this study was restricted to only eight visual texts, which although deemed sufficient for a study with an exploratory goal, places a constraint on the generalisability and transferability of the findings. In addition, the sample was limited to printed CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements only. A further limitation was that only a single mode of Machin’s (2012) visual semiotic analysis toolkit was studied. Since the researcher was the only coder during the analysis process, the findings were subjective, despite the fact that they were based on a specific data analysis model. Despite these limitations, the study could indicate specific trends for future research.

7.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

This exploratory research should provide a basis for further research on various related topics, as highlighted below.

- Analyse all visual semiotic modes in a specific context in order to gain a deeper understanding of and insight into all the semiotic modes in CSR 2.0 corporate advertising and the interplay between them.
- Analyse the perspectives and motives of the creators of OMSA’s CSR 2.0 corporate advertising to gain an understanding of the specific semiotic resources applied in the CSR 2.0 visuals.
- Conduct research focusing on the perceptions, opinions and meanings of viewers/readers of OMSA’s CSR 2.0 corporate advertising, such as employees and other stakeholders.
- Test the application and validity of the CSR 2.0 framework proposed in figure 2.5 across a variety of organisations/sectors.
• Further test and refine the proposed measurement framework in marketing communication, specifically in relation to CSR 2.0.

• Conduct similar research to include all forms of media and channels.

• Conduct a visual semiotic analysis of CSR 2.0 corporate advertising across the financial services industry, which includes all forms of media and corporate advertising channels.

### 7.6 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The findings of this study indicate the importance of deliberate thought pertaining to the application of semiotic resources in CSR 2.0 visual texts in that the underlying meanings convey meaning, which, in turn, are associated with the organisation’s corporate identity and reputation. Furthermore, this study showed how the semiotic resources are applied in CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements, specifically in terms of iconography, where the dominant myths and ideologies have emerged in sync with the current South African context. The application of visual semiotic theory and analysis in this study indicated that OMSA applies consistent semiotic resources to convey and enforce specific meanings. To this end, if the underlying messages do not foster a positive corporate identity, the organisation will fail in its attempts to build positive relations, a strong corporate identity and goodwill among its stakeholders. As highlighted in previous discussions, organisations use CSR 2.0 activities and communication to achieve this.

In addition, Chauhan (2008:2) posits that advertising as a specific language of visual imagery functions as a system in which the underlying meanings are dependent on the combination of its signs, and advertisers deliberately work to produce the maximum impact. Consumers are more inclined to connect with brands they trust and respect, which are aligned with their values and are seen to be sincere and authentic in their social engagements and play a positive role in society. Hence, an
organisation truly aligned to its own and its stakeholder values and purpose, produces and motivates advocates and clients that neither money nor advertising can buy (Low 2013). It is the researcher’s hope that this study should therefore contribute to this body of knowledge in that the benefit of conducting a visual semiotic analysis affords researchers opportunities to investigate the formulation and specific messages contained in CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements, which contributes to these organisation-stakeholder relationships.

Hence, in terms of application, it is hoped that this study will give creative designers insight into the consequences of the application of various visual resources to convey specific meaning. To this end, it is hoped that the proposed measurement framework, which lays a theoretical foundation for the selection of visuals for CSR 2.0 corporate advertisements to enhance the organisation’s corporate identity, will benefit organisations. Another useful element of this study is a conceptual framework for CSR 2.0 and the link to stakeholder-organisation relationships (see figure 2.5). It provides a holistic, integrated view of the organisational approach and integration of CSR 2.0. The framework indicates the instrumental, normative and descriptive value of CSR 2.0 and demonstrates the mandate of the organisation and the key performance indicators and targets. Legally and in terms of compliance, the framework also demonstrates that organisations should be held accountable, and be compliant and responsible in managing and implementing their CSR 2.0 actions. Finally, it demonstrates that performance should be measured and benchmarked and that CSR 2.0 activities should be adequately reported.

Through the elucidation of the new transformational approach to CSR 2.0, it is hoped that organisations will acknowledge the importance of progressing from CSR 1.0 to this new transformational approach, in order to better entrench sustainability and responsibility in their organisations and society. An organisation that professes to be socially responsible and practises social responsibility should understand and
appreciate the significance of displaying its response to society’s and stakeholders’ expectations in the form of reports and audits (Crane et al 2014:401).

In conclusion, this new transformational approach speaks to broader transformation in terms of addressing the dominant oppressive social formations as well – such as reinforcing patriarchal ideology and gender stereotypes. It has become clear from the discussion in specifically chapter 2, that CSR 2.0 should be about more than change and upliftment through education and other economic projects. To this end, organisations should strive to create marketing communications that construct more progressive structures in South African society, which are aimed at representing an egalitarian society.
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11 Aug 2016,

Dear Simoné

RE: Permission for Simoné Eiman to re-use images used by the Old Mutual Foundation for purposes of academic study.

The Old Mutual Foundation grants permission for the re-use of images, published in various channels of communications, for the purposes of academic study as outlined, namely a dissertation on, “A visual semiotic analysis of semiotic resources applied in the Old Mutual Foundation’s CSR advertising”.

We request that your use of these images remain in the academic domain, and where possible credit is given as @ Old Mutual Foundation.

We commend your undertaking a Master’s Degree in Communications, and would welcome the results of your research once your dissertation is complete.

Kind regards

[Signature]

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Old Mutual Life Assurance Company (SA) Limited
Licensed Financial Services Provider
ADDENDUM B: MAMMA’S HANDS
ADDENDUM E: EDUCATION

"We believe the essence of the new South Africa is all about equal opportunity," says Mr. Mthembu, principal of DENDRON SECONDARY SCHOOL. "Our kids need a good education in maths, science and accounting to gain access to these opportunities."

The OLD MUTUAL FOUNDATION shares an equal passion for this mission and invests in secondary school education, specifically maths and science.

Dendron's infrastructure has benefited from Old Mutual Foundation's support and their senior science learners have attended the National Science Festival in Grahamstown and youth leadership forums. In the past five years, this modest high school has produced an excellent 100% pass rate.
ADDENDUM G: RURAL HUTS
ADDENDUM H: VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES (AGED)
ADDENDUM I: CERAMIST